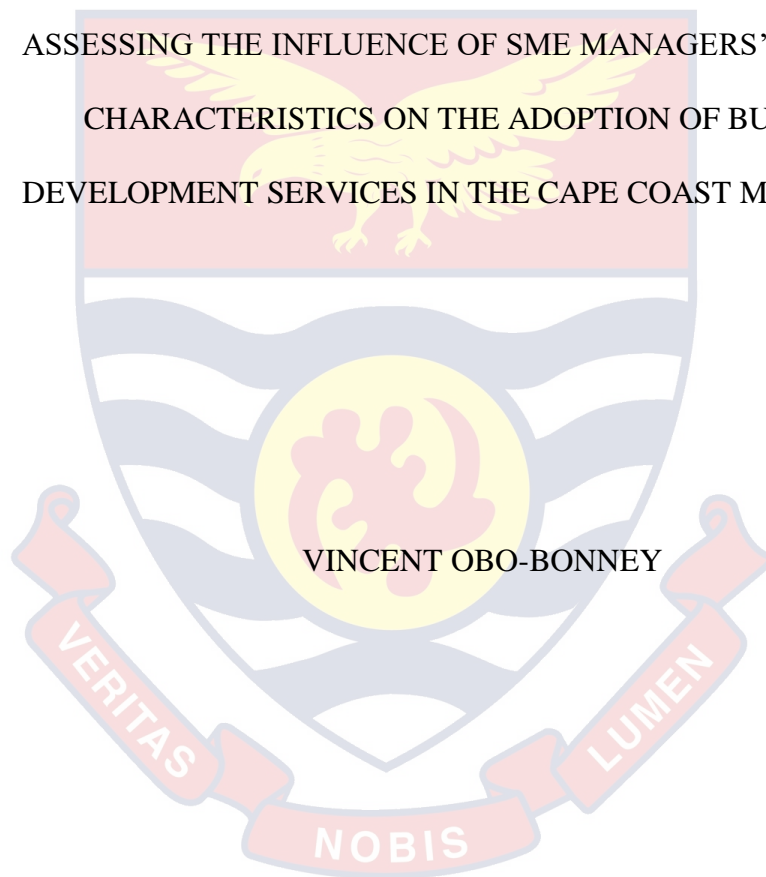UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF SME MANAGERS' PERSONAL

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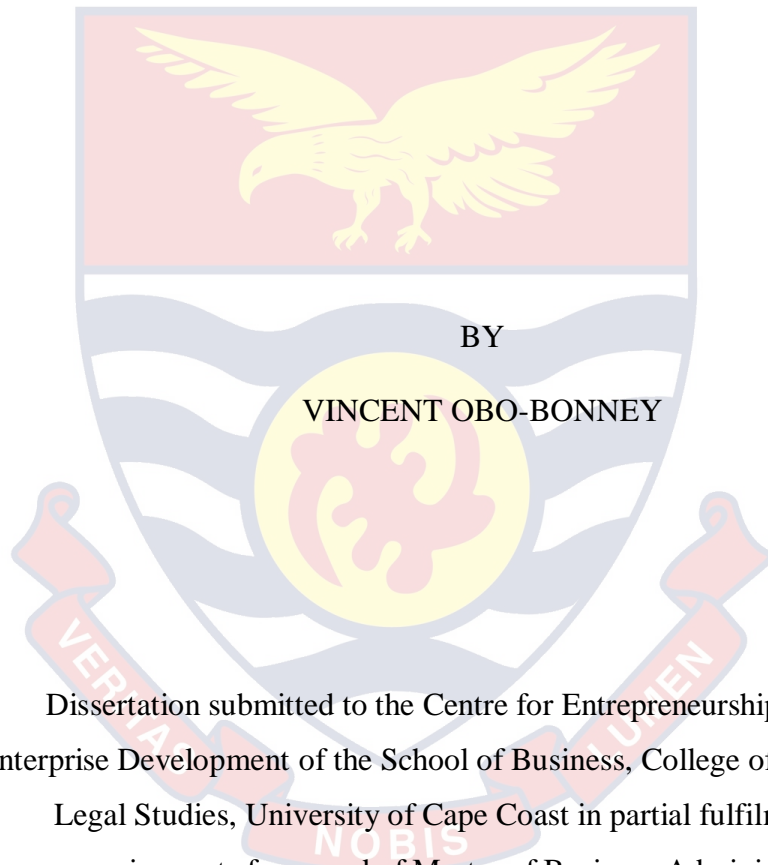
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN THE CAPE COAST METROPOLIS

VINCENT OBO-BONNEY

2020

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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CHARACTERISTICS ON THE ADOPTION OF BUSINESS

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN THE CAPE COAST METROPOLIS

BY

VINCENT OBO-BONNEY

Dissertation submitted to the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Small Enterprise Development of the School of Business, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Master of Business Administration in Entrepreneurship and Small Enterprise Development

JULY 2020

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.
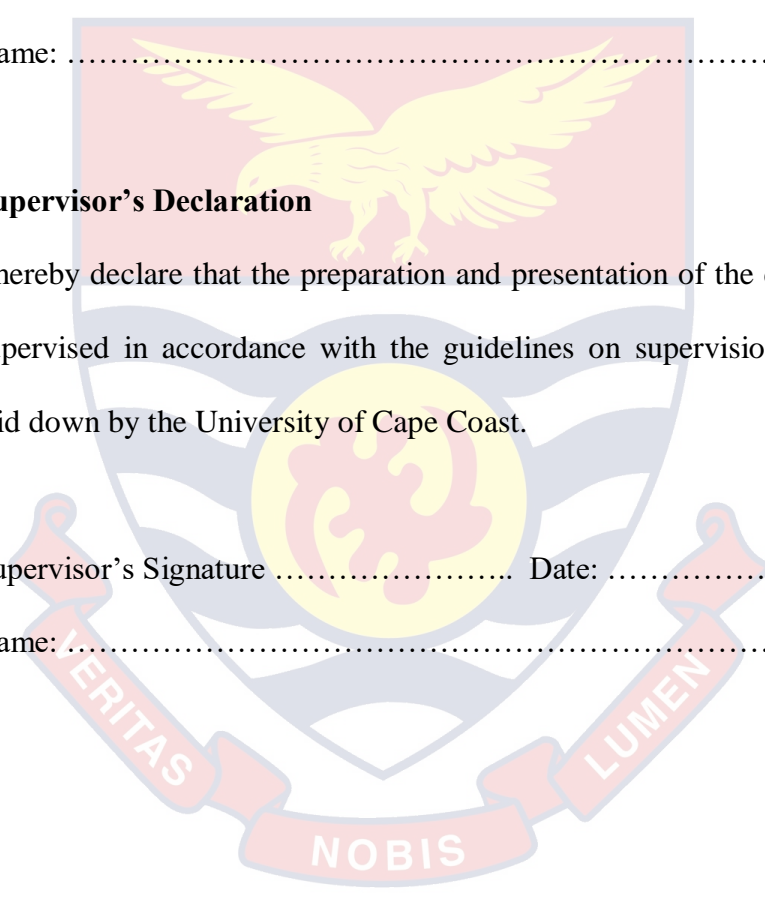
Candidate Signature ………………….. Date: …………………………..

Name: ………………………………………………………………………..

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature ………………….. Date: ………………………..

Name: ………………………………………………………………………..

ABSTRACT

One important aspect of Small and medium-sized enterprises is that they lack sufficient internal skills and experience to handle the challenges that negatively affect their development, which, therefore, necessitates their adoption of external business development services. In line with this necessity, the present study assessed the influence of SME managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Employing the quantitative research approach, explanatory research design, and cross-sectional survey design, 125 completed and valid questionnaires were retrieved from a population of 160 SME managers who have accessed business development services from the National Board for Small Scale Industries in the Cape Coast Metropolis. A census was employed in selecting samples for the study. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection and it was self-administered. IBM SPSS Statistics Software for Windows, version 23 was the software employed for data analysis. The analytical tools were mean, standard deviation, one-sample t-test, independent-samples t-test, and regression analysis. Consistent with expectations, the study found that personal characteristics of SME managers, namely age, sex, work experience and education jointly and independently influenced the adoption of business development services, confirming the assumptions of the Upper Echelons Theory.

