



MAKERERE

UNIVERSITY

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

**CONSORTIUM APPROACHES, ICT USAGE AND BUSINESS GROWTH OF URBAN
AGRICULTURE IN KAMPALA & WAKISO**

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PLAN A

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DECLARATION

I, Ashabahebwa Sylvia declare that this dissertation is my own work and has never been presented for any award to any university.

ASHABAHEBWA SYLVIA

2020/HDIO/20751U

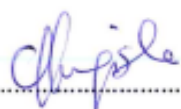
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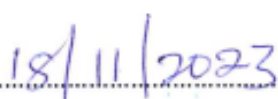
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APPROVAL

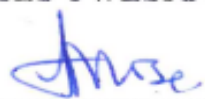
This research dissertation has been prepared under our supervision as university research supervisors.

DR. CATHERINE TINDIWENSI

Sign: 

Date: 

MR. MOSES TWESIGYE

Sign: 

Date: 

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family and friends for all their moral, financial and spiritual support throughout this academic journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank the Almighty God that has bestowed on me his Grace to write this dissertation and also complete my class work.

I would like to recognise the efforts of my supervisors Dr. Catherine Tindiwensi and Mr. Moses Twesigye for the continuous guidance that you accorded me in the entire research process. You have not tired a bit of my continuous consultations, may the almighty reward you abundantly.

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between Consortium approaches, ICT Usage and Business growth of Urban Agriculture in Kampala and Wakiso Districts. The specific objectives were derived from the purpose of the study.

To conduct this study, the researcher employed a cross-sectional research design which was considered appropriate given the time frames within which the research study had to be conducted. The research study considered a population of 210 registered urban Agriculture business from where a sample of 130 farms was drawn using the proportionate simple random sampling technique. The researcher collected primary data using self-administered questionnaire. The instrument was tested for validity using the CVI of above .70 and reliability using Cronbach Alpha test and the results of above 0.70 rendered it reliable. Good practices of ethical behavior during research studies were exhibited and these included voluntary participation, anonymity of the respondents and respect for scholarly works which ruled plagiarism.

The response rate was 71%. The data was analyzed using SPSS. The correlation results revealed; the relationship between consortium approaches and Business growth was found to be positive, strong and significant ($r=.750$, $p<.01$) and that there is a positive significant relationship between ICT Usage and business growth. ($r=.473$, $p<.01$) whereas the combined effect indicated that the usage of ICT and the adoption of consortium approaches accounts for 39.9% (Adjusted $R^2= 0.399$; $p<.01$). The researcher offers a number of recommendations to the study; Urban Agricultural Business owners need to consider the use of ICTs and incorporate them into business to improve efficiency and effectiveness and also need to seek and join consortiums for networks, partnerships and collaborations to continuously make use of the various business opportunities.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The first chapter comprises of the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives guiding the study, the conceptual framework, research questions, scope of the study and significance of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

Urban Agriculture is done on small areas within the city for growing crops and raising small livestock for own consumption or sale in neighborhood markets and can provide food and source of income for urban dwellers (FAO, 2020). Urban Agriculture has greatly increased worldwide over the years. This has encompassed businesses, non-profits organizations as well as individuals (Valley &Wittman 2019). According to projections by the United Nations, 66 percent of the world's population will be living in urban areas by 2025. The projected urban population increase is expected to put pressure on the urban food baskets of most cities. Cities have an environmental track that exceeds their natural bio capacity and rely heavily on resources from rural areas (Baabou et al., 2017). These social and environmental concerns necessitate the need for growth of urban agriculture as a source of dietary adversity for the city population, provide a source of income for urban farmers and also the promotion of urban greening (Janker et al., 2019). Numerous challenges however hinder the growth of urban agricultural projects including limited lateral space, high costs of operation and the limited experience in urban agriculture among others. These have posed a threat to the growth of urban agricultural projects (Lin et al., 2015).

The situation among urban Agricultural businesses in Uganda is not different. Urban farming in Uganda was born out of the political and economic crises of the 1970s and is widely practiced in Kampala today and mainly comprises of vegetable production and livestock keeping, primarily

poultry, dairy cattle and pigs (Sabiiti et al., 2014). While many of these businesses aspire to last for long, only some of them manage to survive more than a few years. Researchers and practitioners alike have developed a keen interest on how to grow urban agricultural businesses.

