



Research Article

Driving the Performance of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Through Learning Orientation: Empirical Insights from Wajir County, Kenya

Najma Yussuf Abdikadir , Godfrey Muigai Kinyua*

Department of Business Administration, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are important contributors to economic growth, employment creation, and poverty alleviation in both developed and developing economies. In Kenya, SMEs are estimated to constitute 98% of all businesses and generate approximately 30% of annual employment. However, a substantial proportion fail within their first five years of operation, raising concerns about the sustainability of the sector. Learning orientation, defined as the extent to which an organization institutionalizes processes of knowledge acquisition, dissemination, and application, has been identified as an important organizational capability associated with SME performance, although empirical evidence remains inconsistent across contexts. This study sought to establish the influence of learning orientation on the performance of SMEs in Wajir County, Kenya. The study was anchored on Dynamic Capabilities Theory and Growth of the Firm Theory and adopted an explanatory research design. The target population comprised 9,717 registered SMEs operating across eight business sectors in Wajir County, from which a sample of 385 owners and managers was selected using stratified sampling. Data were collected using semi-structured questionnaires comprising closed- and open-ended items, with the closed-ended items measured on a five-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS version 24. Of the 385 questionnaires distributed, 320 were duly completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 83.1%. The findings revealed that SMEs in Wajir County moderately embraced learning orientation practices ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 0.52$), with the greatest emphasis placed on encouraging employee and customer feedback and the least on cultivating a shared mental model of future goals. Learning orientation exhibited a positive and statistically significant correlation with organizational performance ($r = .534$, $p < .01$) and a positive and statistically significant regression coefficient ($\beta = .362$, $t = 6.400$, $p < .001$). The regression model explained 47.5% of the variation in organizational performance ($R^2 = .475$, $F = 95.207$, $p < .001$). The study concludes that learning orientation is positively and significantly associated with SME performance in Wajir County. It recommends that SME owners and managers institutionalize continuous learning through regular training, mentorship, feedback mechanisms, and structured knowledge-sharing practices, while strengthening shared understanding of organizational goals to enhance adaptability, innovation, and long-term performance.

Keywords

Learning Orientation, Organizational Performance, Small and Medium Enterprises

*Correspondence: Godfrey Muigai Kinyua (Kinyua.godfrey@ku.ac.ke)

Received: 30 September 2026; Accepted: 13 October 2026; Published: 23 October 2026



Copyright: © The Author(s), 2026. Published by Science Publishing Group. This is an **Open Access** article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

1. Introduction

Organizational performance remains one of the most widely examined constructs in management literature and serves as a critical indicator of how effectively firms achieve their objectives under changing operating conditions [38]. It is commonly assessed using dimensions such as profitability, market share, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction, and is closely associated with how firms deploy their resources, competencies, and strategic capabilities to achieve and sustain competitive advantage [4, 16]. Organizational performance is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include innovation capability, leadership, organizational processes, and resource utilization, while external factors include market dynamics, regulatory conditions, technological developments, and changes in customer preferences [34, 38].

Within the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) sector, organizational performance is particularly sensitive to an operating environment characterized by intensifying competition, rapid technological change, and evolving consumer demands. These conditions require SME owners and managers to continuously reassess and adapt their strategic practices [14]. SMEs occupy a central position in the global economy, accounting for the majority of business establishments and contributing substantially to employment in both developed and developing economies [34]. In the European Union, for example, SMEs account for more than 99% of registered businesses, with the majority employing fewer than ten people, underscoring their contribution to economic activity and employment creation [10].

In developing economies, SMEs have demonstrated considerable versatility and adaptability, often responding to market opportunities and filling gaps left by larger enterprises [13, 26]. Nevertheless, SME performance in many African economies remains constrained by limited access to finance, inadequate technology adoption, weak market linkages, and gaps in entrepreneurial and managerial capabilities [37]. In East Africa, inadequate capital, restricted market access, and technological limitations continue to pose challenges to SME performance despite the sector's important contribution to industrialization, employment creation, and economic development [26, 30]. These challenges highlight the need for strategic capabilities that enable SMEs to acquire, develop, and utilize knowledge in responding effectively to changing operating environments [12].

In Kenya, SMEs are estimated to support approximately 11 million livelihoods and to sustain a relatively high labour intensity compared with large enterprises, making the sector an important pillar of inclusive economic growth [9, 17]. Despite this contribution, many Kenyan SMEs experience difficulties in sustaining their operations and achieving desired levels of performance [17]. These challenges have been associated with factors such as intense competition, limited resources, and weaknesses in strategic and managerial practices [19, 29, 33].

The performance of SMEs in Wajir County is of particular research interest because enterprises in the county operate within an arid and semi-arid environment and may additionally contend with constrained market linkages, limited operating hours, and periodic security-related disruptions [8]. Such contextual conditions underscore the importance of examining strategic capabilities that can enhance SMEs' ability to adapt and sustain performance [44].

Among the strategic capabilities through which firms can respond to changing operating environments, learning orientation has attracted considerable scholarly attention [3, 6]. Learning orientation reflects an organization's fundamental disposition towards learning and the extent to which learning processes are embedded in its organizational practices and culture [40]. It encompasses the organization's capacity and willingness to acquire, disseminate, interpret, and apply knowledge in ways that support organizational activities and strategic decision-making [6, 43]. Learning orientation is therefore closely associated with how firms respond to information about customers, competitors, technologies, and broader market developments [2, 3].

The literature has conceptualized learning orientation in various ways, but common dimensions include commitment to learning, shared vision, open-mindedness, and intra-organizational knowledge sharing [6, 40]. These dimensions reflect an organization's willingness to invest in learning, develop a collective understanding of organizational goals, question established assumptions, and facilitate the dissemination and utilization of knowledge across the organization [6]. In the SME context, such practices can enable firms to identify emerging opportunities, respond to changing customer requirements, improve products and services, and adapt their strategies to competitive and environmental changes [1, 43]. However, the extent to which learning orientation contributes to SME performance may vary across organizational and contextual settings, creating a need for further empirical investigation, particularly in relatively under-researched environments such as Wajir County, Kenya [32, 39].

