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Challenges of Managing Growing Small & Medium Businesses (SMES) In Botswana

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Abstract

Enterprise growth may be planned or happen by chance, either way, for an enterprise (especially growth oriented firms) to achieve its objective, growth must be properly managed. Numerous studies worldwide have been undertaken to investigate the factors that contributes to SMEs failures, impediments to firms' growth and the relationship between firm growth and firm profitability and the growth strategies adopted by SMEs, but the issues relating to the challenges of effectively managing enterprise growth especially in Botswana were not addressed. This paper aims to bridge this knowledge gap by evaluating the challenges of managing entrepreneurial growth and examine the factors that influence enterprise growth and identify appropriate ways to effectively manage venture growth. The article uses secondary data from online database such as science direct, google scholars, academic journals, articles, textbooks, reports, etc. Two relevant conceptual frameworks developed by Smallbone and Wyer (2006) *Framework of Influences on Enterprise Growth (which is based Storey (1994) Determinants of Growth Framework)* and Liabotis (2007) *Integrating Strategy with Execution Infrastructure* were used to address the issues relating to managing enterprise growth. The findings revealed that the effective management of growing enterprises is not solely influenced by entrepreneur traits and/or financial resources but by other factors including the enterprise type, management strategy, business environment and by integrating organizational strategy with execution infrastructure – building organization capabilities, performance management scorecards and organization leadership. Further that whilst the two models are considered suitable for use by SMEs in Botswana, the Smallbone and Wyer (2006) *Framework of Influences on Enterprise Growth* was found most relevant and user friendly. The findings of this study are expected to assist various researchers and scholars in future studies. Startups and SMEs in Botswana may use the information to monitor and control implementation of their growth strategies.

Key words: Startups, SMEs, innovation, business growth, sustainability, strategy, infrastructure.

Introduction

Most owners and managers of growing startups and SMEs in Botswana often know and understand the nature of their businesses, and sometimes they do possess adequate technical skills and exposure in the industries within which their businesses are major players. However, some of these managers/owners have none or very limited managerial skills needed to successfully manage these ventures. As a results, some of these ventures fail mostly due to absence of skills in effective business management and/or lack of strategic planning It is therefore not enough for owners/managers to just introduce, develop and maintain professional business practices but they should also critically explore innovation and creativity not only a growth strategy but also to enhance the firm's competitiveness and long term sustainability (David & David 2016). In short, they should not only be alive to and knowledgeable about the factors that affect strategic growth decision but should also fully understand the importance of effectively managing their enterprises growth stages. They should effectively prepare and plan for growth, identify and properly manage the various risks facing their growing ventures. They should closely monitor business environment by effectively scrutinizing both internal and external factors that affect their firms. This strategic tool if properly used will allow all areas of a firm to access consistent and verifiable information in making decisions (David & David 2016) and help the firms to monitor their rivals' competitive moves and appropriately respond or react to them. The competitive intelligence information will also help firms to maintain their positions in the markets and/or re-align their strategic positions in order to enhance their competitiveness and prolong their life cycles. The importance of business strategies therefore can never be inconspicuous as strategies enhance firms' competitiveness in the market and their resilience against challenging business environment (Durmaz & Ilhan, 2015). Dauda & Akingbade (2010) concur that business enterprising is a high stake game that requires action plans to solve immediate and future problems. Further that aligning these business activities to the ever changing business environment is a necessary prerequisite for the firm's competitiveness and survival. The authors add that wrong or poorly planned and executed strategic moves could be very costly to the firm monetary wise. Durmaz & Ilhan (2015) (citing Eren, 2006) advise owner/managers to equip themselves with necessary skills in order to effectively manage their growing enterprises and adapt themselves to the development and changes in the future.