A consortium allows for two or more businesses to combine their capabilities, relevant skills, experience and expertise in such a way that every business complements each other (Chakol et al., 2018). According to Arena et al., (2020), consortiums in urban agricultural businesses can significantly reduce the project costs per individual project given their ability to share resource with farmers in similar trade. More specifically, developing agricultural farms that pool market and supplier resources enjoy economies of scale (Beke, 2018), establish strategic alliances (Mangubhai et al., 2022) and seek for capacity enhancement opportunities are better place to enjoy economies of scale. ICTs on the other hand involve a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to transmit, store, create, share or exchange information (Abhigya, 2018). ICTs facilitate information dissemination, improve feedback mechanisms, and encourage participation in order to strengthen social development initiatives (United Nations, 2015). Farmers that perceive ICTs useful and easy to use are likely to adopt their usage (Caffaro et al., 2020). The potential for growth of urban agricultural businesses using ICTs is promising and ought to be given the attention it deserves, because it can facilitate farmers to great networking and market opportunities. Given the projected urban population increase, this research seeks to investigate the relationship between consortium practices, ICT usage and growth of urban agricultural businesses.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There have been efforts in promoting the growth of urban agricultural businesses in Uganda. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) have organized a number of programs to promote Urban & Peri-urban in the Kampala and Wakiso

Districts. One of the biggest projects in support of urban agriculture by KCCA is the Kyanja demonstration farm in Wakiso that is meant to provide urban agriculture farmers with the latest trends in the business (KCCA, 2019). The effort is in a bid to increase commercial farming, promote healthy farming practices and maintainable food supplies even with the limited land as a major farming resource. The efforts however have been largely futile with urban Agriculture in Uganda staggering at 3% by 2020, the lowest in the East African region (IFPRI, 2021), as compared to Kenya and Tanzania which are at 10%. According to projections by the United Nations, 66 percent of the world's population will be living in urban areas by 2025. The projected urban population increase is expected to put pressure on the urban food baskets of most cities.

Many model farming projects fail to survive for the desired period of time, despite the heavy resource investment. According to Wetaya (2020), the failure can largely be due to the lack of use of up-to-date ICTs and collaborative spaces like farmers' consortiums which can help improve their output to support the growth of urban agriculture given the limited food supply and incomes earned. Modern approaches to Agriculture such as the use of ICTs and Consortiums is however still very low. There is therefore need for building growth capacity of urban Agriculture using contemporary approaches such as establishment of partnerships and increased use of modern technology. This study therefore seeks to examine the relationship between consortium approaches, ICT usage and growth of urban agricultural projects.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

To examine the relationship between consortium approaches, ICT usage and growth of agricultural businesses in Kampala and Wakiso Districts.

1.4 Research Objectives

- i) To examine the relationship between consortium approaches and growth of urban agriculture businesses
- ii) To examine the relationship between ICT usage and growth of urban agriculture businesses
- iii) To examine the combined effect of consortium approaches and ICT usage on growth of urban agriculture businesses

1.5 Research questions

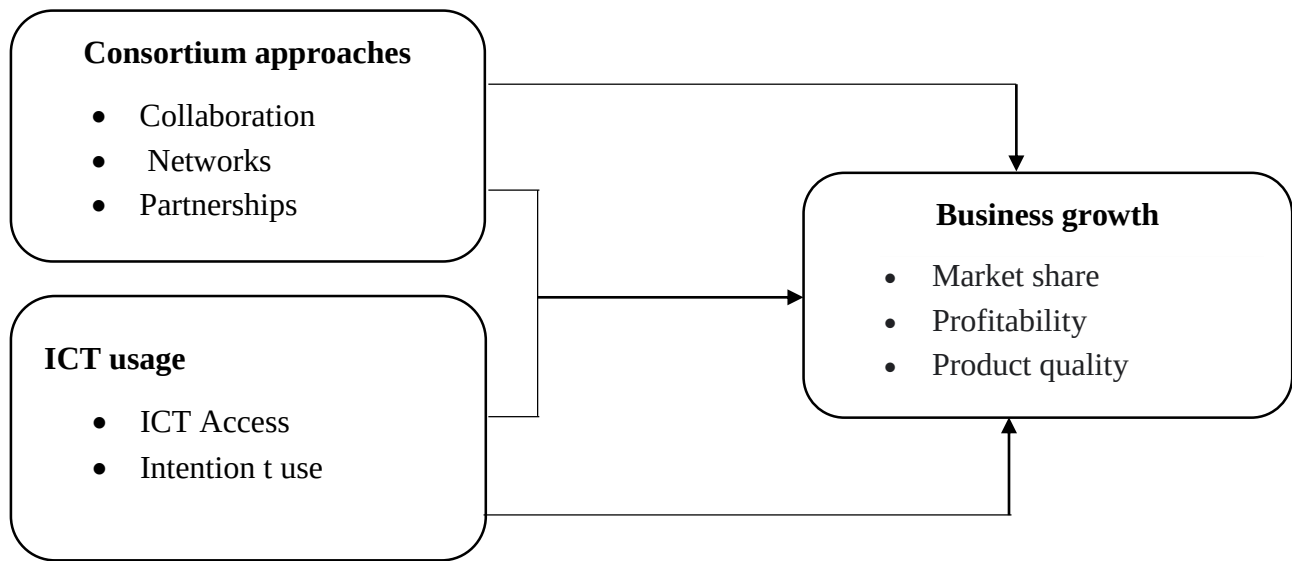
- i) What is the relationship between consortium approaches and business growth?
- ii) What is the relationship between ICT usage and business growth?
- iii) What is the combined effect of consortium approaches and ICT usage on business growth?