2. Statement of the Problem

Although SMEs play an important role in employment creation and economic development in Kenya, their performance and long-term sustainability continue to face significant challenges [17]. Inadequate access to capital, limited market opportunities, poor infrastructure, inadequate knowledge and skills, rapid technological change, limited product diversity, low product quality, and unfavourable regulatory conditions have been identified as persistent constraints affecting SME performance [9, 26]. National statistics further indicate that a substantial proportion of micro, small, and medium enterprises fail to survive beyond their early years of operation, with only a small proportion remaining in business beyond

five years [17]. This presents a significant concern given the sector's contribution to the Kenyan economy, including its estimated contribution of approximately 3% to national gross domestic product (GDP), representation of about 98% of businesses, and contribution of roughly 30% of annual employment [7, 18].

Various policy and economic reports have consequently emphasized interventions such as managerial training, knowledge development, supportive regulation, and government assistance as mechanisms for improving SME performance. Within this context, learning orientation has attracted attention as an organizational capability through which firms can continuously acquire, share, interpret, and apply knowledge to respond to changing environmental conditions and improve organizational outcomes. However, empirical evidence regarding the specific contribution of learning orientation to organizational performance remains inconclusive. For instance, Kwambai [24] found that learning orientation was positively associated with the performance of floriculture farms in Naivasha Sub-County, although the study was limited to a specific agricultural subsector. Similarly, Kimani [19] established that learning orientation enhanced the internalization of customer needs and enabled clearing and forwarding firms to anticipate market changes, but the study focused exclusively on the clearing and forwarding industry. Outside Kenya, Obeidat [32] reported that learning orientation significantly enhanced organizational creativity among telecommunications firms in Jordan but did not exert a direct effect on performance, with creativity mediating the relationship. Shahtahmasbi and Bonab [39], meanwhile, found that learn-

ing orientation influenced the development of manager-oriented social capital among cellulose and hygiene product firms in Iran, with the relationship varying according to competitive intensity and environmental instability.

Although these studies provide useful insights into the role of learning orientation, they reveal differences in the outcomes associated with learning orientation and are predominantly concentrated in specific industries and organizational settings. Moreover, evidence from Kenya remains limited, particularly regarding SMEs operating in geographically and economically distinctive environments. No identified study has specifically examined the relationship between learning orientation and the performance of SMEs in Wajir County, an arid and semi-arid region where enterprises operate under distinctive market, infrastructural, and security-related conditions. Consequently, a contextual and empirical gap exists regarding whether and to what extent learning orientation contributes to SME performance in Wajir County. The absence of context-specific empirical evidence limits understanding of whether learning-oriented practices can enable SMEs operating in such an environment to improve their organizational performance. The present study therefore sought to establish the influence of learning orientation on the performance of SMEs in Wajir County, Kenya.

3. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual model illustrating the hypothesized relationship between learning orientation and organizational performance is presented in Figure 1.

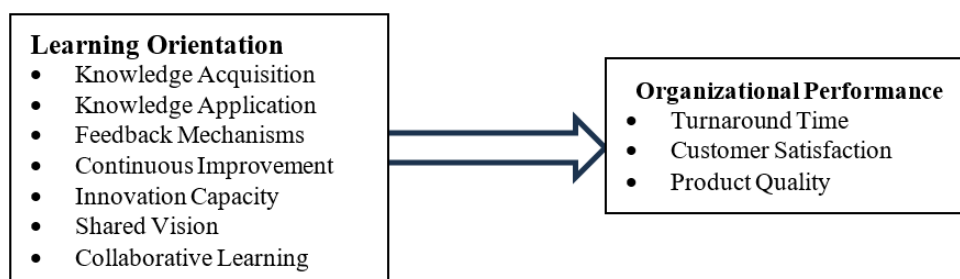


Figure 1. Conceptual Model.

3.1. Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was to establish the influence of learning orientation on the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Wajir County, Kenya.

3.2. Research Hypotheses

The research hypothesis for the study was formulated in both null and alternative forms.

H₀: Learning orientation does not significantly influence

the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Wajir County, Kenya.

H₁: Learning orientation significantly influences the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Wajir County, Kenya.

4. Theoretical Literature Review

Relevant theoretical literature was examined to establish a sound theoretical foundation for the key concepts and the hypothesized relationship between the concepts.

4.1. Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Dynamic Capabilities Theory provides a useful theoretical explanation of how learning orientation can contribute to organizational performance [42]. While learning orientation reflects an organization's disposition and practices toward acquiring, sharing, interpreting, and applying knowledge, dynamic capabilities refer to the firm's capacity to sense changes in the environment, seize emerging opportunities, and reconfigure its resources and processes in response to those changes [41]. Learning orientation can therefore contribute to the development and renewal of dynamic capabilities by enabling firms to continuously acquire and utilize knowledge about customers, competitors, technologies, and other environmental changes [45]. Through such learning processes, firms can improve their ability to recognize emerging opportunities and threats, develop appropriate responses, and reconfigure their resources and processes as circumstances change [11].

This relationship is particularly relevant to SMEs, which often operate with limited resources and face considerable environmental uncertainty [14]. By fostering continuous learning, feedback-seeking, knowledge sharing, innovation, and a shared strategic vision, SMEs can strengthen their capacity to adapt to changing customer needs and competitive conditions [44]. Such adaptive capacity can enhance product and service quality, innovation, customer satisfaction, resource utilization, and ultimately organizational performance [21, 41]. Dynamic Capabilities Theory therefore provides a suitable theoretical foundation for explaining why SMEs with stronger learning orientations may be better positioned to adapt to environmental changes and achieve improved performance [11, 28, 42].

4.2. Growth of the Firm Theory

The Growth of the Firm Theory, developed by Penrose [36], conceptualizes the firm as an administrative organization whose growth is shaped by the productive opportunities perceived and pursued by its managers. The theory views firm growth as a process through which managers utilize existing resources, develop new capabilities, and identify opportunities for deploying resources in productive ways [22]. Penrose argued that resources themselves do not determine the growth of a firm; rather, the knowledge, experience, and managerial services available within the firm influence how resources are utilized and the opportunities that can be pursued [36]. As firms accumulate experience and knowledge, they can generate new productive services from existing resources and explore new products, markets, and activities [22]. Growth is therefore viewed as a dynamic process arising from the interaction between a firm's resources, managerial capabilities, knowledge, and perceived productive opportunities [22, 36].