Background

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Botswana like in other countries are still considered major contributors to the country's economic development and growth. To Dauda & Akingbade (2010) these enterprises are the real fabric of a nation's development, and effective competitive tool and the source of breeding ground for entrepreneurs especially where businesses compete based on innovation and entrepreneurship (Ongori, 2011). The SME sector is responsible for creating and growing the majority of employment opportunities which account for one third to two thirds of the turnover of the private sector (Ntsika, 2002 and Arianoff, 2010) and is crucial for economic growth, employment creation, poverty reduction and reducing levels of inequality (Ncube, 2013). The enterprises have been put in the development agenda and strategy of many developing African countries (Pansiri & Temtime, 2006) because their growth directly impact a nation's economy (Morapedi, 2014). Noruwa (2012) concurs that achievement of good economic growth is primarily driven by SMEs contribution and the environment of well-focused policies aimed at poverty eradication, and the people accessibility to factors of production, particularly credit. For example, SMEs contribute 56% of private sector employment and 36% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) worldwide (Arianoff, 2010), and 75 percent of formal sector employment in Botswana (LEA, 2007). They play a significant role in marginalized and rural areas which are mostly characterized by high unemployment, inequality and poverty levels, and where the majority of people depend on government grants (Fatoki, 2013). Nkwe (2012) asserts that most of Batswana SMEs still follow traditional growth strategies that generates marginal profits. Further that these enterprises have improved the lives of the founding owners and their families and the few people engaged to help. Without them, a lot of people in Botswana would be leaving below poverty line if there were SMEs. Regrettably, despite the critical socio-economic role played by the SMEs and the government support that they get, the majority of them continue to fail within a very short time. For example, in Botswana, the life span of SMEs has been estimated to be five years (LEA, 2009; Okurut, Molefhe, Mupimpila, Nkuba and Okurut, 2015).

It is for this very reason that Botswana government has put in place, policies and programs that seek to empower the SMEs and entrepreneurs (Mwobobia, 2012), and enhance citizen participation in the mainstream economic activities (Matambo, 2013 cited in Monyake, Gosekwang, Ditshweu, and Mmereki, 2020) with view to prolonging their life span and increase their survival rates and their continued contribution to the country's economy. This is notwithstanding Lisenda, (1997) assertion that Government policies supporting SME development tend to adopt "a one-size-fits-all approach", an approach deemed more beneficial to medium size firms than the micro and startups businesses. Sentsho et al. (2007) on the other hand blames limited commercial bank support for the enterprises failure due to the lack of access to finance.

David and David (2016) introduce the aspect of technological developments. The authors posit that no company or industry today is insulated against emerging technological developments and that in high-tech industries, identification and evaluation of key technological opportunities and threats forms the important part of the external strategic-management audit. Mafeje (2001) concurs that technological development plays a critical role in firms' competitiveness. The author however cautions governments to closely observe not only technological changes but also new globalization changes as both paradigms require graduating the poor from a certain level of income or consumption to another, the process which in turn requires achievement of a sustained increase in productivity and an integration of the poor into the process of economic growth. Further that this socio-economic goal can be achieved if resources within an effective policy and institutional framework are accessible to both firms and people, and if firms and people actively participate in the policy decision making (Mafeje, 2001). It is therefore against this backdrop that governments worldwide do not only incentivize these enterprises monetarily and through other interventions such as tax subsidies but also through some of management development training programmes to ensure that these enterprises are effectively managed to continue being major players in development and growth of their economies. Notwithstanding this, Faulkner & Bowman, (1995) caution SMEs not to be totally dependent on government interventions but to demonstrate their awareness of the current challenging business environment by creating robust strategies that will usher them beyond their present limited growth scope.