1.6 Conceptual Framework

In this study, we conceptualize Consortium approaches and ICT usage as antecedents of Business growth of Urban Agriculture. Borrowing from the systems theory that emphasizes the constructive power of the different elements of a system in which a business blooms. According to Ashby, (1964), the major purpose of systems theory is to develop unifying principles by the integration of various sciences, technical, natural and social elements.

The theory is applied to business management, because it advocates for alignment of the elements in a system for it to be effective. In this particular conceptualization, consortium approaches and ICT usage are elements that can be incorporated into the different phases of a business right from planning phase, to implementation and subsequent operations that lead to growth of the business (Herrera et al., 2019).

Figure 1: The conceptual framework



Source: Literature review; (Reijonen et al., 2021; Taveres-Cachat et al., 2017; Gao et al., 2011).

1.6.1 Explanation of the conceptual framework

The growth of a project is built on the pillars of market share, product quality and profitability. In this particular conceptualization, project growth has been conceptualized to depend on consortium approaches and the use of ICTs. In this case, urban agricultural projects are likely to grow if there is access to and ability to use ICTs coupled with formation of consortiums among farmers for fundraisers, marketing approaches and strategic partnerships.

According to ElMassah and Mohieldin (2020), ICTs have been at the center of transformation of many sectors and also greatly supported the achievement of the SDGs. In addition, many small and medium projects have the potential to grow beyond their current status as a result of forming partnerships through consortiums. In the same line, we propose that urban agricultural projects growth can be achieved with ICTs usage and implementation of consortium approaches.

1.7 Scope of the Study

- i) **The Geographical Scope;** the study was conducted in the urban and peri-urban areas in the Kampala and Wakiso. This is because the area focuses on urban agriculture, which is the focus of the study.
- ii) **Conceptual Scope;** conceptually, the study was confined to consortium approaches, ICT usage and project growth.

1.8 Significance of the study

This study is significant to different parties;

- i) The study makes clear the ICT usage challenges among urban agricultural projects. Therefore, the government and international funders can to identify ways of how to improve the access and ability to use ICTs in promoting project growth.
- ii) The findings from the study informs urban agricultural projects of the various strategies involved in the use of consortium approaches and how these can be used to the benefit of sustainability of their projects.
- iii) The findings provide policy makers in the Ministry of Agriculture with information on how to improve project sustainability of urban agricultural projects through the suggested avenues of ICT usage and consortiums.
- iv) This study also adds to the existing literature on project sustainability, consortium approaches and usage of ICTs.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This section contains the discussion of the concepts of the study and the relationship among them from which the research questions are anchored.

2.1 Theoretical review

This study employed the systems theory in conceptualization.

2.1.1 Systems theory

The system approach is one of the earlier comprehensive theoretical frameworks for grasping complex social phenomena. It was created to reduce the complexity of (social) reality in order to understand structures and behaviors within a system. The systems theory emphasizes the constructive power of the different elements of a system in which a business blooms. According to Ashby, (1964), the major purpose of systems theory is to develop unifying principles by the integration of various sciences, technical, natural and social elements. A system is a cohesive assembly of interrelated and interdependent parts which can be natural or human-made whereby changing one part of a system may affect other parts or the whole system. Under this study, the combined effect of consortium approaches and ICT usage revealed the more impactful result as compared to when one variable is applied in urban agriculture.

Systems Theory can be applied to business management, because it advocates for alignment of the elements in a system for it to be effective. In this particular conceptualization, consortium approaches and ICT usage are elements that can be incorporated into the different phases of a business right from planning phase, to implementation and subsequent operations that lead to growth of the business (Herrera et al., 2019).

This study finds applying the systems approach to urban agricultural businesses an appropriate way to capture important elements of the business system.

2.2 The concept of Business Growth

Scholars define business growth as a situation where a business experiences an increase in its revenue in terms of profitability and on the other hand decreasing its operational costs (Kalogiannidis2021). In addition, Cosenz and Bivona (2021) indicate that business growth refers to the general expansion of a business enterprise in terms of assets, human resource, quantity of goods produced and market coverage.

However, business trust is a set up where the properties and assets of a business organization are channeled and entrusted to a specific trustee whose role is to manage all operations for beneficiaries' profit. This means that the trustee does not work for his own profit but for the profit of the beneficiaries who are the real owners or investors of the business. There should therefore be trustworthiness between the beneficiaries and the trustee for the purpose of credibility and loyalty (Mohd Yusuf, 2012).

According to Altiget al., (2020) growth of a business implies radical changes to the characteristics of the enterprise. These changes may run counter to the founder's initial goals of, for instance, personal independence. Indeed, previous research indicates that expectations of changed working conditions arising from business growth are a primary concern for small business managers, which, in turn, affects their attitudes toward expanding their businesses (Wiklund et al. 2003). For example, as the business grows, the tasks required of the small business manager will likely also change. If the small business manager is favorably disposed to performing the new tasks that firm

growth requires, then they will likely have a more positive attitude toward growth (holding the other factors of growth constant).