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KEY WORDS

Adoption

Business development services

Cape Coast Metropolis

Managers

Personal characteristics

Small and medium-sized enterprises

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DEDICATION

To my mother, Mary Eghan, and grandmother, Maame Esi Mensima of

blessed memories

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AGI	Association of Ghana Industries
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CCMA	Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly
EU	European Union
GEDC	Ghana Enterprise Development Commission
GEPC	Ghana Export Promotion Council
GSGDA	Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda
NBSSI	National Board for Small Scale Industries
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEF	Private Enterprises Foundation
PLS-SEM	Partial Least-Squares Structural Equation Modeling
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Business development services aim at assisting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to overcome internal and external constraints on their development, improve their performance, and help add value to their goods and services (Hossain, 2018). This assertion impinges on the fact that growth and development of SMEs is crucial for the development economies (Szczepańska-Woszczyna & Kurowska-Pysz, 2016). It is argued that personal characteristics of managers of SMEs, such as sex, age, work experience and educational attainment, affect their adoption of business development services (Welmilla, Weerakkody & Ediriweera, 2017). However, extant empirical literature addressing the influence of personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services among managers of SMEs is limited (Ng'ang'a, Ngugi & Odhiambo, 2014). It is this gap that the present study seeks to fill.

Background to the Study

It is acknowledged that the growth and development of SMEs is crucial for the achievement of broad development objectives, including poverty alleviation, economic development and the promotion of democratic and pluralist societies (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017). In most developing countries, SMEs constitute a substantial percentage of firms and account for a significant proportion of people in employment (Muriithi, 2017). In Ghana, the role of SMEs in economic development has been given prominence by government and

development agencies for a very long time (Agyapong, 2016; Fening, Appiah & Frempong, 2017).

In sustaining the role of SMEs in economic development, scientists have proposed the adoption of business development services (Hossain, 2018; Mbura & Bambaganya, 2016). Business development services are services that improve the performance of the enterprise, its access to markets, and its ability to compete. Business development service includes an array of business services, such as training, consultancy, marketing, information, technology development and transfer, business linkage promotion, which are strategic and operational in nature, specifically designed for individual businesses. The services can be provided through business support centres, mentoring, clusters and networks, business incubators, specialized or general training programmes or institutions [United Nations Development Business (UNDP), 2015].

The provision of quality business development services is an important means of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by addressing poverty and empowering the poor and vulnerable groups (UNDP, 2016). The relevance of business development services to SMEs has led to several delivery agents offering such services. These delivery agents include public agencies, academic institutions, the government, private sector or non-governmental organisations (Mbura & Bambaganya, 2016). In Ghana, the business development services providers are the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), EMPRETEC-Ghana Foundation, the Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC), the Private Enterprises Foundation (PED) and non-governmental

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organisations (NGOs) both local and international, among others (Oppong, Owiredu & Churchill, 2014).

These promotional institutions provide specific business development services to the SMEs which include training, central organisation to protect the interest of industry, facilitation of industrial related information, entrepreneurship development, the promotion of exports of goods made in Ghana and Business Advisory Services and networking (Oppong et al., 2014). In particular, NBSSI, which has physical presence in the Cape Coast Metropolis, is the apex government body for the promotion and development of micro and small enterprises' sector in Ghana. Their role is mainly to develop the human resource, the structures and systems for enhancing access to SMEs to high quality business development services which promote growth and competitiveness (Fobih & Adom, 2017).

Existing literature argues that firms that use business development services experience superior performance (Mbura & Bambaganya, 2016; Mwaanga, 2014; Okeyo, Gathungu & K'Obonyo, 2014). Mwaanga (2014) establishes that providing training in management skills and practices improves the business performance of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. Okeyo et al. (2014) find that procurement services and infrastructure facilities had a positive and significant influence on performance of SMEs. Mbura and Bambaganya (2016) unveil that business development services positive affect the success and of firms. Hence, the contribution of business development services to the survival, performance and growth of SMEs cannot be exaggerated.

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A systematic review by Ng'ang'a et al. (2014) unfolds that the personal characteristics of managers of SMEs, such as sex, age, previous experience, and educational attainment, have the propensity of influencing the adoption of business development services. In support of this revelation, Welmilla et al. (2017) declare that significant differences exist in SME development between selected demographic characteristics of entrepreneurs, namely sex, age, educational level, and level of experience. This declaration is illuminated by the Upper Echelons Theory, which is credited to Hambrick and Mason (1984).

The Upper Echelons Theory proposes that strategic choices are partially predicted by managers' background characteristics (Hambrick, 2007). The outlook taken by this theory is that top management and executives of any organisation matter. Thus, choices made by top management of an organisation, both formally and informally, reflect the idiosyncrasies of these decision makers. The adoption of business development services by managers of SMEs depends on how managers perceive its relevance (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). As Hambrick (2007) argues, each decision maker brings his or her own set of "givens" to an administrative situation and these givens reflect the decision maker's cognitive base: knowledge or assumptions about future events; knowledge of alternatives; and knowledge of consequences attached to alternatives.

Assessing the influences of personal characteristics of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs, particularly those in the Cape Coast Metropolis, would provide a baseline data for business development services providers to offer technical assistance to help boost

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growth in the SME sector in the metropolis and beyond (Gbadeyan, Oppong & Oduro, 2017). The vision of the Cape Coast Metropolis is to ensure the total transformation of Cape Coast into a peaceful and progressive metropolis with a high standard of living, basic infrastructure and social services, and a conducive atmosphere where the hopes and aspirations of the people can be realised in full [Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly (CCMA), 2018].

One of the broad objectives of the Cape Coast Metropolis under the thematic areas from Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda II is to enhance competitiveness in Ghana's private sector by expanding opportunities for job creation among both large and small firms. The population engaged in self-employment is 7.4 per cent, government employment is 33 per cent, agriculture is 10.7 per cent, and the overall population in private sector employment is 63.0 per cent (Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly, 2018). This statistics signify that the private sector is the largest employer, highlighting the relevance of promoting SMEs' growth and development in the metropolis. Against this background, the present study sought to assess the influence of personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the significant role played by SMEs, they face many challenges which constrain their survival and growth (Lekhanya, 2016). Anecdotal information confirms that there is low survival rate of SMEs and that most of these businesses are constantly threatened with failure, with statistics indicating that three out of five SMEs fail within the first year of

operation (Ng'aru, Muluku & Sakwa, 2018), and the majority of them fail after five years (Mwaanga, 2014). One important aspect of SMEs is that they lack sufficient internal skills and experience to handle the challenges that negatively affect their development (Wang, 2016), which, therefore, necessitates their adoption of external business development services (Mbura & Bambaganya, 2016).

Furthermore, extant literature confirms low adoption of business development services by many SMEs in developing countries, partly resulting from the decline in the use of local public agencies in promoting SMEs, while international NGOs and private sector organisations and firms have assumed a leading role (Mwaanga, 2014). In Ghana, although business management concept is being practiced by some large firms, including public organisations, their acceptance and application by small business in the country is still marginal (Asomaning & Abdulai, 2015). In the Cape Coast Metropolis, evidence indicates that the patronage of business development services has been on the low (Gbadeyan et al., 2017)

It is argued that personal characteristics of managers of SMEs, such as sex, age, lack of previous experience and low educational attainment, could adversely affect their adoption of business development services (Ng'ang'a et al., 2014; Welmilla et al., 2017). This problem is expounded by the Upper Echelons Theory, which assumes that poor strategic choices made by managers of firms are partially predicted by unfavourable background characteristics of managers (Hambrick, 2007). For SMEs, personal characteristics of managers are very important, because most decisions rest solely on them (Welmilla et al., 2017).

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Although studies exist on the effect of personal characteristics on variables, such as entrepreneurial intentions (Chaudary & Fatima, 2014; İrengün & Arıkboğa, 2015; Karimi et al., 2017), entrepreneurial opportunities (Kohlbacher, Herstatt & Levsen, 2015), performance (Lema, 2013), adoption of electronic services (Gyamfi, 2015; Kupangwa & Dubihlela, 2016; Sharma, 2015), financial management behaviour (Dzomonda & Fatoki, 2018), and growth (Isaga, 2015; Welmilla, Weerakkody & Ediriweera, 2017); extant empirical literature addressing the influence of personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services is surprisingly scant.