Literature Review

This section explores the scholarly information that adequately addresses the study objectives and helps provide practical solutions for the effective management of growing SMEs in Botswana. There is no universal definition for small business enterprises and business growth despite numerous attempts to define these enterprises. The SMEs definitions of these enterprises differ from one country to the other (Ayyagari, Beck, & Demirgüç-Kunt, 2005), vary between sources and depend on different countries specific interpretation (OECD, 2013). For the purpose of this paper, the term *SMEs* shall be applicable to private commercial or industrial *small businesses* and/or *start-ups* in Botswana characterized by the level of fixed investments, assets, operations, output, sales turnover, number of employees and scope (Nkwe 2012; Dauda, Akingbade & Akinlabi, 2010). *Business Growth* on the other hand means increasing the business scope of operations, market share, workforce, markets, business or product lines, etc. (Durmaz & Ilhan, 2015), sales turnover, profit generation, avoiding losses, growth in productivity, being cost effective, surviving in the market or performing well compared competitor (Woldie, Leighton & Adesua, 2019 citing Jennings & Beaver, 1997).

Understanding Growth Concept and its importance

Growth is a must for businesses to survive in developing industries Durmaz & Ilhan, (2015), however for growing firms to remain competitive and sustainable it is important that they are effectively and efficiently managed. Barringer & Ireland (2016) posit that growth can be most exciting and fast paced, quickly producing impressive results for their employees and owners, and for most businesses growth is an indication of success. The authors caution that not all businesses have the potential to be aggressive growth firms, and although a business can grow too fast, business success doesn't always scale (Barringer & Ireland, 2016 pp 466). It is therefore crucial that owners and managers of entrepreneurial firms have a full understanding of the dynamics and the nature of the growth process. Owners/managers should remember that growth is a possible means to profitability, and not an end to objective itself and as such they should not grow their enterprises until they are ready. There are times when an enterprise grow steadily at a measured pace and suddenly experience significant increase in orders and have difficulty servicing these orders (Barringer & Ireland, 2016 pp 466) due to limited resources and capacities. Consequently a fast growing firm with insufficient resources and capacities can end up damaging its good image and reputation and weakening its brand. Kuratko (2014) concurs that building an entrepreneurial company and achieving entrepreneurial leadership in the twenty-first century can be quite challenging for fast-paced, growth oriented startups and small businesses. As such a robust strategic approach should be developed to ensure effective management of these ventures, and should include building dynamics capabilities both internally and externally. *Internally* through the utilization of the creativity and knowledge from employees and e*xternally* through the search for external competencies to complement the firm's existing capabilities (Kuratko, 2014 pp. 478). He adds that if business owners perceive and pursue a unique opportunity, the success of their ventures is possible, however entrepreneurial leadership on the other hand is more demanding as it requires owners to determine the firm's purpose or vision, exploit and maintain the core competencies develop human capital, sustain an effective organizational culture, emphasize ethical practices and establish balanced organizational controls (Kuratko, 2014 pp. 485). Durmaz & Ilhan (2015) add that businesses need not grow only to achieve the desired goals and objectives but also to maintain their current status or position in the market. In short, this means, owner/managers of growth oriented businesses should know and closely monitor both the internal and external business environment and devise strategic approaches to mitigate negative impact on their enterprises performance. They should demonstrate high levels of agility in managing these enterprises and continually adapt themselves to the ever-changing technological and socio-economic developmental changes.

Firms can grow within their current markets or outside their industries (Allen, 2016) or even by exploiting global opportunities (Longenecker, 2017), although not all firms are global players (Barringer & Ireland, 2016). Longenecker (2017) advises firms that are desirous of going global to firstly establish management's objectives, reasons, commitment, expected payoff, expertise, responsibility for and time allocated to international operations, adequacy of production and financial capacity, organizational structure, effect of international operations on local production, capital available for marketing, expansion, payback and management preparedness to go global. Durmaz & Ilhan, (2015) opine that whichever growth strategy firms employ, the goal may be qualitative or quantitative. *Quantitative* as reflected by an increase in current output, sales revenue, product range, investments, number of employees and capital injection and *qualitative* by developing the quality of business elements. Notably, a firm that embraces qualitative growth may also show quantitative growth in many ways, be it increased customer base or additional new technology/machinery. Barringer & Ireland (2016) concur that growth in sales revenues is an important indicator of a firm's potential to survive today and be successful in the future.

