

Small and Medium Enterprises Challenges in International Marketing practices

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Abstract:

Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are of vital importance to a country's economic growth and employment. However, many of them find it difficult to keep up with and anticipate the developments in their environment. SMEs new or existing, often face challenges when approach products providers for both enterprise fixed capital investment and market standards. This study aims to assess challenges facing SMEs towards international marketing standards.

Study findings show that SMEs face challenges to access international marketing unaware of regulations and standards, lack of financial support from the Government, poor understanding of consumer's needs and services, lack of essential entrepreneurial skills and weak networking structures to penetrate into international marketing.

Key words: Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), International Marketing, challenges of SMEs.

Jel Classification Codes: L32, P12

ملخص

للمؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة أهمية بالغة في نمو وتطور اقتصاد الدولة، ومع ذلك تجد الكثير منها صعوبة في مواكبة التطورات في بيئتها. عادة ما تواجه المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة سواء كانت جديدة أو قديمة تحديات عند التقرب من مقدمي المنتجات بالنسبة لكل من استثمار المؤسسة لرأس المال الثابت ومعايير السوق. أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة تواجه تحديات للوصول إلى التسويق الدولي منها عدم الوعي بالضوابط والمعايير، قلة الدعم المالي من الحكومة، الافتقار لفهم حاجات وخدمات المستهلكين، قلة المهارات المقاولاتية الأساسية وضعف البنيات الشبكية لاختراق التسويق الدولي. الكلمات المفتاحية: المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة، التسويق الدولي، تحديات المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة.

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is growing recognition of the important role small and medium enterprises (SMEs) play in economic development. They are often described as efficient and prolific job creators, the seeds of big businesses and the fuel of national economic engines. Even in the developed industrial economies, it is the SMEs sector rather than the multinationals that is the largest employer of workers. Interest in the role of SMEs in the development process continues to be in the forefront of policy debates in most countries. Governments at all levels have undertaken initiatives to promote the growth of SMEs.

SMEs are increasingly competing internationally and, internationalization of SMEs is no longer optional. This internationalization can take many forms: exporting, international collaboration and foreign direct investment. Though the topic of internationalization of SMEs are mainly studied from seven angles: timing of internationalization, intensity and sustainability of internationalization, mode of internationalization, influence of the domestic environmental context on internationalization, leveraging of external resources to internationalize, unit of analysis differences, and effect of internationalization on SME performance.

Despite the ongoing reform programs for economy in developing countries, SMEs face challenges for international marketing standards; this study aimed to assess the challenges facing SMEs over the world towards international marketing standards.

Study Question

What are the challenges facing SMEs towards international marketing?

The purpose of this study is to have an in-depth research on the behavior of SMEs against the challenges they face in their internationalization process. In order to accomplish this task, several research questions will be sought which explain the process of internationalization in SMEs step by step and highlight the challenges they face, and their reactive and proactive responses to these challenges.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section two reviews the various definitions of SMEs. Section three discusses the relationship between SMEs and marketing. Section four examine the Antecedents of Marketing Competencies of SMEs for International Market; and Section five present SMEs challenges in international marketing. The paper concludes in section six.

2. What is an SME¹?

The issue of what constitutes a small or medium enterprise is a major concern in the literature. Different authors have usually given different definitions to this category of business. SMEs have indeed not been spared with the definition problem that is usually associated with concepts which have many components. The definition of firms by size varies among researchers. Some attempt to use the capital assets while others use skill of labour and

turnover level. Others define SMEs in terms of their legal status and method of production. A researcher tries to sum up the danger of using size to define the status of a firm by stating that in some sectors all firms may be regarded as small, whilst in other sectors there are possibly no firms which are small.

The Bolton Committee in 1971 first formulated an “economic” and “statistical” definition of a small firm. Under the “economic” definition, a firm is said to be small if it meets the following three criteria:

- It has a relatively small share of their market place;
 - It is managed by owners or part owners in a personalized way, and not through the medium of a formalized management structure;
 - It is independent, in the sense of not forming part of a large enterprise.
- Under the “statistical” definition, the Committee proposed the following criteria::
- The size of the small firm sector and its contribution to GDP, employment, exports, etc.;
 - The extent to which the small firm sector’s economic contribution has changed over time;
 - Applying the statistical definition in a cross-country comparison of the small firms’ economic contribution.