A systematic review by Ng'ang'a et al. (2014) confirms the need for a study that will address the influence of manager's personal characteristics on adoption of business development services by SMEs. In addition, not much is known about SME managers' perception of business development services, and what these services actually mean to them in their everyday business (Mwaanga, 2014), particularly for SMEs operating in the Cape Coast Metropolis, Ghana. As a consequence, the present study sought to assess the influence of SME managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis, with guidance from the Upper Echelons Theory.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the influence of SME managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

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Research Objectives

The research objectives considered were: to

1) Analyse the influence of age of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis;

2) Test the influence of sex of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis;

3) Examine the influence of work experience of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis; and

4) Ascertain the influence of education of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses considered were:

H_0: Age of managers does not influence the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

H_1: Age of managers influences the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

H_0: Sex/gender of managers does not influence the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

H_2: Sex/gender of managers influences the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

H_0: Work experience of managers does not influence the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

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H_3: Work experience of managers influences the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

H_0: Education of managers does not influence the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

H_4: Education of managers influences the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Significance of the Study

The present study is relevant for several reasons. Firstly, the study sought to analyse the influence of age of top managers of SMEs on their willingness to adopt business development services. The finding for this objective would assist delivery agents, namely public agencies, academic institutions, the private sector or non-governmental organisations to provide appropriate interventions for the top managers within the found vulnerable age range. In the same way, testing the influence of sex/gender of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs will aid delivery agents to offer appropriate interventions for the top managers within the vulnerable sex group. Similarly, examining the influence of work experience and education of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis would provide policy makers with the necessary information to be able to provide the needed advice to improve survival, competition, performance and growth among these SMEs.

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Delimitations

This study is delimited to SME managers in the Cape Coast Metropolis in Ghana. Variables used in the study were the adoption of business development services and personal characteristics of SME managers, namely age, sex, educational attainment, and work experience. Personal characteristics of SME managers were used as independent variables, whereas adoption of business development services was used as the dependent variable.

Limitations

In every research, the approach employed comes with some weaknesses, which may affect the study's findings. The study employed the quantitative research approach and, thus, improper representation of the target population could affect the study's findings. The confinement of the study to SMEs operating within the Cape Coast Metropolis rendered the result of the study applicable mainly to such jurisdiction. Also, the study adopted close-ended Likert-type statements, which limited the amount of information that respondents may provide with respect to the main variables of the study.

Furthermore, the data to be collected emerged from self-reported inventories, and, thus, the honesty of the responses given in terms of respondents' personal characteristics and adoption of business development services may be questioned. Additionally, the inability to control the environment, because of the use questionnaires, could affect the study's findings. This is because responses, generally, depend on conditions of respondents during the time questionnaires are administered to them. As such,

their responses may be influenced by their current situation, which could eventually affect the study's findings.

Organisation of the Study

This study is organised into five main Chapters. Chapter One presents the introduction, which entail an untitled introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitations, limitations, and organisation of the study. Chapter Two reviewed various literatures relevant to this research project, capturing the theoretical review, conceptual review, empirical review, conceptual framework, lessons learnt from the literature review, and chapter summary. Chapter Three described the research methods adopted for the study encompassing the research approach, research design, study design, population, sample size, sampling procedure, data collection instrument, ethical considerations, data collection procedure, and data analysis procedure. Chapter Four captured the results and discussion, while Chapter Five finalised the research project with the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study sought to assess the influence of small and medium-sized enterprise managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis. This Chapter covered the literature review. Literature review is an activity in which the knowledge base is consulted to inform the present study. It is organised under five headings, namely conceptual review, the theoretical review, empirical review, conceptual framework, and lessons learnt from the literature review. The chapter ended with a Chapter summary.

Conceptual Review

This section considers the conceptual review. The conceptual review explains the concept and variables emanating from the research topic namely, business development services and personal characteristics of managers: age, sex, work experience, and educational attainment; and the definition of SMEs globally and locally. As such, the discussion of the conceptual review began with the concept of business development services and it is explained below.

Business development services

According to UNDP (2015), business development services are generally defined as: services that improve the performance of the enterprise, its access to markets, and its ability to compete. The definition of business development service includes an array of business services, such as training,

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consultancy, marketing, information, technology development and transfer, business linkage promotion. These business services are both strategic [medium to long term issues that improve performance] and operational in nature [day-to-day issues]. Business development services are designed to serve individual businesses, as opposed to the larger business community.

The services can be provided in a number of different ways, such as through business support centres, mentoring, clusters and networks, business incubators, specialised or general training programmes or institutions, venture capital, training of human resource, provision of information on market linkages, logistical and technical support, training on book keeping and monitoring, and provision of other networking services (Hossain, 2018). Business development services are a very important means of supporting the development of SMEs, which are known to create employment, generate income and contribute to economic development and growth (UNDP, 2016).

Employment and income generation are particularly important for impoverished rural areas, vulnerable groups and communities, such as the Cape Coast Metropolis. The delivery agents for these services can be public agencies, academic institutions, the private sector or non-governmental organisations. The provision of quality business development services is an important means of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by addressing poverty and empowering the poor and vulnerable groups (UNDP, 2016). The relevance of business development services to SMEs has led to several delivery agents offering such services. These delivery agents include public agencies, academic institutions, the government, private sector or non-governmental organisations (Mbura & Bambaganya, 2016).

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In Ghana, the business development services providers are the National Board for Small Scale Industries, Association of Ghana Industries, EMPRETEC-Ghana Foundation, the Ghana Export Promotion Council, the Private Enterprises Foundation, and NGOs both local and international, among others. These promotional institutions provide specific business development services to the SMEs, which include training, central organisation to protect the interest of industry, facilitation of industrial related information, entrepreneurship development, the promotion of exports of goods made in Ghana and business advisory services and networking (Oppong et al., 2014).

In particular, NBSSI, which has physical presence in the Cape Coast Metropolis, is the apex government body for the promotion and development of micro and small enterprises' sector in Ghana. Their role is mainly to develop the human resource, the structures and systems for enhancing access to SMEs to high quality business development services which promote growth and competitiveness (Fobih & Adom, 2017).

Personal characteristics of managers

Scholars have found that demographic characteristics of managers, such age, sex, work experience, and educational attainment, have a likely effect on the usage of business development services (Ng'ang'a et al., 2014; Welmilla et al., 2017). Age has traditionally been one of the key variables in contemporary empirical social research, routinely used to categorise people and to explain differences among them (Sajilan, Hadi & Tehseen, 2015). With increasing age, the skills of people might improve. This might be due to the

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fact that people learn how to manage their time more effectively (Johara, Yahya & Tehseen, 2017).

Generally, age, which is usually defined in years, is a time of life at which some particular qualification or power arises. According to The Free Dictionary (2019), age is the length of time that one has existed; duration of life. Expressed another way, age is the time of life when a person becomes qualified to assume certain civil and personal rights and responsibilities. Along with the age, someone can develop a certain quality of ripeness or can be matured. Mature age is the time of life at which one attains full personal rights and capacities.

Age often appears unidimensional: the amount of years since birth is seen as the only measurement of age. In modern societies, numerical age has gradually become the most important criterion for measuring age, and other dimensions of age are allocated a similar status (Sajilan et al., 2015). The present study also adopted the numerical age as the age of SME managers. In line with the numerical ages, this research project considered the age classifications proposed by Yarlagadda, Murthy and Prasad (2015), namely young adults (18 to 30 years), middle-aged adults (31 to 50 years), and senior adults (>50 years).

With respect to sex, the gap between men and women has always existed. In many cases, the possibilities for women to participate in working life have been/is difficult due to women's main responsibilities for children (Kabeer, 2016). However, over the years, some positive changes in order to diminish this gap have happened (Hyman, 2017). In several countries, the law requires employers to consider human resource policies

issues, such as parental leave and the right to time off for family emergencies. In terms of managers of SMEs, the majority of them are men, even though the number of female managers has increased – this increasing trend in the number of woman entrepreneurs is more likely to be continuing in the future (Ajayi, Ojo & Mordi, 2015).

Considering work experience, there is recognition in the entrepreneurship literature of the significance of the contribution of working experience to venture performance (Sreih, Assaker & Hallak, 2016). McDermott and Boyd (2018) contend that prior work experience of the SME manager can lead to success. Similarly, specific experience in similar businesses ensures survival and growth (Staniewski, 2016). The last personal characteristic considered in this study is educational attainment. Generally, level of education, represents a broad section of the education, that is, the progression from elementary to more complicated learning experience, embracing all fields and programme groups that may occur at that particular stage of the progression.

The acquisition of an educational qualification implies the successful completion of a course of study or training programme (Welmilla et al., 2017). Like other studies, the present study considers education from the basic level, secondary level, vocational or technical training to education at the university level and postgraduate level. Based on that, education is defined as the learning experience of the SME manager.