Factors That Influence Growth

Businesses pursue growth for various reasons, the first and the most important, being that growth provides businesses with competitive advantages against their rivals and help them to become resilient against difficulties (Dauda, Akingbade & Akinlabi, 2010). Allen (2016) posits that the decisions to grow or not to grow is influenced by several factors including but not limited to demand for product/service, size of the market and leadership success. Woldie, Leighton & Adesua (2019) (citing Storey, 1994) suggests five characteristics of age, gender, education, motivation, previous work experience of the owner/manager. Raja & Zouaoui (2020) add to the list of growth influencers' managers' ability to identify and exploit opportunities, asserting one's position in a network of companies, intensive work and mastering the functional and technical aspects related to business. Stokes, Wilson & Mador, (2010) (citing Storey, 1994 and Smallbone, Wyer, 2006) on another hand, suggest the characteristics of the entrepreneur and of the enterprise, the management strategy and the external business environment as key enterprise growth influencers. Kuratko, (2014) concurs with other authors, and categorises all these factors into four, namely, (i) *market and industry factors* (e.g. supplier power, customer power, competition, industry size and characteristics, intellectual-property rights, etc.); (ii) *firms decisions to grow or not to grow* (e.g. demand for product/service, market size, leadership success, etc.); (iii) *management factors* (problematic leadership tendencies such as loyalty to the original founding team, single-mindedness of vision, task orientation, working in isolation, etc.) and *(iv) scaling factors* (e.g. inability to understand and respond to the environment of the business or assess it for change and emerging competitors, etc.). He adds business owners/managers across the globe are also forced to appreciate the other key factors of control, responsibility, tolerance of failure and change during the growth stage (Kuratko, 2014, pp 474-475). Woldie, Leighton & Adesua (2019) (citing Storey, 1994) breaks motivation factor into positive and negative. The authors define positive motivation in terms of the owner/manager's perception of market opportunities for a product or service and the desire to make money and negative motivation as dissatisfaction with an existing employer and threat of actual unemployment. In Botswana, the entrepreneur motivation is perceived a major factor as exhibited by observed the owner/managers slowness and/or less eagerness to grow their businesses beyond the country's borders through exports into neighbouring SADC countries. This observation was confirmed by SADC Representative during panel discussions at AFRIC, Africa Rising-AFCFTA Forum 2021 (recently held in October 2021, in Gaborone, Botswana) who suggested that it was surprising that Botswana SMEs were interested in a larger foreign market when it did not export to its neighbouring countries such as Namibia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Challenges Encountered By Start-Ups & SMEs in Managing Growth

It is not surprising that very few of start-ups and SMEs can reach the medium size and that only a portion of them have the potential to further develop into large firms (Nichter & Goldmark, 2009). These ventures ability to grow is impeded by numerous factors including but not limited to conducive infrastructural environment, the degree or extent to which they are promoted and developed in each country, the robustness of the private sector, and entrepreneurs traits such as innovativeness and commitment, passion, product/customer focus, execution intelligence, tenacity (Barringer & Ireland, 2016, p.31). Aremu & Adeyemi (2011) cite lack of planning, improper financing, poor management and overestimating what owners/managers can do, lack of market knowledge and appreciation, hiring of mediocre people, and being a domineering manager as some of the major factors that contribute enterprises' failure especially at infancy/introduction stage. Oluntu (2008) cites inexperience in the field of business, lack of technical knowledge, poor managerial skills, lack of planning skills, Ormerzel (2008) lack of market research skills and lack of exposure in managing operations and Duale et.al. (2015) and Amoako (2013) poor bookkeeping practices as factors that expand the SMEs problems. Kinyua (2014) concurs that poor accounting systems and procedures lead to lack of professional accounting records which in turn limits SMEs borrowing capacities, since banks depend on a business accounting records to ascertain credibility and qualification for issuing business loans. Further that unsolved problems of poor record keeping management systems practiced by SMEs may lead to other challenges especially funding related problems. Kuratko (2014) asserts that very often financially troubled enterprises leave owner/manager emotionally drained but Longenecker (2017) cites greed, e.g. failure to share ownership in the business in an equitable way as a major top stress related factor. To Fine (1997) and Themba & Josiah, (2015), the most distressing factors are the continent's poor socio-economic performance caused by lack of or poorly developed entrepreneurial capacity and persistent socio-economic, political, technological and cultural changes facing the continent.