The growth of urban agriculture business in Uganda like the rest of the world is promising given its increased attention (Sabiiti et al., 2014). Urban agriculture in Uganda largely falls under Micro, small and medium business and the recipe for business growth is similar to that of other businesses. In this study, we look at consortiums and ICT usage as antecedents for business growth, specifically among urban agriculture businesses.

2.3 The concept of Consortium approaches

A consortium is an agreement between two or more entities sides for mutual exploitation and use of resources with a common goal between the parties. Business consortiums are organizations, such as chambers of commerce, trade-specific alliances and institutions, professional associations, councils, federations and unions that build networks among existing businesses operating in the same geopolitical market.

According to Oxford Research AS, (2008), Cluster policies aimed at supporting and promoting collaborative R & D between universities and the industry (R & D consortia) have recently been implemented in several countries (Reijonen et al 2021). Perhaps the most obvious role of the business consortium is to provide training concerning issues pertinent to its members. Modern business literature amply documents the degree to which education and training directly impact new venture success.

Consortiums enable small businesses to come together through partnerships and networks. Networking helps micro and small business pool resources for operations and can be considered as a way of doing business (Gilmore and Carson, 1999). These partnerships may be haphazard and

informal: it can be spontaneous and carried out as a reaction to events and opportunities as they occur. However, they can also be more formal, as in the case of interfirm alliances in which two or more partners cooperate to perform business activities that could include pooling resources (BarNir and Smith, 2002). They further note that small businesses can seek to cooperate in such discrete groups of firms to achieve benefits that would not be available to them independently. Consortiums established with customers, suppliers and competitors provide access to advice, resources and problem-solving skills that enable firms to identify and seize opportunities, as well as to gather, share and respond to market intelligence more quickly and with less investment of time and other resources.

2.4 The concept of ICT Usage

According to Al- Rahmi et al., (2020) online technologies specifically refer to that group of technologies that allow users to access information and communication over the World Wide Web (Web browsers, e-mail, associated hardware, Internet service providers, among others). These include applications, social media and others. In general, Agricultural projects operate at low levels of technology usage which generate lower desirable outcomes. In Uganda, it is reported that, only 13 percent utilize Information Communication and Technology (ICT) for business operation (UNCDF Report 2020).

The benefits of ICTs usage could be extensive for smaller businesses especially with the introduction of low-cost new technologies such as the internet and the falling cost of information services could erode the traditional barriers that have prevented smaller businesses such as those in small scale agriculture from becoming sophisticated users of ICTs (Okundaye et al., 2019).

The pattern of the ICT usage can be determined by the ownership of and access to the ICTs (i.e., computer, phones and the Internet), and the intention to use the (Mumcu & Usluel, 2010).

Therefore, for a fully-fledged effective deployment of information technology resources in an organization, the availability of the resources coupled with the usage intention and actual behavior of individual users is very important. The access to and the intention to use ICTs have been overtime examined in the IT adoption research (Tao, 2009). Farmers' positive attitude towards ICT usage is a must and also an added advantage in the implementation of ICT-related programs (Kandasamy& Shah, 2014).

2.5 The relationship between Consortium approaches and business growth

The role of consortiums is elaborate in enhancing business growth (Shaheen& Junaid, 2018). These consortium organizations help a business more quickly tap market resources and professional services in aid of its start-up or expansion activities which it would not ordinary reach out to on their own. This is because of the enhanced visibility of business. In the case of urban Agricultural projects, this would mean connection of a single farmer to a wide range of others in the same business to provide support both upstream and downstream.

According to Ghayoomi, et al., (2020) another feature of the consortium's collaborative role entails coordinating specific projects that promote members' common interests; projects in which businesses cooperate to accomplish an objective that would be difficult or impossible to achieve independently. These can be for example building a network to provide market for products in the case of agricultural projects.

In recent times, with the emergence of the virtual marketplace, business consortiums can be accessed and utilized from the personal computers or even on the mobile phones; some websites even provide directories to thousands of consortiums within a particular country. This helps to create a wider network for the business, supporting its growth. Literature concerning the specific benefits of business consortiums and empirical data on their effectiveness in assisting business

development is not widely available. The gap in consortium approaches for business growth for context specific agricultural businesses is even more evident. This creates a need to address this gap.

This study therefore seeks to examine the relationship between consortium approaches and business growth of urban agricultural projects.

2.6 The relationship between ICTs Usage and business growth

The world has witnessed that technology helps business to expand market share and look up for new idea for business growth. Technology comes in with emerging economy booster through the social networking, computerized and online marketing (Rahman et al., 2016). Technology is crucial for boosting market competitiveness amidst turbulent times. The economies and commercial conditions may change significantly due to globalization, especially in the present economic climate, as corporations persist in attaining economies of scale. The technology revolution also generates unique problems for business owners in many nations. Technological adoption has a crucial role in enhancing small and medium-sized businesses and long-term growth and survival (Das et al., 20120).