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Definition and classification of SMEs globally

Definitions of SMEs vary from country to country, depending on one or more thresholds laid down in respect of investment, employment and turnover. The issue of what constitutes a small or micro enterprise is a major concern in literature. Different writers 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 as well as writers. Others define SMEs in terms of their legal status and method of production. Some attempt to use the capital assets while others use labour and turnover level.

Bolton Report (1991) 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; and 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 and exports; the extent to which the small firm sector's economic contribution has changed over time; and applying the statistical definition in a cross-country comparison of the small firm's economic contribution.

The Bolton Committee applied different definitions of the small firm to different sectors. Whereas firms in manufacturing, construction and mining were defined in terms of number of employees (in which case, 200 or less

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qualified the firm to be a small firm), those in the retail, services, and wholesale were defined in terms of monetary turnover (in which case the range is 50,000-200,000 British Pounds to be classified as small firm). Firms in the road transport industry are classified as small if they have five or fewer vehicles. There have been criticisms of the Bolton definitions. These centre mainly on the apparent inconsistencies between defining characteristics based on number of employees and those based on managerial approach (Bolton Report, 1991).

In Japan, small-scale industry is defined according to the type of industry, paid-up capital and number of paid employees. Consequently, small and medium-scale enterprises are defined as: those in manufacturing with 100 million yen paid-up capital and 300 employees, those in wholesale trade with 30 million yen paid-up capital and 100 employees, and those in the retail and service trades with 10 million yen paid-up capital and 50 employees (Ekpenyong & Nyong, 1992). European Union (EU) Member States traditionally have their own definition of what constitutes an MSME, for example the traditional definition in Germany had a limit of 250 employees, while, for example, in Belgium it could have been 100.

But in recent times, the EU has started to standardize the concept. Its current definition categorizes companies with fewer than 10 employees as "micro", those with fewer than 50 employees as "small", and those with fewer than 250 as "medium". By contrast, in the United States, when small business is defined by the number of employees, it often refers to those with fewer than 100 employees, while medium-sized business often refers to those with fewer than 500 employees. Canada also defines a small business as one that has

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fewer than 100 employees (if the business is a goods-producing business) or fewer than 50 employees (if the business is a service-based business), and a medium-sized business as fewer than 500 (Carsamer, 2009).

Small-scale industries are defined as manufacturing units employing not more than 30 persons. For the purpose of differentiating them from the other small-scale non-farm economic activities, the emphasis is placed on the manufacturing aspect. Manufacturing means producing or making physical items. This means that pure service activities such as government services, retail trade, banking, recreation and insurance services are not included. However, repair services are included in the manufacturing enterprises because they have something to do with formally manufactured goods (Chapman & Walker, 1987; Dinye, 1991).

The argument is that manufacturers do not always produce a finished good, but only perform one stage in a sequence of a process. The fact that an item can be repaired implies that there is a further stage in the manufacturing process (Chapman & Walker, 1987; Dinye, 1991). After looking at the definitions and classifications of SMEs in the global perspective, it is proper to examine definitions of SMEs given in the context of Ghana, since the study covers that jurisdiction.

Definition of SMEs in Ghana

In Ghana, various definitions have been given for SMEs, but the most commonly used criterion is the number of employees of the enterprise (Kayanula & Quartey, 2000). By using this definition, confusion often arises in respect of the unpredictability and cut off points used by the various official

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sources. According to the National Board for Small Scale Industries (1998), a small business is any business that employs up to 29 people, and small business is divided into: the micro, small and medium enterprises. The micro enterprises employ up to five employees with fixed assets (excluding land and building) not exceeding the value of $10,000; small enterprises are those employing between six and twenty-nine employees or having fixed assets excluding land and building not exceeding $100,000 and; a medium enterprises employ between 30 and 99 employees with fixed assets of up to $1m.

According to Mensah (2004), SMEs are dominated by one person, with the owner/manager taking all major decisions. The entrepreneur may possess limited formal education, access to and use of new technology, market information, and access to credit from the banking sector is severely limited; they have weak management skills, thus inhibiting the development of a strategic plan for sustainable growth; they experience extreme working capital volatility; and lack of technical know-how and inability to acquire skills and modern technology impede growth opportunities.

The Ghana Enterprise Development Commission (GEDC), on the other hand, uses a 10 million Ghanaian cedis upper limit definition for plant and machinery. It is important to caution that the process of valuing fixed assets poses a problem. Secondly, the continuous depreciation of the local currency as against major trading currencies often makes such definitions out-dated (Kayanula & Quartey, 2000). In defining small-scale enterprises in Ghana, Osei, Baah-Nuakoh, Tutu and Sowa (1993) used an employment cut-off point of 30 employees and however, classified small-scale enterprises into

three categories. These are: micro-employing less than 6 people; very small - employing 6-9 people; and small - between 10 and 29 employees.

The present study employs the definition proposed by NBSSI (1998) that, a small business is any business that employs up to 29 people, and small business is divided into: the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. In line with this definition, small enterprises are those employing between six and twenty-nine employees or having fixed assets excluding land and building not exceeding $100,000, and medium enterprises employ between 30 and 99 employees with fixed assets of up to $1m.

Theoretical Review

This study was guided by the Upper Echelons Theory, which is credited to Hambrick and Mason (1984). The Upper Echelons Theory asserts that organisational outcomes, strategic choices and performance levels are partially predicted by managers' background characteristics. At the centre of the Upper Echelons Theory is the view that organisational outcomes, both strategies and effectiveness, are reflections of the values and cognitive bases of the powerful actors in the organisation (Hambrick, 2007). The outlook taken by this theory is that top management and executives of any organisation matter. Accordingly, choices made by top management of an organisation formally and informally, reflect the idiosyncrasies of these decision makers.

Furthermore, the Upper Echelons Theory was founded on the premise that organisational outcomes are directly impacted by the knowledge, experiences and expertise of those individuals occupying prominent managerial roles in the organisation. In other words, the adoption of business

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development services by managers of SMEs depends on how they perceive its relevance (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). As Hambrick (2007) argues, each decision maker brings his or her own set of "givens" to an administrative situation and these givens reflect the decision maker's cognitive base: knowledge or assumptions about future events; knowledge of alternatives; and knowledge of consequences attached to alternatives.

Nielsen (2010) puts forward that complex decisions in a firm are not always based on rational processes, but are largely the outcome of behavioural factors, such as bounded rationality, multiple and conflicting goals and varying aspiration levels. Bounded rationality is the idea that informationally complex and uncertain situations are not objectively "knowable", but rather are merely interpretable (Kinuu, Murgor, Ongeti, Letting & Aosa, 2012). Following these assumptions, Ng'ang'a et al. (2014) used the Upper Echelons Theory to explain the influence of manager personal characteristics on the demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises in Kenya.

As summarised In Figure 1, the situation that a strategic decision maker faces is complex and made up of far more phenomena than he or she can possibly comprehend and, therefore, the decision maker brings a cognitive base and values to a decision, which creates a screen between the situation and his/her eventual perception of it (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Strategic decision making under bounded rationality can take a perceptual process conceptualised by taking a sequential view (Hambrick, 2007). First, the manager's field of vision is restricted, which poses a limitation on their

perceptions. Second, the manager's perceptions are limited further, because they selectively perceive only what is included in their field of vision.
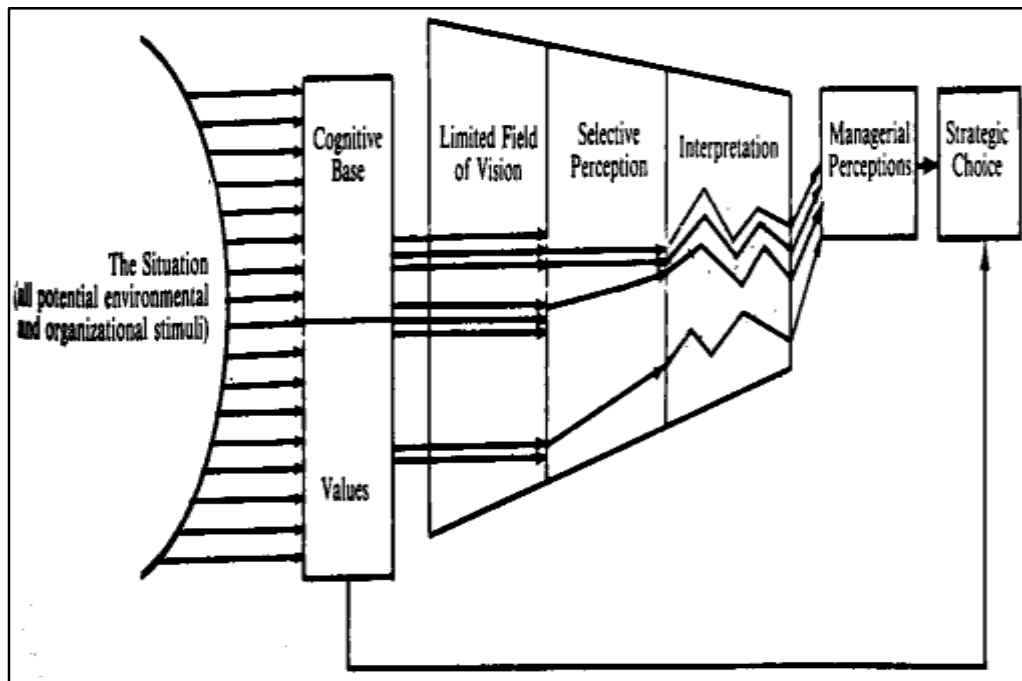
Figure 1: Strategic choices under condition of bounded rationality