The Growth of the Firm Theory provides a relevant basis for explaining the relationship between learning orientation and SME performance [22]. Learning enables firms to expand their knowledge base, develop managerial capabilities, and identify new ways of utilizing existing resources [36]. SMEs

that continuously acquire, share, and apply knowledge can recognize emerging productive opportunities, improve existing products and services, respond to changing customer requirements, and develop new market opportunities [6, 43]. In this respect, learning orientation can enhance the ability of SMEs to convert existing and underutilized resources into productive services that contribute to improved organizational outcomes [4, 36].

Within the context of the present study, the Growth of the Firm Theory provides a theoretical basis for understanding organizational performance as an outcome of how SMEs utilize their resources, knowledge, and managerial capabilities to pursue productive opportunities [36]. A strong learning orientation can enable SME owners and managers to continuously develop their knowledge and capabilities and apply them to improving operational processes, product quality, customer satisfaction, and other aspects of organizational performance [16, 43]. The theory therefore complements Dynamic Capabilities Theory by explaining how knowledge and managerial resources can be transformed into productive opportunities and performance outcomes within SMEs in Wajir County [22, 41].

5. Empirical Review

The reviewed empirical studies provide evidence that learning orientation is associated with various organizational outcomes, but they also reveal important differences in the nature and direction of these relationships. Kwambai [24] established a positive association between learning orientation and organizational performance among floriculture farms in Kenya, while Kimani [19] demonstrated that learning orientation enhanced knowledge generation, understanding of customer needs, anticipation of market changes, and strategic decision-making among clearing and forwarding SMEs. In contrast, Obeidat [32] found that learning orientation did not directly influence organizational performance but exerted an indirect effect through organizational creativity. Shahtahmasbi and Bonab [39] linked learning orientation to manager-oriented social capital, with aspects of the relationship varying according to competitive intensity and environmental instability.

Despite these contributions, the existing evidence presents three important gaps. First, a contextual gap exists because much of the available evidence has been generated from specific geographical settings, including Naivasha in Kenya, Jordan, and Iran, with limited empirical attention to SMEs in Wajir County. Second, a sectoral gap is evident because previous studies have predominantly focused on specific industries, such as floriculture, clearing and forwarding, telecommunications, and cellulose and hygiene products. This limits understanding of whether the observed relationships apply across a more diverse population of SMEs operating under different business conditions. Third, an empirical gap remains concerning the direct relationship between learning orientation and organizational performance. Whereas

some studies have reported direct relationships, others have identified indirect effects or examined alternative organizational outcomes such as creativity and social capital.

The present study addresses these gaps by examining the influence of learning orientation on organizational performance among SMEs operating across multiple business sectors in Wajir County, Kenya. The study therefore extends existing empirical evidence by providing context-specific evidence on whether learning orientation contributes directly to SME performance in an arid and semi-arid county characterized by distinctive market, infrastructural, and operating conditions. Organizational performance is examined using indicators of turnaround time, customer satisfaction, and product quality, thereby providing evidence on the practical performance implications of learning-oriented practices within the SME context.

6. Research Methodology

The study adopted an appropriate research methodology and employed systematic procedures for the collection, organization, analysis, presentation, and interpretation of data.

6.1. Research Design

A research design is a systematic and logical plan or blueprint adopted in an inquiry to guide the process of answering research questions [5]. An explanatory research design was adopted because it facilitates the examination of hypothesized relationships among research variables and provides a basis for assessing the direction and strength of their relationships [23]. The design was considered appropriate for examining the relationship between learning orientation and the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Wajir County, Kenya. However, because the data were collected at a single point in time (cross-sectional), the findings are interpreted as associations rather than as evidence of causality. Explanatory research design has also been applied in addressing research questions in the field of management [20, 25, 27, 31].

6.2. Target Population

The target population comprised registered small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in Wajir County. The SME constituted the unit of analysis, while the owners or managers responsible for the day-to-day operation of the enterprises constituted the units of observation.

Table 1. Target Population.

SME Sector	Population
Wholesale and Retail Traders	401
Transport	523

SME Sector	Population
Hospitality	814
Catering	689
Entertainment	1,241
Pharmaceuticals and Health Services	2,140
Technology	1,452
Consultancy Services	2,457
Total	9,717

Source: Wajir County Licensing Department (2025).

Eligibility for inclusion in the study required an SME to hold a valid trading licence issued by the Wajir County Government. The SMEs were categorized into eight subsector clusters based on business codes: Wholesale and Retail Trade; Transport; Hospitality; Catering; Entertainment; Pharmaceuticals and Health Services; Technology; and Consultancy Services. This classification provided a basis for ensuring representation of the diverse business activities operating in the county. According to records from the Wajir County Licensing Department, 9,717 SMEs were registered across the eight subsectors during the study period.

6.3. Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The study employed stratified sampling to select respondents from registered SMEs operating in Wajir County. The sampling frame comprised the 9,717 registered SMEs, with owners or managers serving as the respondents.

Table 2. Sample Size Distribution.

SME Sector	Sample Size
Wholesale and Retail Traders	16
Transport	21
Hospitality	32
Catering	27
Entertainment	49
Pharmaceuticals and Health Services	85
Technology	58
Consultancy Services	97
Total	385

Source: Researcher (2025).

Stratified sampling was employed because the SMEs operated across diverse business sectors. The SMEs were categorized into eight strata based on business sector to ensure adequate representation of the different subgroups within the target population. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula at a 5% margin of error, yielding a total sample of 385 respondents. The sample was then proportionately allocated across the eight sectors according to the number of registered SMEs in each stratum. This approach ensured that each sector was represented in proportion to its size within the target population and enhanced the representativeness of the sample.