It is essential to investigate a country's technical environment to help businesses achieve sustainable growth. Business enterprises that operate in technologically complex situations may broaden their market by marketing and creating sales of their products even in turbulent environments (Casidy et al., 2020). Also highly competitive local markets may compel them to enter overseas markets, but they may also do so because they sense considerable potential elsewhere the globe becomes more linked, trade barriers fall, and transportation and communication grow more efficiently, the internationalization of businesses is expected to. ICTs

have boosted business competitiveness by improving internal communication and organizational effectiveness.

Another potential benefit of adopting ICTs for businesses is to enhance the digitization of internal operations and processes, improving performance effectiveness and efficiencies, re-engineering business models, and ensuring business growth (Akpan, Soopramanien, and Kwak 2020). These benefits were utilized mainly by several businesses in the advanced economies during the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting community lockdown to limit the spread and human-to-human transmission of the coronavirus disease (Akpan, Soopramanien, and Kwak 2020). Businesses cannot grow faster unless they embrace technology (Kozak, (2011) and the urban Agriculture business is not an exception (Byomire et al., 2015). Today, all businesses, regardless of their size, are faced with several competitive challenges. To cope with this phenomenon, managers are adopting e-commerce in their respective organizations in order to grow and remain competitive (Poorangi, Khin, Nikoonejad & Kardevani, 2013). Businesses need to embrace innovative e-commerce strategies in order to stay competitive, profitable and successful in local and global markets (Awiagah et al., 2016). Indeed, ICTs adoption has been earmarked as one of the innovations that could help businesses to grow and survive. Increased use of the Internet provides potential benefits to business, such as cost reduction, improved operational efficiencies, access to new customers and enhanced business growth (Standing, Standing and Love, 2010). Certainly, e-commerce makes communication within and outside the enterprise faster and facilitates efficient management of the resources (Ahmad, Baker, Faziharudean, & Zaki, 2015).

ICTs adoption is still appropriate for many micro and small businesses in developing countries (Kurnia et al., 2015). Although several studies have been generally conducted regarding ICTs adoption by businesses, there is a need to appreciate the factors influencing adoption of technology

within the specific perspective of farming, specifically, urban agricultural business (Sunday and Vera, 2018). It is generally documented that ICTs provides numerous benefits for businesses such as reduced cost, increased sales and productivity, extended market reach and increased customer loyalty (Turban, 2010) that are essential for business growth. Ahmad et al., (2015) reveal that ICTs adoption by businesses in developing countries is influenced by a number of factors including perceived relative advantage, perceived compatibility, managers/owner's knowledge and expertise, management characteristics and external change agents. Accordingly, external change agent and perceived compatibility are the most significant. As such, external change agents mainly the government, external consultants and ICTs solution providers play a significant role with regard to business growth.

Likewise, the adoption is likely to fail if the existing infrastructure is incompatible with the technology (Ahmad et al., 2015). This is in agreement with the findings of Alam& Mohammad (2009) who revealed that the technical compatibility positively influences the adoption of ICTs to conduct business in developing countries. In Uganda for example, micro and small businesses find it hard to adopt ICTs mainly due to the high costs involved such as the data packages charges, the purchase cost of these technologies among others. According to Vilaseca (2013) and Premkumar& Roberts (2010), lack of awareness and cost are fundamental factors that hinder the adoption and use of technology by businesses. Cost elements include training, maintenance, information systems and software (Giovanni & Mario (2013). Businesses are unlikely to adopt and use technology when the initial set-up cost is high. This is in agreement with Paul & Pascale (2013), who argue that many businesses, particularly in Africa, face specific challenges in the design of innovative strategies due to limited technological competencies and financial resources.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section presents the framework that was used in data collection and data analysis. It covers the research design, study population, sample design, sample size, sources of data, research instruments, measurement of variables and anticipated limitation of the study.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a cross sectional study design meaning that data was collected at one point in time and using a quantitative approach meaning that data was collected using a closed ended questionnaire anchored on a measurable scale. The cross-sectional design was justifiable given the fact that the study had limited time in which it was expected to be completed.

3.2 Study Population

A population is a well-defined set of people, services, elements and events, group of things or households that are being investigated. According to the Association of Micro and Small Farmers Association of Uganda, there are 210 registered urban agriculture businesses in Kampala and Wakiso areas (UBOS, 2021) are registered with the Famers Association of Uganda. These are registered with a number of urban Agricultural Associations. These comprised the population of the study. This area was chosen because it represents the geographical urban area of Uganda.

3.3 Sample size

The sample size was 130 urban agriculture businesses with each district given an equal number of businesses. The sample was determined in accordance with Krejcie and Morgan (1970) at 95% Confidence interval.

3.4 Sampling procedure

Simple random sampling was used to identify the respondents for the study. This method of sampling allowed for an equal chance for the respondents to participate in the study because it is scientific in nature. Papers with names of the individual businesses were put into a basket and selected randomly without replacement.

The unit of inquiry was owners and managers of these urban agriculture businesses and the unit of analysis was the urban agriculture businesses.

3.5 Data Sources

Data was collected from primary sources in order for the researcher to get firsthand information. Primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaire.