Source: Hambrick and Mason (1984)

Finally, information selected for processing is interpreted through a filter woven by one's cognitive base and values. The manager's eventual perception of the situation combines with his values to provide the basis for strategic choice (Kinuu et al., 2012).

Upper echelons theory and the adoption of business development services by SMEs

The publication of the influential work of Hambrick and Mason (1984) on the Upper Echelons Theory heralded the interest amongst researchers on the study of how the human side of managers, such as their backgrounds and psychological characteristics, influenced the decisions they made (Nielsen,

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2010). The Upper Echelons Theory suggested that the personal characteristics, such as age, sex, work experiences, education, social-economic extraction and financial position, of the firm manager had a strong influence on the direction and performance of a business. The foundation of this theory was that executives' experience, values and personalities greatly influenced the interpretations of situations they faced and, in turn, the choices they made (Irungu, 2007).

Empirical Review

The empirical review section presented the methodology and results of studies closely related to the research topic. It was structured into four thematic areas, which were consistent with the stated research objectives. The thematic areas were: influence of age on the adoption of business development services, influence of sex on the adoption of business development services, influence of work experience on the adoption of business development services, and influence of education on the adoption of business development services. In addition, the empirical review ascertained the gap which the present study sought to fill, and identified the similarities and contradictions in such studies.

Influence of age on the adoption of business development services

Existing literature shows a likely association between age of managers of SMEs and the usage of business development services. Lema (2013) analysed the influence of age on the performance of SMEs in Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania. The towns considered were Moshi urban, Moshi Rural,

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Hai, Siha, Same and Mwanga. The study used the cross sectional study design in which data were collected from 200 SMEs owners and managers. Regression results indicated that age was a significant contributing factor to the performance of SMEs. Despite the contributions that the author has made to existing literature, Lema's (2013) study was limited to performance of SMEs, neglecting SMEs adoption of business development services.

Ng'ang'a et al. (2014) used the Upper Echelons Theory to explain the influence of manager's age on the demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises in Kenya. In their systematic review, they established that age was a key individual characteristic that drives demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises. However, the authors did not conduct any empirical investigation to support their conclusions.

Sharma (2015) assessed the relationship between age and willingness to use e-government services in Oman. Data were collected using Google forms from 248 e-government service users. Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the research model. Parallel to the study by Ng'ang'a et al. (2014), the researcher discovered that age of users showed a statistically significant relationship with their willingness to use e-government services. However, the study was limited to e-government services, ignoring users' willingness to use business development services.

Kupangwa and Dubihlela (2016) investigated the relationship between employees' age and perceived factors that influence the adoption and use of e-business technologies in SMEs operating in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the

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influence of age on the e-business technology adoption and use in the context of retailers. In contrast to the study by Sharma (2015), the results showed no significant difference in the age of employees with respect to e-business technology adoption and usage. Yet, Sharma's study ignored the influence of age on the adoption of business development services.

Welmilla et al. (2017) conducted a study, which sought to identify the impact of age of owners on the development of small and medium business in the tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Using the correlational research design, cross sectional study design, simple random sampling technique, completed questionnaires were retrieved from 100 small and medium business owners. Contrary to the study by Kupangwa and Dubihlela (2016), correlation and regression analysis showed that most SMEs were owned and managed by individuals who were middle-aged adults (31 to 40 years), which had a positive impact on their development. Nonetheless, the study ignored SMEs adoption of business development services.

Dzomonda and Fatoki (2018) investigated the effect of rural entrepreneurs' age on the financial management behaviour in South Africa. The quantitative research design was utilised and the survey method was used for data collection. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 100 participants. The convenience and snowball sampling methods were used to identify the study participants. The Cronbach's alpha was used as a measure of reliability. In contrast to the finding by Welmilla et al. (2017), t-test results showed no significant differences in age with respect to the financial management behaviours among rural entrepreneurs. Although their study contributed to the body of knowledge, it neglected to consider the

differences in entrepreneur's age regarding the adoption of business development services.

Gleaning from the views, it is evident that the age of managers could influence the adoption of business development services among SMEs. This idea led to the first objective of this dissertation, which sought to analyse the influence of age of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The study expects to find significant differences in the age of SME managers regarding the adoption of business development services.

Influences of sex/gender on the adoption of business development services

Lema (2013) examined the influence of sex on the performance of SMEs in Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania. The towns considered were Moshi urban, Moshi Rural, Hai, Siha, Same and Mwanga. The study used the cross sectional study design in which data was collected from 200 SMEs owners and managers. Regression results indicated that sex did not significantly contribute to the performance of SMEs. Despite the contributions that the analyst has made to existing literature, Lema's (2013) study was limited to performance of SMEs, neglecting to consider SME adoption of business development services.

Welmilla et al. (2017) conducted a study, which sought to identify the impact of sex of owners on the development of small and medium business in the tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Using the correlational research design, cross sectional study design, simple random sampling technique, completed questionnaires were retrieved from 100 small and medium business owners.

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Contrary to the finding of Lema (2013), Welmilla et al. (2017) found support for significant differences in SME development between male and female owners with males being advantaged, after conducting independent-test analysis. The analysts therefore recommended for that policy makers should lessen the obstacles faced by women owners. The study highlighted the need for interventions to be provided to support women engaged in SMEs. Although their study made valuable contributions to the body of knowledge, it neglected to consider the adoption of business development services by those SMEs.

Dzomonda and Fatoki (2018) investigated the effect of rural entrepreneurs' sex on the financial management behaviour in South Africa. The quantitative research design was utilised and the survey method was used for data collection. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 100 participants. The convenience and snowball sampling methods were used to identify the study participants. The Cronbach's alpha was used as a measure of reliability. In contrast to the finding by Welmilla et al. (2017), t-test results showed no significant difference in sex/gender with respect to the financial management behaviours among rural entrepreneurs. Although their study contributes to the body of knowledge, it neglected to consider the differences in entrepreneur's sex/gender regarding the adoption of business development services.

With these findings in mind, it was manifested that the sex/gender of managers could influence the adoption of business development services among SMEs. This led to the formulation of the second objective of this research project, which sought to test the influence of sex/gender of managers

on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis. It is therefore anticipated that sex/gender would influence SME managers' adoption of business development services.

Influences of work experience on the adoption of business development services

Prevailing literature revealed the probability of a positive influence of work experience of managers of SMEs on the adoption of business development services. Ng'ang'a et al. (2014) used the Upper Echelons Theory to elucidate the influence of manager's work experience on the demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises in Kenya. In their systematic review, they established that work experience was a key individual characteristic that drive demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises. Yet, the authors did not conduct any empirical examination to support their conclusions.

Isaga (2015) contributed to the understanding of the influence of work experience on the growth of SMEs in Tanzania. A survey method was used to gather data from 300 small business owners and managers located in selected cities in Tanzania. Regression analysis was conducted to analyse the influence of owner-manager's industrial and managerial experience on the growth of SMEs. Three indicators for growth, namely employment, sales and assets, were used to measure growth. Consistent to the argument put forward by Ng'ang'a et al. (2014), the results suggested that industrial and managerial experience influenced the growth of SMEs. Nonetheless, Isaga's (2015) study

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did not pay attention to SMEs managers' adoption of business development services.