The European Commission (EC) defined SMEs largely in term of the number of employees as follows:

- firms with 0 to 9 employees - micro enterprises;
- 10 to 99 employees - small enterprises;
- 100 to 499 employees - medium enterprises.

Thus, the SMEs sector is comprised of enterprises (except agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing) which employ less than 500 workers. In effect, the EC definitions are based solely on employment rather than a multiplicity of criteria. Secondly, the use of 100 employees as the small firm’s upper limit is more appropriate, given the increase in productivity over the last two decades.

Finally, the EC definition did not assume the SMEs group is homogenous; that is, the definition makes a distinction between micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. However, the EC definition is too all-embracing to be applied to a number of countries.

3. SMEs and Marketing²

One of the most important fields in the SMEs work is marketing; it is a generally accepted fact that small business owners or managers are responsible for a wide range of tasks in the business – if not everything in the business. The implications of this, is that certain tasks will receive more attention than others and needless to say some will be neglected. In some businesses financial aspects will receive preference, in others it will be stock control and in others again it may be sales. Unfortunately business owners – especially in the case of SMEs – cannot afford to only focus on what they like. They still have to perform all the tasks. So even if the owner does not like marketing for example, they still need to perform the tasks associated with marketing and therefore need the marketing skills. Managers need some marketing skills to ensure that there is balance in their business’.

It stays a fact that the marketing actions in the business will influence the long term survival of a business – if it does not directly affect the overall success and survival of the business. It is common sense that if your target market, i.e. customers , are not aware of what you offer, where you are located , or what your total product offering includes they cannot support the business. Some researchers argues that marketing in SMEs is fundamentally different from the marketing conducted by larger businesses, as they face different challenges. This is partially ascribed to the fact that the decisions taken by marketers in SMEs and the implementation thereof can be more important to the success of the business than planning and strategy.

A large range of authors argue that a major factor in the success or failure of a marketing or business strategy at any level is whether it fits the realities of the organisation’s external environment. Thus, in order to be able to develop a marketing strategy for a product, or the business as a whole, the SMEs owner need to ensure that he/she has a clear understanding of the factors in this environment that can and will influence the business – that means identifying the opportunities and threats in the environment. furthers this argument in his contention that the key to successful strategic marketing is focusing, positioning and differentiation.

The SMEs must define its target market carefully and based on its understanding of the needs of the market and the perceived environmental influences. To be successful the business must focus on a specific market segment, position itself in the minds of the consumers, the best solution to their needs in that specific case, and use any relevant and important tool to differentiate itself from its competitors. The SMEs must also try and develop valued points of difference in its offerings and services that competitors would find difficult to copy.

Research showed that many SMEs failed because they lacked an understanding of the relevance and importance of marketing in their businesses. However, It did not investigate the underlying reasons for this phenomenon. This part attempts to identify the major challenges facing the business regarding marketing skills needed by SMEs.

- Marketing skills

An author states that small business owners exhibit certain personality traits that are responsible for the success or failure of their businesses and that inadequate marketing skills of owners create sustainability and survival problems in the small business sector. Therefore it is argued that if the small business owner does not possess the required skills or have the knowledge regarding marketing issues and how to apply these skills and knowledge it can and will lead to the demise of the business – or at best that it will not become as profitable as it can become. Even though all functions and tasks are important the marketing function is the only one that generates income for the business and therefore the success of the business largely depends on the marketing skills being applied in the business.

- Marketing skill challenges of SMEs

Some of the studies already alluded to as well as others have identified a list of marketing skill challenges facing SMEs. When categorised, these challenges can be related to the following:

- To gain an understanding of the market and potential for growth
- Market Segmentation
- Market Needs Analysis
- Access to finance to fund marketing actions
- Education and training
- Competitiveness
- Marketing of products and services

It is clear from the list above that in order to give adequate attention to marketing issues the marketer or entrepreneur requires certain marketing skills. It can be accepted that marketing is one of the most important tasks a SME has to perform and in order to do this the skills needed for this purpose include an understanding of marketing activities, sales, increasing market share to introducing particular new products or building relationships with customers.