3.6 Data Collection Methods and Instruments

A self-administered, closed-ended questionnaire was used to gather information from the respondents. The questionnaire contained the items of the variables under study anchored on a Likert scale of Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The reason for selecting for this instrument is because, it is simple to administer and gives respondents time to think about what they answer. This is expected to limit respondents' bias considering that a questionnaire is given to the respondent to fill without interference therefore that limits the anticipated biasness expected during data collection process.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

Validity of the instrument was obtained through expert method by subjecting the instruments to scrutiny to 5 experts (supervisors and practitioners). The item that was to be rated by the supervisor on the extent to which they measure validity using the CVI of above .70 (Amin (2005)).

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement and is frequently assessed using the test–retest reliability method. The instrument to be reliable should allow respondents answer the same questionnaire many times with consistency. The tool was thus subjected to Cronbach Alpha test and the results of above 0.70 rendered it reliable (Nunnally and Bernstein 1994).

Table 3.1 Validity and reliability results

	<i>No of Items</i>	<i>CVI</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha</i>
Consortium Approaches	12	.721	.782
ICT Usage	12	.704	.703
Business Growth	12	.756	.801

Source: Primary Data

3.8 Measurement of variables

A five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) which was used to anchor the components of study variables that is; ICTs usage, Consortium approaches and business growth. The likert scale is useful in quantifying the target audience’s feelings towards an idea or a phenomenon (Joshi, et al 2015).

Business Growth was measured using items adopted from (Taveres-Cachat et al., 2017) which include, market share, profitability and product quality. For consortium approaches, collaboration was measured with items adopted and modified from (Kim& Lee2010) while networking and partnerships was measured using items modified from (Doz, et al., 2000).

ICT usage was measured using indicators and items modified from (Akbulut et al., 2007) and these included access to and ability to use ICTs. These items altogether formed the questionnaire items for the study.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

The collected data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Mean and standard deviation was used in interpreting the demographic items in the data. Correlation was used to ascertain the degree and direction of association between the dependent variable and the independent variables and regression analysis was used to measure the prediction power of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

3.10 Ethical considerations

- i) The researcher ensured to seek for informed consent from the respondents of the study by requesting them to participate on free will.
- ii) The researcher ensured that participants in the study are not exposed to harm as a result of participating in the study.
- iii) Respect for anonymity and confidentiality was done by ensuring that personal identification details of the respondents are not indicated in the data collection instrument.
- iv) Respect for privacy was upheld by ensuring respect of their boundaries.

3.11 Anticipated limitations to the study

- i) The researcher anticipates limited response especially from the identified respondents for fear of being spied on. However, the researcher tried as much as possible to convince the respondents that the study is for academic purposes only.
- ii) Time limitations together with financial constraints may not permit in depth investigation given the intensity of research. However, the researcher tried to abandon some activities to ensure that this work is accomplished within time and resources budgeted.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the study provides two types of data analysis; namely descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. The descriptive analysis helps the researcher to describe the relevant aspects of the phenomena under consideration and provide detailed information about each relevant variable. For the inferential analysis, the study used the Pearson correlation to measure the degree of association between variables under consideration and the regression analysis to estimate the contribution of adoption of dependent variables on the independent variable.

4.1 Response rate

Out of the 130 businesses which were targeted, the study was able to obtain results from 92 businesses giving a response rate of 71%. This response rate according to Fowler (1984), this is an acceptable rate for a research survey.

4.2 Demographic characteristics

The demographic characteristics were found to be as follows;

4.2.1 The level of engagement of respondent in the business

The results revealed that majority of the respondents in this study were owners of the businesses representing 79% of the responses. These are involved in the day today running of the business and therefore this means that they understand issues of operation for business survival and are in position to give relevant information to inform this study. The information is presented in the table below.

Table 4.1 showing the level of engagement of the respondents

Level	Count	Percent
Employee	19	20.7
Owner	73	79.3
Total	92	100.0

Source: Primary data

4.2.2 Number of the years the business has been in operation

Respondents were asked to provide information regarding the characteristics of the business in terms of the number of years the business had been in existence. The results indicate that majority of the businesses had been in existence for a period between 1-3 years with a percentage of 54.3% and 34.8% beyond three years. This means that majority of the businesses had been in existence for reasonable time to gauge their growth beyond just one year.

Table: 4.2 Number of years the business has been in existence

Number of years	Count	Percent
Less than 1 year	10	10.9
1-3 years	54	54.3
More than 3 years	34	34.8
Total	92	100.0

Source: Primary data

4. Correlation results

Pearson's Correlation analysis was conducted to measure the strength and direction of linear associations between the study variables

Table: 4.3 The Pearson's Correlation

Variables	1	2	3	4
Consortium Approaches (1)	1			
ICT usage (2)	.332**	1		
Business Growth (3)	.750**	.473**	1	

***.* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data

4.3 The relationship between Consortium approaches and Business Growth

Objective one: The relationship between consortium approaches and Business growth was found to be positive and strong ($r=.750$, $p<.01$). This relationship was found to be statistically significant. This means that a positive change in business growth is significantly associated with a positive change in Consortium approaches adopted by the business. In essence, the growth of urban agricultural business in terms of market share, profitability and quality products is associated to the extent to which the business owners/workers adopt various consortium approaches in terms of collaborations, networks, and partnerships.