Sreih et al. (2016) examined the structural relationship between entrepreneurial experience, support for community and family firm performance. Partial least-squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to collect the data from 176 family businesses from two sectors of the economy – product manufacturing and service-based organisations. In consonance with the study by Isaga (2015), the empirical results indicated that length of time as a business owner and numbers of businesses owned in the past were significant predictors of business's support for the community, and family firm performance. Yet, the analysis ignored business owner's adoption of business development services.

Welmilla et al. (2017) conducted a study, which sought to identify the impact of work experience of owners on the development of small and medium business in the tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Using the correlational research design, cross sectional study design, simple random sampling technique, completed questionnaires were retrieved from 100 small and medium business owners. Similar to the study by Sreih et al. (2016), correlation and regression analysis unveiled that SME owners who were more experienced had the possibility to survive in the industry. It was, therefore, recommended that SME owners should share and implement best practices and experiences to be able to respond appropriately to the needs of the industry. Nevertheless, the study ignored SMEs adoption of business development services.

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In the light of the above discussion, it appears work experience of managers could influence the adoption of business development services among SMEs. This led to the formulation of the third objective of this dissertation, which sought to examine the influence of work experience of SMEs managers on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis. It is, therefore, anticipated that work experience would positively influence SME managers' adoption of business development services.

Influences of education on the adoption of business development services

Studies show a likely positive relationship between educational attainment and the usage of business development services among managers. Lema (2013) analysed the influence of educational level on the performance of SMEs in Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania. The towns considered were Moshi urban, Moshi Rural, Hai, Siha, Same and Mwanga. The study used the cross sectional study design in which data was collected from 200 SMEs owners and managers. Regression outcomes indicated that educational level was a significant contributing factor to the performance of SMEs.

The researcher recommended that policy makers should assist SMEs owner and managers to improve upon their education. The investigator added that, if possible, business and entrepreneurship subjects should be made compulsory in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools so as to equip learners with appropriate business and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, which will encourage them to start and manage business successful. Despite the contributions that the author made to existing literature, Lema's (2013)

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study was limited to performance of SMEs, neglecting SMEs adoption of business development services.

In their systematic review, Ng'ang'a et al. (2014) used the Upper Echelons Theory to explain the influence of owner/manager age on the demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises in Kenya. Parallel to the finding of Lema (2013), the analysers established that awareness or knowledge was a key individual characteristic that drive demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises. Nevertheless, the authors did not conduct any empirical investigation to support their inferences.

Sharma (2015) assessed the relationship between educational level and willingness to use-e-government services in Oman. Data were collected using Google forms from 248 e-government service users. Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the research model. Parallel to the study by Ng'ang'a et al. (2014), the researcher discovered that educational level of users showed a statistically significant relationship with their willingness to use e-government services. However, the study was limited to e-government services, ignoring users' willingness to use business development services.

Isaga (2015) contributed to the understanding of the influence of workshop and vocational training on the growth of SMEs in Tanzania. A survey method was used to gather data from 300 small business owners and managers from the furniture sector located in selected cities in Tanzania. Regression analysis was conducted to analyse the influence of owner-manager's workshop and vocational training on the growth of SMEs. Three indicators for growth, namely employment, sales and assets were used to

measure growth. The results suggested that workshop and vocational training influenced the growth of SMEs. On the other hand, formal education successfully completed by the owner-managers was not important in explaining the growth of SMEs. Nonetheless, Isaga's (2015) study did not pay attention to SMEs managers' adoption of business development services.

Gyamfi (2015) investigated the factors that affect the adoption of e-marketing among SMEs. Employing the quantitative research approach and IBM SPSS Statistics software, the results showed that lack of knowledge was a factor inhibiting the adoption of electronic marketing among SMEs in Kumasi, which was in line with the study by Isaga (2015). Sreih et al. (2016) examined the structural relationship between business owner's educational level, support for community and family firm performance. Partial least-squares structural equation modeling was used to collect the data from 176 family businesses from two sectors of the economy – product manufacturing and service-based organisations. In consonance with the study by Gyamfi (2015), Sreih et al. (2016) found that business owner's educational level was a significant predictor of business's support for the community, and family firm performance. Yet, their study ignored business owner's adoption of business development services.

Welmilla et al. (2017) performed an empirical study, which sought to identify the impact of education of owners on the development of small and medium business in the tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Using the correlational research design, cross sectional study design, simple random sampling technique, completed questionnaires were retrieved from 100 small and medium business owners. Similar to the discovery of Sreih et al. (2016),

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correlation and regression analysis disclosed that when educational level goes up, development of SMEs goes up too. The investigators therefore recommended that SME owners should develop their professional skills so as to be able to respond appropriately to the needs of the industry. Nevertheless, their study did not focus on SMEs adoption of business development services.

Dzomonda and Fatoki (2018) investigated the effect of rural entrepreneurs' level of education on the financial management behaviour in South Africa. The quantitative research design was utilised and the survey method was used for data collection. The self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 100 participants. The convenience and snowball sampling methods were used to identify the study participants. The Cronbach's alpha was used as a measure of reliability. Similar to the study by Sreih et al. (2016), t-test results showed significant differences in the level of education with respect to the financial management behaviours among rural entrepreneurs. Although their study contributed to the body of knowledge, it neglected to consider the differences in the level of education regarding the adoption of business development services.

Gleaning from the views above, it is evident that the education of managers could influence the adoption of business development services among SMEs. This led to the establishment of the fourth and final objective of this research project, which sought to ascertain the influence of education of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis. It is, therefore, anticipated that education would positively influence SME managers' adoption of business development services. Accordingly, a relationship was established between the personal

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characteristics of SME managers and the adoption of business development services by SMEs. This relationship was articulated in the conceptual framework developed below.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

This section considered the conceptual framework of the study. It elucidates that writer's idea on how the study was explored. The conceptual framework presented in Figure 2 displayed the influence of the independent variable, personal characteristics of SME managers; and the dependent variable, adoption of business development services. To be precise, the conceptual framework suggested relationships between the independent variables: age, sex, work experience, and education attainment among managers SMEs and the dependent variable, represented by the adoption of business development services. This relationship was deeply rooted in the Upper Echelons Theory, which has been credited to Hambrick and Mason (1984).
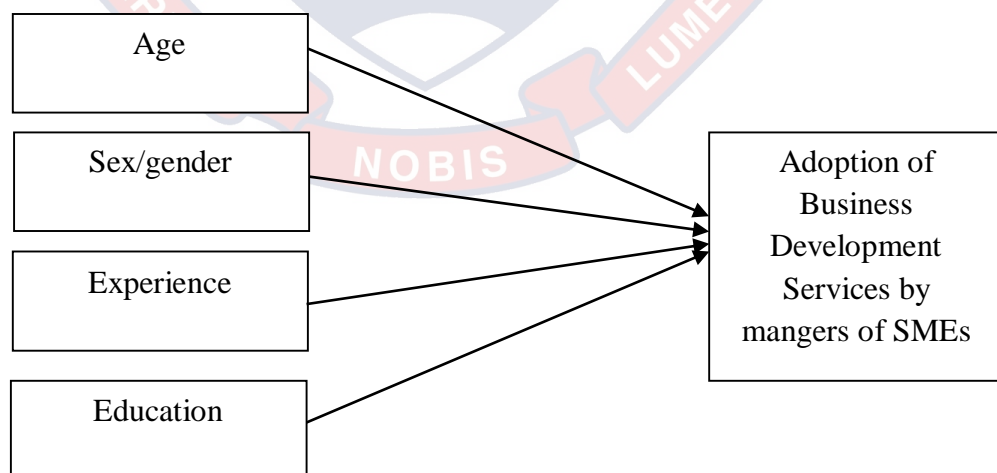
Figure 2: Conceptual framework of the study

Source: Author's construct, Obo-Bonney (2019) based on literature

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Lessons Learnt from the Literature Review

This section detailed the lessons learnt from the review of related literature. With respect to the conceptual issues, the literature showed that business development services help to improve the performance of the enterprise, its access to markets, and its ability to compete. In addition, business development services are provided in a number of different ways, such as through business support centres, mentoring, clusters and networks, business incubators, specialized or general training programmes or institutions, venture capital, training of human resource, provision of information on market linkages, logistical and technical support, training on book keeping and monitoring, and provision of other networking service. They are both strategic and operational in nature. The delivery agents for these services are public agencies, academic institutions, the private sector or non-governmental organisations. Further, a few scholars have proposed that, demographic characteristics of managers, such age, sex, work experience, and educational attainment has a likely impact on the usage of business development services.