4. the Antecedents of Marketing Competencies of SMEs for International Market Performance

SMEs have a large range Antecedents of Marketing Competencies for International Market Performance are³:

- ***Core Concepts in International Marketing Competencies of SMEs: Entrepreneurial Vision and International Marketing-Oriented Awareness***

Vision, whose lexical meaning is “view”, “foresight” and so forth, can be explained as “targets to be reached” in terms of a strategic perspective. Having a vision, being aware of his/her mission and being ambitious are among the most prominent qualifications of successful entrepreneurs. They are committed to their jobs with passion and it is indispensable for them to wish for competition and winning. Entrepreneurs with entrepreneurial vision can prefer to struggle by setting goals in order to overcome the seemingly impossible challenges in the market. They are aware of the fact that they cannot reach an ideal, in other words; they cannot acquire the desired market performance by spontaneous efforts. This awareness is in question for both local and global markets. Business managers have to head for foreign markets and regard the world as a whole in terms of production and market. Globalization, shaping markets from the point of enterprises, also changes consumption patterns and leads to the emergence of new consumer markets.

Similar social classes are formed in different countries of the world and new market opportunities appear according to different demands and expectations shaped by cultural properties. It is highly critical for the enterprises which try to survive in the ever-increasingly severe competition conditions and especially are stuck in local markets due to several structural disadvantages that entrepreneurs perceive the opportunities and threats posed by the mentioned changes whose main dynamics are technological developments.

Entrepreneurs’ abilities to seize the mentioned market opportunities are closely linked to their awareness level regarding this issue. Awareness is expressed in social sciences as a combination of the relationship of human mind with itself and with the world in the context of its actions and intuitions. In other saying, it means creatures’ being aware and awake of themselves and the events around them. It is of critical importance that entrepreneurs become aware of the opportunities offered by the changes in the circle of international markets in order to perceive and seize these opportunities.

- ***Innovation Orientation***

Innovation orientation, with a critical role in reaching entrepreneurial targets, reflects the ability of an enterprise to offer a new service/product and the success it has earned accordingly. Therefore, the importance of innovations has been thoroughly examined in the literature with different perspectives like the firm’s survival, profitability and expansion and development in new fields.

Innovation is a field which is still current and interesting for both theoreticians and practitioners. The importance enterprises attach to the innovation issue and their special strategies hereof increase the number of new products/services in the market. In this respect, the ability of an enterprise to present a new product is considered as a measure of its market performance. Innovation orientation has a determinative role in delivering successful offerings in global markets as in local markets.

Due to the close ties between the innovation skill and the adaptation practice skill, it can be asserted that innovation-oriented enterprises lead the field in developing successful market offerings. Reviews about innovations generally focus on product/service and technology, but innovation also contains such fields with a potential to create difference in the market as distribution channels, e-marketing practices and brand.

- Brand Orientation

Consumers seeking for both quality and affordable price in the products they want to purchase consent to pay more only for branded products depending on the perceived value. On the other hand, consumer needs and expectations cannot be satisfied without brand. Thus, the ability to create brand/brands perceived as valuable by consumers has been accepted to be an indicator of market success. The enterprises with brand equity are preferred and purchased more by consumers. Moreover, they can reduce financial risks, gain more advantage in credit financing and possess bargaining power in acquisitions or mergers.

On the other hand, research findings demonstrate that brands are slightly touched by the adverse effects of crises and even more some enterprises can increase their brand equity in the crisis period. It proves how important it is for enterprises to develop brand-oriented market practices in crisis periods. Brand orientation can be explained as the importance attached to brand by an enterprise and its development level in terms of brand. Creating and developing a brand with the purpose of taking long-term competition advantage and perpetuating the brand equity in parallel with active customer relations underlie the brand-oriented perspective.

With this strategy, the threats posed by the offerings of competitors can be turned into an opportunity. As this process is so important, it is necessary to plan it with a strategic management perspective and to implement and control special strategies for the brand. Brand management includes a number of strategic and tactical decision processes. Brand name, visual identity with its constituents and especially communication strategies and decisions constitute critical junctures in terms of performance in the process of brand creation.