4.4 The relationship between ICT Usage and Business Growth

Objective two: The relationship between ICT Usage and Business Growth. The results shows that there is a positive significant relationship between ICT Usage and business growth. ($r=.473$, $p<.01$). This means that a positive change in ICT usage can be associated with a positive change Business growth. Therefore, managers of urban agriculture businesses ought to adopt the usage of ICT in order to enjoy the positive outcomes associated with business growth such as profitability, improved market share and quality products.

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to determine the predictive power of the Usage of ICTs and Consortium approaches on business growth. The results are presented in the table below;

Table: 4.4 Hierarchical Regression Results

	<i>Unstandardized Coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.798	.399		2.000	.049
Consortium approaches	.557	.089	.530	6.252	.000
ICT Usage	.235	.083	.241	2.842	.000

Dependent Variable: Business Growth	
R	.642
R Square	.412
Adjusted R Square	.399
Std. Error of the Estimate	3.335
R square change	.412
F Statistic	31.226
Sig.	.000

**Coefficients are significant (sig <0.01)

Source: Primary data

Regression analysis was used to address objective three; to examine the effect of consortium approaches and ICT usage on business growth. The results show that the usage of ICT and the adoption of consortium approaches accounts for 39.9% (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.399$; $p < .01$). This means that while the variation in growth of urban Agricultural businesses can be explained by adoption of consortium in terms of networking and collaborations, and the access and intention to use ICTs. The other factors that were not part of this study account for 60.1% of the variation in business growth among urban agricultural projects.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and concludes the findings of the study, recommendations and areas for further research. The study investigated the relationship between consortium approaches, ICT usage and business growth.

5.2 Discussion of findings

This research was carried out on the basis of three objectives. Findings in relation to these objectives were attained. In this section, these findings are further discussed to check their relevance to the overall knowledge generation and testing. This discussion is organized in line with the objectives of the study and paying special courtesy to the key findings attained from the process of data analysis.

5.2.1 The relationship between consortium approaches and business growth

Findings in relation to examining the relationship between consortium approaches and business growth revealed a positive relationship between the two variables. Regression analysis further confirmed that consortiums have a positive significant effect on business growth among urban agricultural businesses. When two or more businesses combine their capabilities for networks, collaboration and partnerships, there is greater economies of scale, efficiency and effectiveness in the business hence growth.

A consortium lets its partners share relevant skills, experience and expertise in such a way that every business complements each another to drive growth. Being in the consortium gives the business an opportunity to access partner experiences or competencies. These findings are consistent with those of Deyand Banerjee, (2021) who emphasize the positive effects of

consortiums on business outcomes. Contradicting findings from Oliveira, and Lumineau, (2019), however stated that inter business relationships and partnerships may not always yield positive outcomes because of the increase in the level of risk that this arrangement creates. The risks may include fight for market share and profit sharing among the stakeholders.

5.2.2 The relationship between ICT usage and business growth

According to the findings in the study context, there exists a significant positive relationship between the use of ICTs and business growth of urban-based agricultural businesses. This means that, when business owners and workers in these businesses use ICTs there is a likelihood of faster, time saving, effort saving, cost reducing, and overall efficiency and effectiveness in their businesses. There are thus more likely to realize positive business outcomes such as profitability, increased market share and productivity. Researchers have overtime studied the benefits which may result from using ICTs and put forth evidence that it saves businesses from a lot of expenditures, making it easier for them to use for example e-commerce to provide virtual sale services that are not limited by space and reach, in fact, a business can grow beyond just its geographical location (Kumar & Ayedee, 2021).

5.2.3 The effect of adoption of consortiums and ICT usage on business growth of urban agriculture

The predictive power of adoption of consortiums and ICT usage revealed a positive significant effect on business growth among urban agricultural businesses. The regression results indicated a strong positive contribution of the two variables on business growth. While each of these variables contributes significantly to the variation in business growth, the combined effects is more impactful. Urban Agricultural businesses are therefore more likely to improve market share, profitability and quality of their products if they have a combined effort of networking,

collaborations, partnerships and the access and intention to use ICTs. These have been supported by previous research the fact that ICT usage allow businesses to communicate effectively and efficiently and better deal with data regarding the internal and external dealings of the business (Nassser et al., 2019) while consortiums improve economies of scale to improve business efficiency, and subsequently growth of businesses.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings and relationships between the study variables the following conclusions were made;

The consortium approach in urban agriculture is essential for business growth. It allows stakeholders to leverage their combined resources, and industry expertise, to reach a wider audience and achieve more significant business outcomes.

From the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that businesses that use ICTs will realize heightened business growth inform of increased market share, profitability and quality products.

For example, the use of ICTs for marketing can greatly reduce operation costs of a business and ultimately facilitate growth for urban agricultural businesses. Therefore, the use of the combined variables yields more positive outcomes to the business.