6.4. Data Collection Instrument

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising closed-ended items to obtain quantitative data, respectively. The closed-ended items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire was organized into sections covering respondents' demographic characteristics, learning orientation, and organizational performance. The instrument was considered appropriate because it facilitated standardized and systematic collection of quantitative data while providing respondents with an opportunity to express additional views and perspectives through open-ended items.

6.5. Pilot Testing

A pilot study was conducted to assess the clarity, relevance, and suitability of the questionnaire before the main data collection. Specifically, the pilot test sought to identify and rectify ambiguous or confusing questions, correct typographical errors, and assess the relevance of the questionnaire items to the study objectives. The pilot study involved 39 SMEs, representing approximately 10% of the total sample size, selected through random sampling. The pilot exercise provided an opportunity to identify potential weaknesses in the questionnaire and make the necessary revisions before its administration in the main study.

6.5.1. Validity of the Research Instrument

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument accurately measures the constructs it is intended to measure. In this study, face and content validity were assessed. Face validity was evaluated during the pilot study by examining the clarity, comprehensibility, and absence of ambiguity in the questionnaire items. Content validity was established through a review of the instrument by experts, including the university supervisor, and through refinement of the questionnaire based on their feedback and the findings of the pilot study. These procedures helped ensure that the questionnaire adequately and comprehensively covered the relevant dimensions of learning orientation and organizational performance.

6.5.2. Reliability of the Research Instrument

Reliability refers to the consistency of a research instrument in producing stable and consistent measurements under similar conditions. In this study, internal consistency reliability was assessed during the main study using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The coefficient evaluates the extent to which items intended to measure the same construct are consistently related to one another. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or higher was considered acceptable, consistent with the commonly applied threshold for research in the social sciences.

6.6. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher first obtained research authorization from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and an introductory letter from Kenyatta University. The questionnaires were then physically distributed to the selected respondents using the drop-and-collect method. Respondents were allowed approximately 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire and were given a maximum of three days to return the completed instruments. Follow-up efforts, including telephone calls, email reminders, and text messages, were undertaken to encourage timely completion and return of the questionnaires.

6.7. Data Analysis and Presentation

Completed questionnaires were organized, coded, and reviewed for completeness and accuracy before analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24, using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Inferential analysis comprised Pearson correlation and simple linear regression. Pearson correlation was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between learning orientation and organizational performance, while simple linear regression was employed to assess the extent to which learning orientation predicted organizational performance and to determine the statistical significance of the relationship.

The regression model was specified as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

where:

Y = Organizational Performance

X_1 = Learning Orientation

β_0 = Constant

β_1 = Regression coefficient for Learning Orientation

ε = Error term

Statistical significance was tested at a 95% confidence level and a 5% level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$). Consistent with the specific objective of the study, the analysis and interpretation of the regression results focused on the coefficient for learning orientation (β_1), which indicates the direction, magnitude, and

statistical significance of its relationship with organizational performance.

6.8. Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to the ethical principles governing academic research and complied with the regulations of the Kenyatta University Graduate School. Prior to data collection, the researcher presented an authorization letter from the Graduate School and a research permit from NACOSTI to legitimize the study. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents through direct communication supported by the university's authorization letter. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process, and a summary of the research findings was made available to participants upon completion of the study.

7. Research Findings and Discussions

The survey data were analyzed in accordance with the adopted methodological approach, and the findings were interpreted and discussed in relation to the study objective.

7.1. Response Rate

A total of 385 questionnaires were distributed to the sampled SME owners and managers in Wajir County. Of these, 320 were duly completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 83.1%. [Table 3](#) presents a summary of the questionnaire response rate.

Table 3. Response Rate.

Category	Frequency / Percentage
Issued Questionnaires	385 (100.0%)
Returned Questionnaires	320 (83.1%)
Not Returned Questionnaires	65 (16.9%)

Source: Researcher (2026).

The response rate of 83.1% exceeded the commonly recommended minimum of 50% for social science research and was considered adequate for the analysis undertaken in the study. The relatively high response rate was attributed to the use of the drop-and-collect approach and the follow-up efforts undertaken by the researcher, including telephone calls, email reminders, and text messages, which encouraged timely completion and return of the questionnaires. The high response rate, together with the adopted sampling procedure, enhanced the adequacy of the achieved sample for making inferences about the target population.

7.2. Biographical Characteristics of the Respondents

[Table 4](#) presents the biographical characteristics of the respondents, including gender, age, highest level of education, and duration of SME operation. These characteristics provide contextual information for interpreting the study findings and describing the profile of the respondents. The frequencies and percentages are based on the 320 valid responses obtained.

Table 4. Biographical Characteristics of the Respondents.

Variable / Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	214	66.9
Female	106	33.1
Age Bracket (Years)		
Below 25	22	6.9
25–34	97	30.3
35–44	132	41.3
45–54	48	15.0
55 and above	21	6.6
Highest Level of Education		
Primary	29	9.1
Secondary	127	39.7

Variable / Category	Frequency	Percent
Diploma/Certificate	91	28.4
Bachelor's Degree	54	16.9
Postgraduate Degree	19	5.9
Duration of SME Operation		
Less than 1 year	23	7.2
1–3 years	77	24.1
4–6 years	96	30.0
7–10 years	71	22.2
Over 10 years	53	16.6

Source: Researcher (2026).

The gender distribution indicates that male respondents constituted 66.9% of the sample, while female respondents accounted for 33.1%. This distribution indicates that men constituted a larger proportion of the owners or managers represented in the study than women. The observed gender distribution may be interpreted within the broader social and economic context of SME ownership and management in Wajir County, although the descriptive data alone do not establish the factors underlying this pattern. With respect to age, the largest proportion of respondents (41.3%) was aged between 35 and 44 years, followed by those aged 25 to 34 years (30.3%). This indicates that a substantial proportion of the respondents were within the 25–44-year age range, suggesting that SME ownership and management in the sampled population was largely represented by adults in these age groups.