- Marketing Communication Skills

Thanks to the developments in technology and transportation, products, just like people, are able to be transported to new international markets easily and economically. However, ensuring consumers exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors towards products in international markets with different cultures poses a problem for enterprises. Enterprises have difficulties in defining their institutional identities in both local and international markets, in expressing themselves to consumers and in introducing their market offerings to consumers.

In order to overcome these difficulties, it gains more importance day by day for enterprises to be conscious about marketing communication and to develop their skills in this regard. Marketing communication involves the processes of creating communication opportunities and sending messages to and receiving messages from consumers in order to create the desired reactions in the target audience. The aims of marketing communication are generally to support sales, to create product and brand awareness, to develop product and corporate image and to shape the attitudes and behaviors of the target audience.

5. Challenges of SMEs in international marketing

There are a lot of motives and barriers faced SMEs in the field of international marketing; the major are listed in this section.

5.1. The Export Marketing Activity Of SMEs Motivation Stimuli Vs Barriers

We can show the motives and barriers of Exporting in the next table⁴:

Table 01: Exporting motives and barriers.

Exporting motives and stimuli	Exporting barriers
• large market size • stability by entering more markets • greater profit • unsolicited orders • closeness of markets • excess capacity • foreign distributor requests • growth rate • smooth out business cycles	• Competing with overseas producers • Finding the right distributor/agent • Slow payments/payment defaults • The cost of marketing overseas • Lack of market knowledge • Time in planning • Lack of experience • Cultural/language problems • Lack of export incentives • International standards • Import duties • Transportation difficulties • Currency exchange fluctuations • Lack of export assistance • Customs and clearance • Unfavourable conditions overseas

Source: adapted from Ronika Chakrabarti. Dayananda Palihawadana; (2006); investigating the export marketing activity of SMEs operating in international healthcare markets; *Journal of Medical Marketing*; Volume 6, number 3; p 217.

5.2. The challenges of internationalization in SMEs

The challenges the firm has faced in the internationalization process can be summarized as⁵:

- lack of managerial commitment to internationalization and non-domestic markets,
- lack of ownership of marketed products,
- lack of knowledge on marketing and fostering networks on the international stage,
- lack of trust and cooperation in the firm's own network,
- and lack of trust and building insidership with new networks in foreign markets.
- the perceived cost of internationalization is an important deterrent.

5.3. Challenges facing SMEs towards International Marketing Standards

There are many Challenges face SMEs in the field of international marketing; it can be addressed as the following⁶:

- Non-Access to International Marketing

International marketing is a multinational process of planning and executing international marketing standards for pricing, promotion, distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchange that satisfy individual and organizational on national and international level. Firms expand into international markets slowly and deliberately over time for the market that are familiar to their home market.

International market has generally been assumed to take place when the production process becomes more standardized to take advance of certain factors unique to specific locations. A number of researchers show that there are strategies that entrepreneurs can apply to penetrate the international market such as exportation, joint venture, and direct investment for international production.

Education program is one of the most important factors that positively have impact on the growth of SMEs. A considerable growth of SMEs in international markets characterizes an international involvement. The global market provides new business opportunities such as innovation and new export markets with activities for large firms and between SMEs themselves. SMEs have played a central role in developing the private sector and integrating into the global economy as an efficient way to alleviate poverty in developing countries.

A researcher recommended that to participate effectively in global markets, SMEs are required to have and maintain significant capabilities in different areas ranging over the industry value chain, including production, design, distribution, branding, and marketing. Other researcher finds that the most significant challenges facing SMEs is the negative perception that their clients have on their ability to provide adequate and quality services for their needs.

A great group of researchers find that improper planning and poor management have been posited as main causes of failure for SMEs. Lack of credit has been identified as one of challenges facing SMEs and that hinders their growth towards international marketing. And with the current trends of globalization, SMEs are facing a turbulent environment in which competition is intensifying whilst their size and other existing constraints remain the same.

- Lack of International Marketing Standards and regulations

It had been suggested that Governments should continuously upgrading the environment so that it is conducive to the international growth and development of SMEs, by proactively seeking international business opportunities, strengthening legal institutions and administrative and financial establishments, and formulating appropriate policies.