African cultural context that African countries have to contend with whilst Durmaz and Ilhan (2015) point a finger at stiff competition and customers' constantly changing attitudes as some of the factors that threatens the firm's ability to grow and manage growth more effectively. To those SMEs that engage in international trade, Hatten (2012) cites the risk of not getting paid at all and that of the time it takes to get paid, and the currency fluctuations as the greatest challenges as they have the ability to significantly impact the firms' bottom line (Hatten (2012, pp 372). Gartner and Belammy (2010) on the other hand blames business owners/managers' failure to pay attention to and notice problems and errors before they become too big, their inability to respond promptly so that problems stay small and to solve problems and adapt to as necessary and their unwillingness to listen to listen to people who have expertise and use their insights (Gartner and Belammy, 2010, pp.479). Liabotis, (2007) add that growth is elusive because the probability of achieving profitable growth is mostly driven by a firm's clear growth strategy and strong execution infrastructure, and that one without the other impairs the probability of success. These authors caution business managers or owners to pursue growth for most realistic reasons other than for growth own sake or to satisfy the ego of the CEO or to boost their individual egos or for social recognition or acceptance as such type of growth would not create value (Barringer & Ireland, 2016, pp467; Liabotis, 2007). The authors of this paper argue that whilst the effects of all the above stated growth impediments on the firms 'overall performance cannot be downplayed, the rampant pandemic diseases such as HIV aids, Ebola, malaria and now Covid 19 have significantly contributed to these enterprises' failure by reducing the much needed managerial and technical expertise over several years due to untimely deaths of key entrepreneurs.

Critical Growth Success Factors

Kuratko (2014) posits that the ability of start-ups and SMEs to create, access and commercialize new knowledge on global markets is fundamental to their sustained competitiveness and enterprise growth. Hatten (2012) concurs that international trade and global markets are a critical component of today's businesses irrespective of their sizes. Kuratko adds that these ventures owners should not only formulate and implement strategies for immediate impact and preservation of long-term goals to enhance organizational survival, growth, and long-term viability, but should also be more willing to invest in innovation, human capital, and creating and maintaining an effective culture to ensure long-term viability. Further that they should assume total responsibility and inherent risk of their firms by making all strategic decisions that do not only control the growth pace of their businesses but also decisions to introduce new innovative developments to enhance the firm's competitive position in the market, and let managers only make recommendations (Kuratko, 2014, pp.474). It is however, observed that unlike their counterparts in the developing economies, most of Botswana SMEs and start-up owners are not only risk averse but are often reluctant to introduce the new and innovative changes that can enhance their firms' competitiveness and sustainability even during these 4^{th} industrial revolution times. Yet it is these developmental changes that facilitate businesses to grow and outcompete their rivals (Durmaz & Ilhan, 2015).