In terms of educational attainment, 39.7% of respondents had completed secondary education, 28.4% held a diploma or certificate, 16.9% held a bachelor's degree, and 5.9% had attained postgraduate qualifications. These findings indicate that the majority of respondents had attained at least secondary-level education. The educational profile provides useful context for interpreting the respondents' capacity to understand and respond to questions concerning learning orienta-

tion and organizational performance, although educational attainment alone does not establish levels of financial literacy or managerial capability. Regarding duration of operation, 30.0% of the sampled SMEs had been in operation for four to six years, while 22.2% had operated for seven to ten years. The findings indicate that a substantial proportion of the sampled enterprises had operated for more than three years, suggesting that the sample included a considerable number of relatively established SMEs. This provides an important contextual consideration when interpreting the findings on learning orientation and organizational performance.

7.3. Learning Orientation

This subsection presents the descriptive analysis of learning orientation among SMEs in Wajir County. The construct captures the extent to which SMEs emphasize continuous learning through knowledge acquisition and application, encourage feedback and knowledge sharing, support innovation, and develop a shared strategic vision. Table 5 presents the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and coefficient of variation (CV) for each item, providing an assessment of the level of learning orientation and the degree of consistency in respondents' perceptions.

Table 5. Learning Orientation.

Statements	M	SD	CV (%)
The SME consistently generates, acquires, and applies new knowledge to improve business processes and outcomes.	3.29	0.47	14.29
Learning orientation has enhanced our ability to anticipate and adapt to changes in the market and environment.	3.41	0.52	15.25
The organization actively encourages employees and customers to provide feedback and constructive suggestions for improvement.	3.58	0.55	15.36

Statements	M	SD	CV (%)
Our SME's learning orientation has significantly increased its capacity for innovation and new product development.	3.36	0.51	15.18
There exists a shared mental model among members regarding the SME's future goals and strategic direction.	3.24	0.49	15.12
All members of the SME work collaboratively towards achieving the agreed-upon future vision and objectives.	3.32	0.54	16.27
The SME regularly evaluates daily operations and is open to adopting new ideas and improvements from within and outside the firm.	3.48	0.50	14.37
Our firm maintains a culture of continuously questioning existing practices and actively seeking better alternatives.	3.37	0.53	15.73
Knowledge transfer across the organization has measurably enhanced our overall business performance.	3.26	0.52	15.95
Organizational knowledge sharing has led to the generation of innovative ideas that improve service offerings.	3.44	0.55	15.99
Aggregate Score	3.38	0.52	15.38

Source: Researcher (2026).

Table 5 shows that SMEs in Wajir County demonstrated a moderate level of learning orientation, as indicated by an aggregate mean of 3.38 (SD = 0.52; CV = 15.38%). The relatively low coefficient of variation indicates a reasonable degree of consistency in respondents' perceptions across the learning orientation items. The findings suggest that learning-oriented practices were present among the sampled SMEs, although their adoption was not particularly strong across all dimensions.

The highest mean score was recorded for the statement that the organization actively encourages employees and customers to provide feedback and constructive suggestions for improvement (M = 3.58; SD = 0.55; CV = 15.36%). This finding indicates that seeking feedback from employees and customers was the most strongly reported learning-oriented practice among the sampled SMEs. The finding is consistent with Okoroagu, Nnabugwu, and Rejoice [35], who observed that learning-oriented firms are more likely to generate innovative solutions that enhance customer satisfaction and firm performance. The statement concerning regular evaluation of daily operations and openness to new ideas recorded the second-highest mean score (M = 3.48; SD = 0.50; CV = 14.37%). This further suggests that the sampled SMEs exhibited a relatively strong orientation towards reviewing their operations and considering new ideas.

Organizational knowledge sharing leading to innovative service ideas also recorded a relatively high mean score (M = 3.44; SD = 0.55; CV = 15.99%), as did the ability to adapt to market and environmental changes (M = 3.41; SD = 0.52; CV = 15.25%). These findings indicate that knowledge sharing and adaptability were relatively prominent aspects of learning

orientation among the sampled SMEs. The findings are consistent with Al-Ansaari, Bederr, and Chen [1], who emphasized the role of a learning-oriented culture in enhancing SMEs' capacity to respond to environmental uncertainty and sustain growth. They also accord with Iragena and Mulyungi [15], who reported that knowledge-driven adaptability can strengthen competitive advantage and facilitate alignment between business strategies and changing market needs.

The lowest mean score was recorded for the statement concerning the existence of a shared mental model among organizational members regarding the SME's future goals and strategic direction (M = 3.24; SD = 0.49; CV = 15.12%). This was followed by the consistent generation, acquisition, and application of new knowledge to improve business processes (M = 3.29; SD = 0.47; CV = 14.29%) and the extent to which knowledge transfer measurably enhanced overall business performance (M = 3.26; SD = 0.52; CV = 15.95%). These findings suggest that, relative to other learning-oriented practices, the development of a shared strategic vision and the systematic translation of knowledge into improved processes and performance were less strongly emphasized among the sampled SMEs. Nduati and Kavale [29] similarly emphasized the importance of shared values and coordinated learning processes in strengthening organizational adaptability and long-term competitiveness.

Overall, the findings indicate that SMEs in Wajir County exhibited a moderate level of learning orientation, with relatively greater emphasis on feedback, operational review, knowledge sharing, and adaptability than on shared strategic vision and the systematic application of knowledge. The relatively lower ratings for these latter practices suggest areas in

which learning-oriented processes could be further strengthened. In particular, greater emphasis on developing a shared strategic direction and systematically translating acquired knowledge into organizational improvements may help SMEs align learning activities more closely with their operational and performance objectives.

7.4. Organizational Performance

This subsection presents the descriptive analysis of organi-

zational performance among SMEs in Wajir County. The construct captures the extent to which SMEs achieve efficient turnaround time, customer satisfaction, and product quality. Table 6 presents the mean, standard deviation, and coefficient of variation for each item, providing an assessment of the reported level of organizational performance and the consistency of respondents' perceptions.

Table 6. Organizational Performance.