Regarding the theoretical review, it was learnt that the Upper Echelons Theory helps in elucidating the impact of personal and psychological characteristics of top managers and executives of SMEs on strategic choices, including the willingness to adopt business development services. In other words, the theory assumes that choices made by top management of an organisation, formally and informally, reflect the idiosyncrasies of these decision makers. In view of the relevance of the theory, other researchers have employed it in their study, notable among them is Ng'ang'a et al. (2014).

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Considering the empirical review, the literature established that although studies have explored the effect of top managers' and employees' personal characteristics on other organisational outcomes, such as performance, willingness to use e-government services, adoption and use of e-business technologies, development of SMEs and financial management behaviour, extant literature addressing the influence of top managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services is surprisingly limited. It is this gap the present study seeks to fill.

With respect to methodological issues, the literature revealed that the studies on the subject matter employed the quantitative research approach and the cross-sectional study design. While most of the researchers employed the random sampling method, such as simple random sampling technique, others chose the non-probability sampling method, particularly convenience and snowball sampling. The analytical tools employed by the investigators were independent-samples t-test, ANOVA, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. In particular, independent-samples t-test and ANOVA were used to test the significant differences among demographic variables, with respect to other outcome variables. Correlation and regression analysis were used to analyse the relationship between demographic characteristics and other outcome variables. A questionnaire was the instrument adopted by the researchers.

Chapter Summary

This Chapter covered the review of related literature. It was organised under five headings, namely conceptual review, the theoretical review,

empirical review, conceptual framework, and lessons learnt from the review of related literature. The conceptual review explained the concept and variables that emanated from the research topic, namely business development services and personal characteristics of managers: age, sex, work experience, and educational attainment; and the definition of SMEs globally and locally. The theoretical review discussed the Upper Echelons Theory and how the study guided the present study.

The empirical review section presented the methodology and results of studies closely related to the research topic. It was structured into three thematic areas, which were consistent with the stated research objectives. The thematic areas were: influence of age on the adoption of business development services, influence of sex/gender on the adoption of business development services, influence of work experience on the adoption of business development services, and influence of education on the adoption of business development services. The conceptual framework illuminated the writer's idea on how the present study was explored, with backing from the Upper Echelons Theory. The lessons learnt from the literature review were also discussed in this Chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This study sought to assess the influence of small and medium-sized managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The Chapter presents the research approach, research design, study design, population, sampling procedure and sample size, pre-test, data collection methods and instrument, ethical considerations, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Approach

There are three main types of research approaches, namely the quantitative, qualitative and mixed approaches. Yin (2017) suggests that the research approach employed should accommodate the research objectives. As such, based on the stated research objectives of the present study, which contains variables that are measured numerically or are quantitative in nature, the quantitative research approach was adopted. Among the many advantages of quantitative research approach is its ability to enhance speed of conducting a research.

Further, quantitative research approach offers a broader coverage of a series of events, where statistics are combined from a larger sample (Amarantunga & Baldry, 2002). In addition, quantitative approach enhances the use of statistical data analysis methods, thus, making it easier to generalise the findings from the study. Furthermore, quantitative approaches take the guesswork to a more concrete conclusion. This is because the analyses

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undertaken are usually based on quantitative measures rather than interpretation, thereby enabling the generalisation of the results of the study.

Research Design

Most researches fall into one of the three different categories: exploratory, descriptive and causal (also called explanatory). Each of these serves a different purpose and could only be used in certain ways (Malhotra & Malhotra, 2012). Exploratory research design focuses on the discovery of ideas and insights as opposed to collecting statistically accurate data. The most common example of exploratory research takes place in the form of open-ended questions. Text responses may not be statistically measureable, but they will give you richer quality information that can lead to the discovery of new initiatives or problems that should be addressed (Yin, 2017). Literature research, survey, focus group and case studies are usually used to carry out exploratory research (Darabi, 2007).

Descriptive research is considered conclusive in nature due to its quantitative nature. Unlike exploratory research, descriptive research is preplanned and structured in design so the information collected could be statistically inferred on a population. The main idea behind using this type of research is to better define an opinion, attitude, or behaviour held by a group of people on a given subject (Robson, 1993). Since there are predefined categories a respondent must choose from, it is considered descriptive research. These questions will not give the unique insights on the issues like exploratory research would.

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Instead, grouping the responses into predetermined choices will provide statistically inferable data. This allows you to measure the significance of your results on the overall population you are studying, as well as the changes of your respondent's opinions, attitudes, and behaviours over time (Bryman & Bell, 2015). When a particular phenomenon is under study, the research is needed to describe it, to clarify and explain its inner relationships and properties (Huczynski & Buchana, 2004). However, descriptive research should be thought of as a means to an end rather than an end in itself (Yin, 2017).

Like descriptive research, causal research is quantitative in nature as well as preplanned and structured in design. For this reason, it is also considered conclusive research. Causal research differs in its attempt to explain the cause and effect relationship between variables. This is opposed to the observational style of descriptive research, because it attempts to decipher whether a relationship is causal through experimentation. In the end, causal research will have two objectives: 1) To understand which variables are the causes and which variables are the effects and 2) to determine the nature of the relationship between the causal variables and the effect to be predicted (Yin, 2017). Therefore, given that the research objectives are predictive in nature or relationship-based, the explanatory research design was adopted for this study.

Study Design

A study design constitutes a general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research questions (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). There are many types of research strategies and various scholars classify them in

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different ways. For example, Saunders and Lewis (2012) refer to experiments, surveys, case studies, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and archival research. Bryman and Bell (2015) maintain that a study design consists of five types: experimental design, cross-sectional or survey design, longitudinal design, case study design, and comparative design. In addition, according to Yin (2017), in choosing a study design there are three conditions to be considered: the type of research objective, the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events and the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events. Given the type of research objectives adopted, the researcher's limited control over actual behavioural events, and the researcher's high degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events, the cross-sectional survey design was used as the study design for the study.

Study Area

The study was conducted in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly was established as a Municipality by LI 1373 in 1987. In February 2007, it was elevated to a Metropolitan status by LI 1927. In 2012, the Metropolis was separated into two (2) constituencies or sub-metros namely the Cape Coast South Sub Metropolitan Assembly and the Cape Coast North Sub Metropolitan Assembly. The Cape Coast Metropolis is bounded to the south by the Gulf of Guinea, West by the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem District (at Iture Bridge), East by the Abura Asebu Kwamankese District and to the North by the Twifu Heman Lower Denkyira District. The District occupies an Area of approximately 122 square

kilometres, with the farthest point at Brabedze, about 17 kilometres from Cape Coast, the capital of the Metropolis as well as the Central Region (CCMA, 2018).

The population engaged in; self-employment is 7.4 per cent, government employment is 33 per cent; agriculture is 10.7 per cent and the overall population in private sector employment is 63.0%, highlighting the relevance of promoting SMEs' growth and development in the metropolis. The total unemployment rate in the metropolis is 11.3 per cent. The vision of the metropolis is to ensure the total transformation of Cape Coast into a peaceful and progressive Metropolis with a high standard of living, basic infrastructure and social services, and a conducive atmosphere where the hopes and aspirations of the people can be realized in full. Its mission is to improve the quality of life of the people in the Metropolis through the provision of social and other amenities and good governance in partnership with the communities and other stakeholders. One of the broad objectives of the metropolis under the thematic areas from Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda II is to enhance competitiveness in Ghana's private sector by expanding opportunities for job creation (CCMA, 2018).

Population

Population is made up of all the units of the group that the research emphasizes on. Malhotra (1996) opines that the members or units of the group should possess material facts relevant to the study and the researcher. According to Rubin and Babbie (2001), target population is the theoretically specified aggregation of study elements. Consequently, all the managers of

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SMEs that have been registered with the NBSSI in the Cape Coast Metropolis, numbering 884 as at January 2017 formed the target population of this study. Data from NBSSI suggested that, of the 884 SMEs, only 160 managers of these SMEs have ever accessed business development services. As such, the 160 SMEs, comprising 115 small and 45 medium entreprises, formed the sampling frame for the study,

Sampling Procedure

Owing to the small size of the target population and the sampling frame, a census was used to select all 160 SMEs to serve as samples for this study. The managers of SMEs served as respondents for this study, because they take major decisions within their respective businesses. According to Israel (2013), a census is attractive for smaller populations, such as 200 or less. Efforts were made to reach most of the managers of the SMEs to get large data and to achieve the desired level of precision.