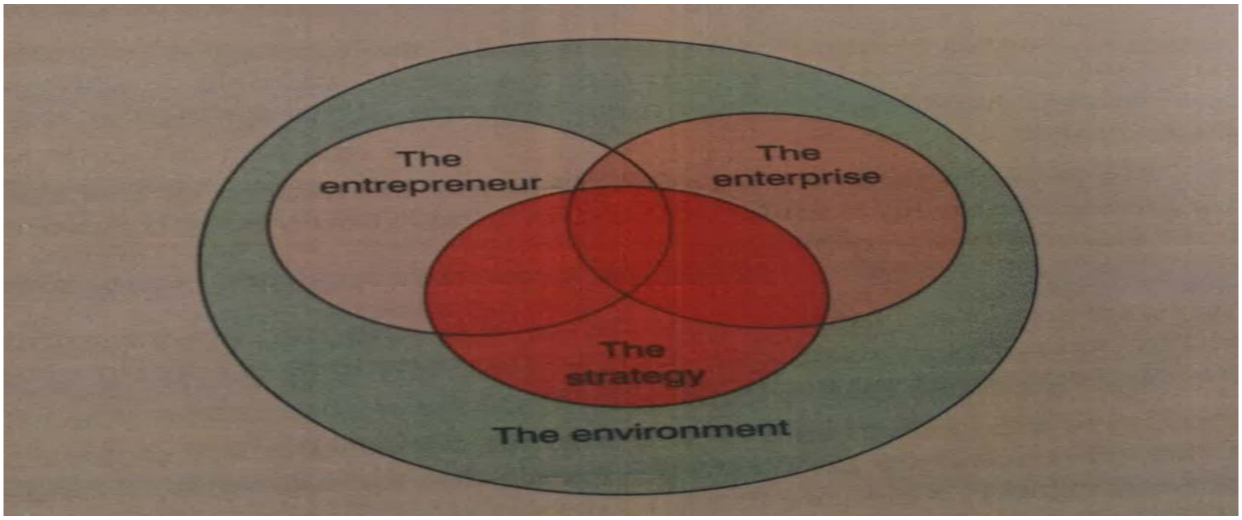
Conceptual Framework

Smallbone & Myer (2006) suggest that there is no single theory that adequately explains the relationship of all factors that influenced growth. The authors assert that growth depends on a variety of different circumstances surrounding each individual enterprise and the complex interactions that influence these factors. Further that it is the complex interactions of these factors that prevented the development of a single framework. This greatly influenced our decisions to consider two conceptual frameworks which we believe are most appropriate to address the issues relating to management of enterprise growth. Namely, (a) A Smallbone and Wyer (2006) "*Framework of Influences on Enterprise Growth*", initially developed by Storey (1994) and (b) Liabotis (2007) *"Integrating Strategy with Execution Infrastructure"*.

Framework of Influences on Enterprise Growth

Smallbone & Wyer (2006) have developed a framework (*Figure 1*), which suggest that growth is influenced by the characteristics of the entrepreneur and enterprise, management strategy and external business environment. The *entrepreneur traits* include motivation, previous management experience, demographics of the entrepreneur (e.g. age, and education) and the number of entrepreneurs involved (e.g. entrepreneurial team skills, experiences and resource availability). The authors of this paper observed that most of the businesses owned by indigenous Batswana usually have limited entrepreneurial traits. For example, those who have motivation may be found lacking the necessary management experience or technical expertise. It is however observed that whilst some of the SMEs in Botswana failed to grow due to lack of owner/manager drive or strong motivation, the majority of these ventures growth potential was hampered by lack of resources, while some failed due to entrepreneurs groundless fears of losing control (Kuratko, 2014). The *enterprise characteristics* include the legal form of business ownership (e.g. sole proprietorship, partnership, etc.), the firm's age and size. For example, as stated above, most small sized firms in Botswana often find it difficult to grow due to resources (e.g. financial, space, skills, etc.) constraints. According to Smallbone & Myer (2006) *Management strategy* is characterized by senior management decisions and actions although most often by the team's agility and individual manager's alignment or misalignment to strategy implementation. These strategic decisions often include the firm's market position (e.g. niche market), introduction of new products and services (e.g. continuous innovation), and decentralization of decision making to non-managerial staff (e.g. modification of the organization structure), changes in reward system, additional funding and strategic collaborations.