Statements	M	SD	CV (%)
The SME consistently meets its expected turnaround time for delivering products or services.	2.88	0.54	18.75
The SME has achieved improvements in turnaround time over the past five years.	3.12	0.49	15.71
Customer satisfaction levels within the SME have improved as reflected in feedback and surveys.	3.04	0.52	17.11
There is strong customer loyalty towards the SME's products and services.	2.95	0.47	15.93
The SME's products consistently meet high-quality standards recognized by customers and industry benchmarks.	2.76	0.51	18.48
The SME has maintained a steady increase in returning and new customers over the past five years.	3.22	0.55	17.08
Aggregate Score	2.99	0.51	17.06

Source: Researcher (2026).

Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics for organizational performance among SMEs in Wajir County. The overall mean score of 2.99 (SD = 0.51; CV = 17.06%) indicates a moderate level of reported organizational performance. This suggests that the sampled SMEs demonstrated some positive outcomes in turnaround time, customer satisfaction, and product quality, although performance across these dimensions was not particularly strong and areas for improvement remain.

The highest mean score was recorded for the steady increase in returning and new customers over the past five years (M = 3.22; SD = 0.55; CV = 17.08%), followed by improvement in turnaround time over the same period (M = 3.12; SD = 0.49; CV = 15.71%). These findings indicate that customer-base growth and improvements in turnaround time were relatively stronger aspects of reported SME performance. Customer satisfaction, as reflected in the use of customer feedback and surveys, recorded a moderate mean score (M = 3.04; SD = 0.52; CV = 17.11%), suggesting that customer-oriented practices were present among the sampled SMEs, although there was scope for further improvement.

The lowest mean score was recorded for the extent to which products consistently met high-quality standards recognized by customers and industry benchmarks (M = 2.76; SD = 0.51;

CV = 18.48%). This was followed by meeting expected turnaround times for the delivery of products or services (M = 2.88; SD = 0.54; CV = 18.75%). These findings indicate that product quality assurance and delivery timeliness were comparatively weaker aspects of reported SME performance. The relatively higher coefficients of variation for these two indicators also suggest greater dispersion in respondents' perceptions compared with some of the other performance indicators. Customer loyalty recorded a moderate mean score (M = 2.95; SD = 0.47; CV = 15.93%), indicating a moderate level of customer retention among the sampled SMEs.

Overall, the findings indicate that SMEs in Wajir County reported a moderate level of organizational performance, with comparatively stronger outcomes in customer-base growth and improvement in turnaround time, while product quality assurance and delivery timeliness emerged as relatively weaker areas. The findings highlight areas of performance that may warrant greater managerial attention, particularly quality assurance and reliable delivery of products and services. Taken together with the learning orientation findings presented in Table 5, these descriptive results provide a basis for the inferential analysis presented in the subsequent section.

8. Correlation and Regression Analysis

This section presents the inferential analysis undertaken to examine the relationship between learning orientation and organizational performance among SMEs in Wajir County. Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship, while simple linear regression was employed to assess the predictive relationship between learning orientation and organizational performance.

8.1. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to establish the strength and direction of the relationship between learning orientation and organizational performance among SMEs in Wajir County. Table 7 presents the correlation matrix.

Table 7. Correlation Matrix.

	Learning Orientation	Organizational Performance
Learning Orientation	1	
Organizational Performance	.534**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: Researcher (2026).

Learning orientation exhibited a positive and statistically significant correlation with organizational performance ($r = 0.534$, $p < .01$), indicating a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. This finding suggests that SMEs reporting greater emphasis on continuous knowledge acquisition, feedback, knowledge sharing, and shared strategic vision

also tended to report higher levels of organizational performance.

8.2. Regression Analysis

Organizational performance was regressed on learning orientation to assess the extent to which learning orientation predicts organizational performance. The regression results, comprising the model summary, the analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the regression coefficients, are presented in Tables 8, 9, and 10.

Table 8. Model Summary.

Statistic	Value
R	.689
R Square	.475
Adjusted R Square	.467
Std. Error of the Estimate	1.482

Predictors: (Constant), Learning Orientation.
Source: Researcher (2026).

The model summary presented in Table 8 shows a moderately strong positive relationship between learning orientation and organizational performance among SMEs in Wajir County ($R = 0.689$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.475$) indicates that learning orientation accounts for approximately 47.5% of the variation in organizational performance. The remaining 52.5% of the variation is attributable to other factors not included in the model and random error. The R^2 value indicates that the regression model explains a substantial proportion of the observed variation in organizational performance.

Table 9. ANOVA.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	742.615	3	247.538	95.207	.000
Residual	821.744	316	2.600		
Total	1564.359	319			

Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance. Predictors: (Constant), Learning Orientation.
Source: Researcher (2026).

The ANOVA output presented in Table 9 provides evidence regarding the overall statistical significance of the regression model. The F-statistic of 95.207, with a significance value of

0.000 ($p < .001$), indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. This finding suggests that the model contain-

ing learning orientation provides a statistically significant explanation of variation in organizational performance among SMEs in Wajir County. The results therefore provide evidence

that the regression model is suitable for examining the relationship between learning orientation and organizational performance.

Table 10. Regression Coefficients.

Model	β	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	9.214	1.587		5.806	.000
Learning Orientation	.416	.065	.362	6.400	.000

Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance.

Source: Researcher (2026).

The model produced the following regression equation:

Organizational Performance = 9.214 + 0.416 *Learning Orientation*

Learning orientation had a positive and statistically significant relationship with organizational performance ($B = 0.416$, $\beta = 0.362$, $t = 6.400$, $p < .001$). The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.416$) indicates that a one-unit increase in learning orientation is associated with a 0.416-unit increase in organizational performance. The statistically significant coefficient indicates that learning orientation made a significant contribution to the prediction of organizational performance among SMEs in Wajir County. Based on this finding, the null hypothesis that learning orientation does not significantly influence the performance of SMEs in Wajir County was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was supported.

The finding is consistent with Kimani [19], who found that the systematic generation and application of knowledge enhanced the capacity of Kenyan SMEs to anticipate market changes and informed strategic decision-making. It also accords with Kwambai [24], who reported a positive association between learning orientation and organizational performance among floriculture firms in Naivasha Sub-County, Kenya. However, the present finding differs in some respects from Obeidat [32], who found that learning orientation significantly enhanced organizational creativity but did not have a direct effect on organizational performance, suggesting that the performance implications of learning orientation may vary across organizational and sectoral contexts. Similarly, Shahtahmasbi and Bonab [39] found that learning orientation was associated with manager-oriented social capital, while competitive intensity and environmental instability influenced some of the relationships examined. These differences indicate that the outcomes associated with learning orientation may depend on the organizational, sectoral, and environmental context in which firms operate.