Marketing and information are two of export problems, which revolve around lack of knowledge of foreign markets business practices and competition strategies, lack of strategies for sales management, lack of are percents to be major barrier in exporting of SMEs in developing countries researchers provides evidence that international marketing knowledge is depending on the relevance and depth of marketing information available to the firm. Karatas et al. (2008) find insufficient supply of microloans is a major issue, particularly where business creators are unemployed persons, women or form part of ethnic minorities. Supporting the supply of microloans is therefore not only an issue of entrepreneurship and economic growth, but also of social inclusion.

The point is that SMEs face internal and external challenges. **Internal barriers include:** limited information to locate and analyse markets, inefficiencies of human resource management with regard to internationalisation, lack or insufficiency of finance with regard to internationalisation, pressures imposed by external forces on adapting the elements of the company's product and pricing strategy, barriers associated with the distribution, logistics and promotion aspects of in foreign markets. **External barriers include:** aspects of transactions with foreign customers, actions or inaction by the home and foreign government in relation to its indigenous companies and exporters, firm's customers and competitors in foreign markets, the economic, political-legal and socio-cultural environment of the foreign market(s), restrictions on exporting and internationalising imposed by government policies and regulations in foreign markets.

A group of researchers ascertains that international marketing standards play a number of important roles in the economy, support innovation, growth and competitiveness of countries. Standards also offer many significant benefits for individual businesses and industries, and provide SMEs with a vital competitive edge. Further, they stated that SMEs could play a fuller role in standardization, but are unhampered by a number of factors that include: lack of awareness of standards relevant to their business, perception that they are more relevant to large business, and lack of hum (technician) and financial resources to both develop and make use of standards.

Studies have pointed out that a range of barriers faced by SMEs concerned with their awareness of international marketing regulations and standards (either generally, or of relevant to their business), any or all of which may prevent them from realizing the full benefits that standards can bring. Insufficient awareness may originate lacking relevant knowledge, or a failure to communicate effectively, and no involvement of SMEs in income growth, entrepreneurial training, and creation of technological capabilities. SMEs have the necessary wherewith to improve its situation, not only in terms of their resources, but also in terms of supply chain strategy for international regulations and standards.

- Lack of Government Support to SMEs

Despite existing policies on financial support for small businesses, very few entrepreneurs receive financial help when they need it. Although in some African countries

banks are by law required to set aside a certain percentage of their profits for small business loans, many banks would rather pay a fine than make what they believe to be a high risk loan to SMEs.

A researcher suggests that basic physical infrastructure required for economic development, such as good roads, ample power supply, and good rail and river transportation facilities, are in very poor shape in most African countries. In addition to the problems noted above, the information and communication infrastructure in most African countries are weak. Other researchers find that access to information infrastructure is considered as an indispensable condition for widespread socio-economic development in this age of globalization and information economy SMEs and other small African firms have challenges to join international market and sell their products in their home market.

Small business assistance from governments of African countries is weak and inadequate. Most research studies on African entrepreneurship have concluded that training programs for entrepreneurs have been few and far between and different in content than what is needed. The technology involved in the training tended to be beyond what trainees can afford to buy and use. In most cases there was no after-training follow up services.

Access to bank loans and direct government financial support are reported in surveys of entrepreneurs as a serious problem for small businesses in Africa. Better financial assistance is needed to address this problem. Accordingly, African firms finance a significant percentage of their investment with internal funds, about 68 percent. This observation highlights lack of financial assistance to small-scale enterprises. Policies to address this problem should be established with input from lending institutions.

One study suggest that the concerns of banks should be taken into consideration in developing financial support policies for small businesses. Governments should work with lending institutions to lower the risk of loan default. While governments need to play an important role, other sources of assistance to small businesses, such as venture capitalists, should be considered. It is also important that entrepreneurs recognize the benefits of education and training in ensuring the success of any business endeavor.

- Setting customer services and needs satisfaction

Large buyers are important drivers of technological innovation in global value chains because of their emphasis on higher product standards, constant threat of supplier replacement, and support of their customers and suppliers. Individuals or organizations may get involved in International Marketing in a rather unplanned way that gives the impetus to more formal and larger operations.

The small- scale enterprises enquiries through word of mouth, visits, exhibitions, and experience through others may result in orders. These may be of domestic based export merchants, domestic based export agents, export management companies or cooperative organizations.