Figure 1: Framework of Influences on Enterprise Growth



Source: A Smallbone,and Wyer (2006)

It has further been observed that unlike owner-managed entrepreneurs, most managers have little say in the strategic matters of the firm, only the owners make strategic decisions, and the managers implement such decisions. The *business environment* on the other hand covers factors that create opportunities for the firms or threaten their existence. Such factors include market/industry sector (e.g. market/industry attractiveness as reflected by the potential growth in profits), competitive forces (e.g. Porter's Five Forces), and strategic location as characterized by economic health of the local population. In business, location is always emphasized, because if the firm's location is not for any reason perceived as strategic, it may lose business due to less patronization by both existing and prospective customers. The city/town or district councils in Botswana have relieved business community from the stress of searching for strategic location through zoning of business locations. This is notwithstanding that some of the citizen entrepreneurs' persistence to operate commercialized activities in residential zoned areas.

Integrating Strategy with Execution Infrastructure

Liabotis (2007) model (Figure 2) suggests that increasing the probability of success and achieving growth may be increased in two ways, that is, by way of (i) *strengthening the execution infrastructure by investing in 'safe bets'* which requires eliminating departmental or regional silos, utilizing leading indicators and performance drivers that align with the strategy and growing

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leaders at all levels – managerial and non-managerial; and (ii) *initiating a process to identify strategies with a high probability for success.*

Figure 2: Integrating Strategy with Execution Infrastructure

Source: B. Liabotis, May 2007

The model proposes three customer growth strategies, namely, growing the core business, growing by sub-segmenting customers and growing adjacent opportunities. Growing core business involves identifying profitable growth opportunities in products, services, customers, channels and geographic areas that generate the largest proportion of revenue and profits; and evaluation of the overall performance of the core business by way of measuring and benchmarking profitability, rate of revenue growth and the firm's reputation with its most important customers.. Further that the firm's top management should begin the process by determining the growth potential within the core business and thereafter explore the adjacent opportunities before growth potential associated with creating innovative value propositions for underserved customer groups. To refocus on the core business, the firm needs to define three market platforms on which the core business is based, eliminate products and markets that did not fit on these platforms, add new products to augment the core and lastly, strengthen market coverage with significant investments in the two major channels, namely, the sales depots and the firm's website. This customer-focused growth strategy is based on the firm's existing customers and involves creating high impact value propositions for new customer sub-segments with view to seeing customers through a different set of lenses. Another alternative is to consider the non-core businesses of the firm to investigate if there is potential to leverage present positions into attractive growth opportunities.

Liabotis (2007) adds that as the firm's senior leadership team moves through this process, it will become clear if and when adjacent growth options should be considered. However, it all depends on several factors including but not restricted to (i) winning the commitment of key employees at all levels, individuals who are willing to step forward and lead (ii) a renewed commitment to operational excellence within the core business, (iii) insightful conversations on the growth potential of the core business, and/or (iv) an urgent need to make significant changes to the core or even a plan for abandoning the present core and exploring more profitable growth options in the non-core businesses of the firm. This is notwithstanding the fact that some leaders choose to look at adjacent growth options in an opportunistic manner as one-offs, which most often results in disappointment. The author further suggests that a process can be created to assist both managers and specialists in discovering underserved customer groups and hidden growth opportunities. This may be done by sub-segmenting existing customer groups based on newly discovered needs, buying patterns and contribution to profits and/or revenue; creating innovative and high-impact value propositions for the most attractive sub-segments, field-testing the new value propositions and scaling-up based on the results of field tests. Further that, senior management who frequently interact with customers can make a significant contribution to this process.