The finding can be interpreted through Dynamic Capabilities Theory and the Growth of the Firm Theory. From the perspective of Dynamic Capabilities Theory, learning orientation can contribute to SMEs' capacity to acquire and apply

knowledge, recognize changes in their operating environment, and adapt organizational processes in response to emerging opportunities and challenges. The significant positive regression coefficient provides empirical support for the relevance of this theoretical perspective in explaining the relationship between learning orientation and organizational performance. From the perspective of the Growth of the Firm Theory, continuous acquisition and development of knowledge can enable SMEs to identify productive opportunities and make more effective use of their existing resources and managerial capabilities. The finding therefore provides empirical support for the view that learning-oriented practices are associated with improved organizational performance among SMEs in Wajir County.

9. Conclusion

The objective of the study was to establish the influence of learning orientation on the performance of SMEs in Wajir County, Kenya. The findings revealed that learning orientation was positively and statistically significantly associated with organizational performance ($\beta = 0.362$, $t = 6.400$, $p < .001$), while the model explained 47.5% of the variation in organizational performance ($R^2 = 0.475$). The study therefore concludes that learning orientation is significantly associated with the performance of SMEs in Wajir County. SMEs that emphasize continuous knowledge acquisition, feedback, knowledge sharing, and the development of a shared strategic vision are better positioned to respond to changing market conditions and improve their organizational outcomes. The findings further suggest that strengthening learning-oriented practices may support improvements in turnaround time, customer satisfaction, and product quality. Overall, the study concludes that organizational learning represents an important strategic capability through which SMEs can enhance their adaptability and performance in the demanding and resource-constrained operating environment of Wajir County. Nevertheless, because the study employed a cross-sectional design, the results reflect associations rather than causal effects; future

longitudinal studies are recommended to establish the direction of causality.

10. Recommendations for Policy and Practice

With regard to learning orientation, SME owners and managers in Wajir County should foster a culture of continuous learning by organizing regular training sessions, mentorship programmes, and peer-learning activities. Knowledge sharing among employees should be actively encouraged to ensure that lessons and experiences are captured, disseminated, and applied in day-to-day operations. SMEs should also establish systematic mechanisms for obtaining and utilizing feedback from employees and customers to inform improvements in products, services, and business processes. Particular attention should be given to developing a shared understanding of the SME's future goals and strategic direction, as this aspect of learning orientation recorded a comparatively lower mean score and therefore represents an area requiring greater attention.

The national and county governments, together with business membership organizations, should complement these efforts by facilitating capacity-building programmes on knowledge management, organizational learning, and business process improvement. They should also establish platforms that connect SMEs with mentorship and peer-learning networks and strengthen partnerships with academic and training institutions to facilitate the transfer of relevant knowledge and best practices to SMEs operating in arid and semi-arid counties such as Wajir. Financial institutions should, where feasible, provide SME financing products that facilitate investment in employee training, innovation, and knowledge-based capacity development. Collectively, these measures can help SMEs strengthen their learning-oriented practices and translate organizational knowledge into improvements in operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and product quality.

Abbreviations

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CV	Coefficient of Variation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
M	Mean
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
SD	Standard Deviation
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

Author Contributions

Najma Yussuf Abdikadir: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Writing – original draft

Godfrey Muigai Kinyua: Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing – review & editing

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References

- [1] Al-Ansaari, Y., Bederr, H., & Chen, C. (2015). Strategic orientation and business performance: An empirical study in the UAE context. *Management Decision*, 53(10), 2287–2302. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-01-2015-0034>
- [2] Asha'al, N., Obeidat, B., & Alhmoud, H. (2019). A theoretical study on the impact of strategic orientation on organizational performance: Examining the mediating role of learning culture in Jordanian telecommunication companies. *Journal of Social Sciences (COES&RJ-JSS)*, 8(1), 24–40.
- [3] Baker, W. E., & Sinkula, J. M. (1999). The synergistic effect of market orientation and learning orientation on organizational performance. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 27(4), 411–427. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070399274002>
- [4] Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1), 99–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108>
- [5] Blaikie, N. (2000). *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation*. Polity Press: Cambridge, United Kingdom.
- [6] Calantone, R. J., Cavusgil, S. T., & Zhao, Y. (2002). Learning orientation, firm innovation capability, and firm performance. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 31(6), 515–524. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0019-8501\(01\)00203-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0019-8501(01)00203-6)
- [7] Central Bank of Kenya. (2019). National economic survey report. Nairobi: Central Bank of Kenya.
- [8] County Government of Wajir. (2023). Wajir County integrated development plan 2023–2027. County Government of Wajir.
- [9] Deloitte. (2018). Kenya economic outlook 2018: The future of the Kenyan economy. Nairobi: Deloitte East Africa.
- [10] Di Bella, L., Katsinis, A., Lagüera-González, J., Odenthal, L., Hell, M., & Lozar, B. (2023). Annual report on European SMEs 2022/2023: SME performance review 2022/2023. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2760/028705>
- [11] Eisenhardt, K. M., & Martin, J. A. (2000). Dynamic capabilities: What are they? *Strategic Management Journal*, 21(10–11), 1105–1121. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-0266\(200010/11\)21:10/11<1105::AID-SMJ133>3.0.CO;2-E](https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-0266(200010/11)21:10/11<1105::AID-SMJ133>3.0.CO;2-E)
- [12] Fahim, N. A., & Baharun, R. (2017). The influence of strategic orientations and innovation capability on small and micro farm performance. *International Journal of Economics and Management Systems*, 2, 7.