A study find that SMEs struggle to ensure that the right product is available in the right quantities at operational level. Some SMEs have targeted specific customer service level, but have been unable to translate their growth plans into improved category performance, largely due to operational inefficiencies. Others suffered as a result of consumer feedback, an indication that the SMEs outlets seemed to have frequent out-of-stocks, affecting consumer brand image for the SMEs and increasing lost sales. And other studies agree that it is important to make each and every service encounter a positive experience for the customer, focusing on creation and building social bonds with customers. According to Customer satisfaction is when the outcome of the service matches the expectations. A third study show that customer satisfaction consists of other factors inherent in the service and outside of the service: The service as a product itself, and the other human interactions or influences involved, respectively.

- Lack of Skills for entrepreneurship

The challenges facing entrepreneurs and small medium enterprises in Africa are varied and many; lack of financial support, weak economic infrastructure, and lack of policy coherence, and lack business support. Given the small number of indigenous African small firms compared to firms from other parts of the world, education and training support for entrepreneurs and small-scale enterprises will help establish a good foundation for small business growth.

A Report indicates that sales and marketing are regarded as the most important knowledge areas to develop, followed by innovation & technology, leadership, production management, quality management systems, export promotion, tax/laws, finance and control, personnel and organization and problem-solving skills. Further, the report states that the process of gaining and consolidating competitive advantage requires a variety of skills and knowledge relating to the changing features of company business. In practice this means that SME training and other business support services should play an important leverage effect and enhance competitive advantage through their supporting and facilitating efforts in the learning process of the entrepreneur.

- Weak Networking Structure for international marketing

The reasons given for the unfavorable internationalization of small firms in Africa includes: unsaturated domestic markets, reputation for small quantity although quality products, low technological requirement for success in markets, and difficulties in joining international supply-chain networks (Rankin et.al, 2006). Inter- firm linkages between small and large firms or domestic and international enterprises in value chains contribute to small firms' growth and success. This type of cooperation allows small firms to reap the benefits of scale and scope economies. The skills small firms develop and knowledge they acquire in inter-firm linkage can lead to competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

A researcher indicates that linkages between small firms and large firms are generally weak at this time, especially between small manufacturing firms and agricultural suppliers. In

addition to that large foreign companies are reluctant to establish local linkages with small enterprises because of product quality concerns. This weak linkage between large and small medium enterprises is a problem for future small business development. Building inter-firm linkages in African countries will require government policies that create an enabling investment environment through tax incentives, red tape reduction, property protection, and other measures that have a positive impact on the overall economy.

6. Conclusion

Study findings show that SME's lack financial power to produce quantity of their product to serve large community. Further findings show that SMEs face challenges to access international marketing unaware of regulations and standards, with poor understanding of consumer's needs and services, lack of essential entrepreneurial skills and weak networking structures to penetrate into international marketing. Further, they lack support and provision of loans leading to poor growth of the SMEs economy development in developing countries. The study therefore recommends the improvement of information that is available to SMEs owners; to the government and other partners avail accessibility to financial facilities with reasonable interest rate of return, encourage more advertisements and use of up to date technology for business and international marketing standards through seminars and trainings on entrepreneurship, and networking structures for export and import of goods and services. The study also recommends that the government supports SME's to ensure that they play their role in helping improve the economy of developing countries and improve the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

- Dealing with competitiveness in the field of SMEs development means to strengthen the ability and performance of SMEs to satisfy customer demands/requirements better than competitors. This can be done by selling and/or supply goods and/or services success- fully; to meet the quality standards of target markets at prices that are competitive; and provide adequate returns on the resources employed in producing them.
- Firms and academic institutions that constitute centres of excellence could provide the critical mass analysis for the economic turn-around process, through highlighting opportunities and challenges facing SMEs;
- Increasing market competitiveness of SMEs not only focus specific economic sector perspectives, but also a form of viewing all chain of international marketing standards;
- The government's to define strategies in the formulation of large enterprise Vs SMEs integration at both central and local level and develop large enterprises Vs SMEs linkage policies.
- Despite all the challenges facing entrepreneurship in Africa, economic growth rates across much of Africa are rising, and there are successful entrepreneurial ventures across the continent. This observation suggests that opportunities exist for African entrepreneurs, and some of these opportunities have already resulted in some international and local business successes.

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