In order to increase the chances of successful implementation of the three customer-focused growth strategies, the firm requires an adequate supporting infrastructure. The organization capabilities are required to successfully entering new markets, create excellent new products or services which appeal to customers, and to provide an outstanding level of customer service. Because these capabilities also serves as the firm's competitive-edge against its rivals, they should be highly visible to key individuals within the customer organization, and acknowledged as providing exceptional value and difficult for present and potential competitors to replicate. For this reason, it is imperative that senior managers clarify, assess and continually strengthen their organization's strategic capabilities. The performance management system and scorecard is the other supporting infrastructure. This is premised on the belief that "*what gets measured gets done*". The process starts by answering the question, what should be measured and why? The measuring process starts with development of scorecards which illustrate key strategic relationships between the desired performance outcomes such as revenue and profit growth and the drivers of performance such as new market entry, service quality, customer loyalty, employee engagement, etc. Performance of both individuals and departments (or regions) is directly linked to the growth strategy and successful execution, and the company scorecards provide a balanced perspective based on the needs of key stakeholders groups and major organizational processes such as internal operations, value provided to customers and employee development. This is notwithstanding the fact that precise measurements are not always possible thereby calling for proxy indicators to be established in a thoughtful and open manner to ensure that the firm's performance is measured. This is followed by questions such as how and when will performance be measured, how will those directly responsible access the performance measurement and what follow-up action, and if any, is necessary? The focus is on measuring and monitoring leading indicators such as the drivers of customer loyalty, employee engagement and financial results. This process cuts across the entire organization as it requires soliciting input from all employees before these measures are set and monitored, and appropriate action undertaken to continually improve performance. The third supportive infrastructure is the firm's leadership, and this comprises of both titled and non-titled, non-managerial positions. Together these leaders irrespective of hierarchical positions create a network that reflects the very essence of their organization. They are solely responsible for the success and/or failure of their organization.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that business expansion is a natural by-product of a successful startup and/or any small business, but Kuratko (2014) cautions that growth requires a successful strategy, not the strategy followed in the past. Wheelen & Hunger (2012) concur that a business strategy helps enterprises to improve their competitive status and determines the performance of businesses in the industry. Thus, growth is not an option for businesses to survive especially for emerging industries but a necessity for continuous monitoring of technological changes and developmental trends. Kuratko (2014) posits that whilst there is strong motivation for business growth, some entrepreneurs still shy away from growth because of fear losing control and that some businesses falter during rapid growth partly due to the enormous demand placed on company resources and sometimes due to absence of a growth strategy plan. Liabotis, (2007) raise an issue of strategic alignment between strategy and infrastructure. The authors add that inadequate consideration of opportunities within the core business, adjacent to the core business or within new customer sub-segments coupled with an organizational infrastructure that cannot support successful execution will also contribute to enterprise failure to achieve their growth goals. Barringer & Ireland (2016) recommends three things a business can do to prepare and plan for growth, and these are (a) *appreciate the nature of business growth* because not all businesses have the potential to be aggressive growth firms and although a business can grow too fast sometimes business success doesn't always scale. Secondly, *stay committed to a core strategy and not lose sight of it* because if a business becomes distracted or starts pursuing every opportunity for growth that it's presented, it can easily stray into areas where it's at a disadvantage. Lastly, businesses should *plan for growth* by establishing growth-related plans, write a business plan and determine as soon as possible, what its growth strategies would be. It cannot be argued that SMEs in Botswana seldom strategize, and thus the majority may be reluctant to adopt *Liabotis (2007*) for its seemingly sophisticated nature. However, Smallbone and Wyer (2006) Framework of Influences on Enterprise Growth appears most suitable and appropriate for Botswana SMEs. It is much simpler to understand and apply even to a micro business.

It is therefore not wrong to conclude that besides the personality traits of the entrepreneurs, the firm's competitiveness and sustainability is greatly influenced by diverse factors including but not limited to the enterprise type, management strategy, business environment, the country's governing laws, the level and robustness of entrepreneurial activity within the country, the solidity of the strategy executing infrastructure and financial support as well as emerging technological changes and globalisation changes. Further that it is imperative that all SMEs regardless of size must be alive to all these factors as they greatly influence their probability of success. Owner/managers (Botswana inclusive) should develop strategic approaches to mitigate those factors that threatens their enterprise existence.

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