- [13] Gatuyu, C. M. & Kinyua, G. M. (2020). Role of Knowledge Acquisition on Firm Performance in the Context of Small and Medium Enterprises in Meru County, Kenya. *Journal of World Economic Research*, 9(1): 27-32. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.jwer.20200901.14>
- [14] Hernández-Linares, R., Kellermanns, F. W., & López-Fernández, M. C. (2021). Dynamic capabilities and SME performance: The moderating effect of market orientation. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 59(1), 162–195. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12474>
- [15] Iragena, E., & Mulyungi, P. (2017). Effect of strategic orientation on organizational performance: A case study of Sonarwa General Insurance Company Ltd. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*.
- [16] Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (2004). *Strategy maps: Converting intangible assets into tangible outcomes*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- [17] Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2016). Micro, small and medium establishment (MSME) survey: Basic report. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.
- [18] Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2018). Economic survey 2018. Nairobi: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.
- [19] Kimani, J. (2019). Effect of strategic orientation on the performance of clearing and forwarding small and medium enterprises in Kenya (Unpublished master's thesis).
- [20] Kinyua, G. M. (2015). Relationship between Knowledge Management and Performance of Commercial Banks in Kenya. Doctoral Thesis, Kenyatta University; Nairobi, Kenya.
- [21] Kinyua, M. N. & Kinyua, G. M. (2023). Understanding Firm Performance in Microfinance Banks: Does Adaptive Capability Matter? *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, 11(10): 78 – 93.
- [22] Kor, Y. Y., & Mahoney, J. T. (2004). Edith Penrose's (1959) contributions to the resource-based view of strategic management. *Journal of Management Studies*, 41(1), 183–191. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2004.00427.x>
- [23] Kumar, R. (2014). *Research Methodology: A Step-By-Step Guide for Beginners*. New Age International: New Delhi, India.
- [24] Kwambai, J. K. (2018). Effect of strategic orientation on organizational efficiency of floriculture farms in Naivasha Sub-County (Unpublished master's thesis).
- [25] Mbogo, I. K. & Kinyua, G. M. (2023). Understanding Firm Performance: Does Opportunity Sensing Capability Matter? *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, 11(11): 22-37.
- [26] Muriithi, S. M. (2017). African small and medium enterprises (SMEs) contributions, challenges and solutions. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Management Sciences*, 5(1), 36–48.
- [27] Murungi, N. K. & Kinyua, G. M. (2024). The Predictive Role of Organizational Vision on Performance of Medium-Sized Manufacturing Enterprises in Kenya. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 12(4): 11-28.
- [28] Mwangi, L. W., Kinyua, G. & Muchemi, A. (2022). Organizational Performance as an Outcome of Adaptive Capability: A Review of Literature. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, 10(1): 44-63.
- [29] Nduati, P., & Kavale, S. (2015). How does strategic orientation affect organisational competitiveness? Evidence from a large cement manufacturing firm in Kenya. *Basic Research Journal of Business Management and Accounts*, 4(5), 113–119.
- [30] Ngari, I. & Kinyua, G. M. (2025). Leveraging Computerized Information Systems for Enhanced Firm Performance: Empirical Evidence from Small and Medium Enterprises in Mombasa County, Kenya. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 13(11): 85-111.
- [31] Njuguna R. W. & Kinyua G. M. (2024). Leveraging Innovation Strategy for Firm Performance in the context of Equity Bank (K) Limited, Kenya. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 12(4): 29 – 48.
- [32] Obeidat, B. Y. (2016). Effect of strategic orientation on organizational performance: The mediating role of innovation. *International Journal of Communications, Network and System Sciences*, 9, 478–505. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ijcns.2016.911039>
- [33] Ocharo, M. O. & Kinyua, G. (2021). Firm Competitiveness in Small Medium Enterprises in Starehe Sub-County in Kenya: What Role Does Organizational Learning Play? *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, 9(11), 32-44.
- [34] OECD. (2023). OECD SME and entrepreneurship outlook 2023. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/342b8564-en>
- [35] Okoroagu, A., Nnabugwu, E. L., & Rejoice, O. E. (2019). Effect of strategic orientation on the performance of selected manufacturing firms in Enugu State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Science*, 8(9).
- [36] Penrose, E. T. (1959). *The theory of the growth of the firm*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- [37] Quartey, P., Turkson, E., Abor, J. Y., & Iddrisu, A. M. (2017). Financing the growth of SMEs in Africa: What are the constraints to SME financing within ECOWAS? *Review of Development Finance*, 7(1), 18–28. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rdf.2017.03.001>
- [38] Richard, P. J., Devinney, T. M., Yip, G. S., & Johnson, G. (2009). Measuring organizational performance: Towards methodological best practice. *Journal of Management*, 35(3), 718–804. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308330560>
- [39] Shahtahmasbi, E., & Bonab, A. F. (2017). Investigating the effect of strategic orientations on manager-oriented external social capital: Case study of the hygiene and cellulose industry. *International Journal of Business Management*, 2(2), 129–139.
- [40] Sinkula, J. M., Baker, W. E., & Noordewier, T. (1997). A framework for market-based organizational learning: Linking values, knowledge, and behavior. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 25(4), 305–318. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070397254003>

- [41] Teece, D. J. (2007). Explicating dynamic capabilities: The nature and microfoundations of (sustainable) enterprise performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, 28(13), 1319–1350. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.640>
- [42] Teece, D. J., Pisano, G., & Shuen, A. (1997). Dynamic capabilities and strategic management. *Strategic Management Journal*, 18(7), 509–533. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1097-0266\(199708\)18:7<509::AID-SMJ882>3.0.CO;2-Z](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-0266(199708)18:7<509::AID-SMJ882>3.0.CO;2-Z)
- [43] Wang, C. L. (2008). Entrepreneurial orientation, learning orientation, and firm performance. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 32(4), 635–657. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2008.00246.x>
- [44] Zahra, S. A., Sapienza, H. J., & Davidsson, P. (2006). Entrepreneurship and dynamic capabilities: A review, model and research agenda. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43(4), 917–955. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2006.00616.x>
- [45] Zollo, M., & Winter, S. G. (2002). Deliberate learning and the evolution of dynamic capabilities. *Organization Science*, 13(3), 339–351. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.13.3.339.2780>