5.4 Recommendations from the study

In relation to the analysis, findings, and the conclusion, the following recommendations have been suggested;

- i. Urban Agricultural Business owners need to put into consideration the use of ICTs and incorporate them into their business to improve efficiency and effectiveness for business growth.

- ii. Urban Agricultural Business owners also need to seek and join consortiums for networks, partnerships and collaborations to continuously make use of the various business opportunities in urban agriculture so as to improve their desired outcomes in terms of growth.

5.5 Areas for further study

- i. Further studies on business growth should explore other variables as antecedents of business growth other than adoption of consortiums and ICT usage.
- ii. Further research can be done in other businesses for example cooperate institutions, SMEs among others to provide a more diversified context of study.
- iii. Future researchers should consider a longitudinal study to study business growth over a longer period of time.

5.6 Limitations to the study

- i. The researcher anticipated limited response especially from the identified respondents for fear of being spied on. However, the researcher tried as much as possible to convince the respondents that the study is for academic purposes only.
- ii. Time limitations together with financial constraints hindered the smooth completion of research on time. However, the researcher tried to abandon some activities in other facets of life to ensure that this work is accomplished within time and resources budget.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent, I am Sylvia Ashabahebwa, conducting academic research under the topic “Consortium approaches, usage of ICTs and business growth of urban agriculture.” You are requested to participate in this study since it is believed that you have information on the variables under study. This is an academic research and your response will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

SECTION I: General Information (please tick the appropriate boxes below)

1. How long has the business been in existence?

Duration	Tick as appropriate
1. Less than 1 years	
2. 1-3 years	
3. More than 3 years	

2. What level of participation are you in this business?

1. Employee

2. Owner

SECTION II:

This section assesses the extent of ICT usage, consortium approaches adoption and business growth among urban agriculture projects. Please indicate by ticking the appropriate box to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements below. 1=strongly disagree (SD), 2=disagree (D), 3=not sure (U), 4 = agree (A) and 5= strongly agree (SA)

	CONSORTIUM APPROACHES	SD	D	U	A	SA
	Partnerships					
CA1	We partner with other agricultural business to source for suppliers	1	2	3	4	5

CA2	The business benefits from combined resources for supplies	1	2	3	4	5
CA3	Partnering helps the business to enjoy bigger markets	1	2	3	4	5
CA4	We partner with other businesses for marketing	1	2	3	4	5
	Networking					
CA5	The business has corporations with other urban farmers	1	2	3	4	5
CA6	Agriculture associations help us access resources easily	1	2	3	4	5
CA7	We are able to meet targets as a result of partnerships	1	2	3	4	5
CA8	We partner with similar businesses to increase our competitiveness	1	2	3	4	5
	Collaboration					
CA9	The business establishes tactical linkages with similar businesses	1	2	3	4	5
CA10	We develop our plans in collaboration with other farmers	1	2	3	4	5
CA11	We are able to increase our agricultural expertise through associating with other farmers	1	2	3	4	5
CA12	We project and plan future demand with other farmers	1	2	3	4	5
	ICT USAGE	SD	D	U	A	SA
	Intention to use ICTs					
ICT1	Majority of the ICTs are user friendly	1	2	3	4	5
ICT2	ICTs are easy to master and understand	1	2	3	4	5
ICT3	I intend to integrate the use of phones and social media in business operations	1	2	3	4	5
ICT4	I can use online technologies in business with minimal effort	1	2	3	4	5

ICT5	I intend to incorporate appropriate ICT resource to match a particular business need	1	2	3	4	5
ICT6	I feel comfortable using phones and online technologies for business	1	2	3	4	5
ICT7	Using ICTs makes doing business faster	1	2	3	4	5
ICT8	I see my business using online resources to keep me abreast with competitors	1	2	3	4	5
	Access to ICTs					
ICT9	I have ICTs readily available within in the business	1	2	3	4	5
ICT10	We use ICTs that are easily accessible	1	2	3	4	5
ICT11	Phones and internet resources are affordable	1	2	3	4	5
ICT12	The knowledge on acquisition of gadgets and online resources are readily available	1	2	3	4	5
	Business Growth	SD	D	U	A	SA
	Product quality					
BG1	Our product quality is unique only our company can offer them	1	2	3	4	5
BG2	We meet the needs of our business owners	1	2	3	4	5
BG3	The business enjoys bigger profits from the products	1	2	3	4	5
BG4	The business has new products to match different preferences	1	2	3	4	5
	Market share					
BG55	This business will live to release the going concern	1	2	3	4	5
BG6	The business easily makes money from produce sold	1	2	3	4	5

BG7	The business has a steady market rate	1	2	3	4	5
BG8	This business has been in operation for a desirable period of time					
	Profitability					
BG9	The business has a good reputation with suppliers	1	2	3	4	5
BG10	The assets in the business owns are profitable	1	2	3	4	5
BG11	The business has a good mix of cash and assets	1	2	3	4	5
BG12	The business has dedicated resources to meet its needs	1	2	3	4	5

Thank You!