Data Collection Instrument

Data collection was conducted within a period of four weeks, from the day the instrument was administered (1st August, 2017) to the day they were finally retrieved (29th August, 2017). The study employed structured questionnaire (Appendix A), as the sole instrument for data collection. A questionnaire is regarded as an efficient way of collecting statistically 'quantifiable data' and it could also be used to obtain responses from a large number within a short space of time (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The questionnaire was made up of two sections (Sections A and B), comprising 11

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items altogether. The first section solicited for the demographic characteristics of respondents, consisting of four items, namely age, sex/gender, number of years in business, and highest educational qualification attained. The demographic characteristics of respondents were measured on a categorical scale.

The second section contained statements geared towards obtaining data on the adoption of business development services by SMEs. Sample item was: "In my enterprise, we acquire bookkeeping services to help improve our accounting record keeping" (B02), which was anchored on a seven-point Likert-type scale: score 1=weakest agreement, 2=weaker agreement, 3=weak agreement, 4=moderate agreement, 5=strong agreement, 6=stronger agreement, 7=strongest agreement; consisting of seven items. The study employed an interval scale as the scale of measurement for measuring the adoption of business development services.

Ethical Considerations

A study by Patten and Newhart (2017) revealed the major ethical issues that need to be considered in every research. These major ethical issues consisted of voluntary participation, right to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of information. As such, all efforts were made in ensuring that these ethical issues were considered. Regarding voluntary participation, every respondent was allowed to participate in the data collection exercise on his/her own free will. Also, the possible issues of right to privacy was realised by allowing respondents to answer the questionnaires on their own and unclear

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questions were appropriately attended to through their own convenient medium.

Further, the issue of anonymity was attended to by restricting respondents from providing detailed information about themselves on the questionnaire in relation to names, contact numbers and personal addresses. Respondents were also assured that none of the information provided would be used for purposes other than this study. Finally, the study ensured confidentiality of information by assuring respondents that all information provided would be kept confidential.

Pre-testing

Pre-testing of the instrument was done before the main study. The essence of the pre-test was to enable the researcher ascertain possible errors and ambiguities in the instrument and make the necessary corrections. To achieve this, 15 questionnaires were pre-tested in the Mfantseman Municipality, located in the Central Region. This number met the criteria by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) that a pre-test should be less than 10 percent of the sample. The motivation for the choice of Mfantseman Municipality was that participants in that district had similar characteristics as those in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Data Collection Procedures

The self-administered questionnaire process was used to collect data from the managers of the SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The researcher identified participants at their work places and handed over the questionnaires

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to them, with the help of five field assistants, who were trained by the researcher. Expressed another way, the researcher and the field assistants went directly to the offices and premises of the various enterprises and then handed over the questionnaires to the managers. The researcher used four weeks for the administration of the questionnaires. The first week was used for the distribution of all the questionnaires, and the next two week was allowed for respondents to complete the questionnaires. On the fourth, the researcher went round to collect the questionnaires. Of the 160 questionnaires distributed, 125 questionnaires were completed; hence, a response rate of 78.12 percent was attained. The non-response rate was 21.88 percent.

Data Processing and Analysis

After the data collection exercise, the completed questionnaires were subjected to scrutiny to ensure that any possible error arising from incomplete and wrongly filled in questionnaires were eliminated or minimised. The error-free questionnaires were carefully coded and edited to avoid missing values, after which the data were processed. IBM SPSS Statistics for window, version 23 was used to analyse the data collected and the results attained were displayed in tables. The demographic characteristics of respondents were analysed, using frequencies and percentages. Descriptive statistical tools, namely mean, standard deviation and one-sample t-test were used to analyse SMEs adoption of business development services.

The first objective of the study, which sought to analyse the influence of age of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, was analysed, using regression analysis.

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The second objective of the study, which sought to test the influence of sex/gender of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, was analysed, using the independent-samples t-test. The third objective of the study, which sought to examine the influence of work experience of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, was analysed, using regression analysis. Similarly, the fourth and final objective, which sought to ascertain the influence of education of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, was analysed, using regression analysis.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the research methods, with discussions on research approach, research design, study design, population, sampling procedure and sample size, pre-testing, data collection methods and instrument, ethical considerations, and data processing and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This study sought to assess the influence of small and medium-sized managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis. This Chapter presented the results and discussion. First of all, the demographic characteristics of respondents were displayed and discussed, using frequencies and percentages. Subsequently, a test for normality of data was conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. This test was necessary to inform the decision to employ either parametric or non-parametric test tools in analysing the data. Afterwards, the chapter examined SME manager's adoption of business development services, using descriptive statistical tools, namely mean, standard deviation and one-sample t-test. Successively, the research objectives of the study were analysed, using independent-samples t-test and regression analysis. The Chapter ended with a Chapter summary.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of respondents, who were the managers of SMEs registered with NBSSI and operating within the Cape Coast Metropolis. The characteristics considered were their ages, sex, number of years in business, and highest educational qualification attained. The results showed that, of the 125 completed questionnaires that were used for the analysis, a majority of 70 respondents (56.00%) were males, while the remaining 55 (44.00%) were females, connoting that the respondents

were slightly dominated by males (Table 1). This result confirms the statement by Kabeer (2016) that the gap between men and women has always existed, and, in many cases, the possibilities for women to participate in working life have been/is difficult due to women's main responsibilities for children. Moreover, the result mirrors the declaration by Ajayi et al. (2015) that in terms of managers of SMEs, the majority of them are men, even though the number of female managers has increased.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Particulars		Frequency	Percent
Age in years:	18 to 30 years	20	16.00
	31 to 50 years	58	46.40
	> 50 years	47	37.60
Sex/gender:	Male	70	56.00
	Female	55	44.00
Number of years in business:	Less than 3 years	13	10.40
	3 to 5 years	20	16.00
	6 to10 years	57	45.60
	More than 10 years	35	28.00
Educational Qualification:	Basic School	7	5.60
	Secondary School	10	8.00
	Vocational Training	63	50.40
	University Education	45	36.00

Source: Field survey, Obo-Bonney (2017)

Regarding the ages of respondents, the study adopted the age classifications proposed by Yarlagadda et al. (2015). In line with this age classification, it came to light that most of the respondents were middle -aged adults (31 to 50 years, n=58, 46.40%), followed by senior adults (>50 years, n=47, 37.60), and, finally, the young adults (18 to 30 years, n=20, 16.00). This finding is displayed in Table 1, and it is in consonance with the study by Welmilla et al. (2017) in Sri Lanka, where the analysts found that most SMEs were owned and managed by individuals who were middle-aged adults.

With respect to working experience, most of the managers have worked in their respective businesses for 6 to 10 years (n=57, 45.60%), followed by more than 10 years (n=35, 28.00%), signalling that majority of the managers have worked in their respective firms 6 years and above (Table 1). This result indicated that most of the managers have considerable working experiences in their respective positions; hence, they are likely to make informed contributions to the study.

Last, but not least, the result denoted that most of the SME managers have acquired vocational training (n=63, 50.40%) and university education (n=45, 36.00%) as their highest educational qualification achieved (Table 1). This outcome connotes that most of the SME managers have gained some appreciable level of educational qualification; hence, they can easily comprehend the statements on the questionnaire and, therefore, will be in a good position to make informed contributions to the study.

Test for Normality in the Data

In selecting the suitable measure of central tendency and dispersion to analyse the data from SME managers, the researcher tested for normality in data, as recommended by Adam (2018), employing the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of IBM SPSS Statistics for windows, version 23. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was preferred over Shapiro-Wilk test, since the dataset used was larger than 50 elements: n=125. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test calculated the probability that the sample was drawn from a normal distribution. It required the specification of a hypothesis statement, as shown below:

H_0: The sample are not significantly different from a normally distributed data or the sample data are normally distributed.

H_1: The sample are significantly different from a normally distributed data or the sample data are not normally distributed.

Regarding the decision rule, if the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yields a significance level less than the alpha level (0.05), it means that the distribution is not normal. Conversely, if the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test yields a significance level greater than the alpha level (0.05), it means that the distribution is normal. As portrayed in Table 2, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test indicated that the *p*-values for all the variables were more than the alpha level of 0.05, hence, the analyst failed to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that the samples for age, sex/gender, number of years in business, highest education qualification attained, and adoption of business development services were not significantly different from a normally distributed data. Put in another way, the samples for all the variables were normally distributed (Table 2).

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Table 2: Test for Normality

Details	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Age	.045	125	.070[*]
Sex/gender	.072	125	.093[*]
Number of years in business	.145	125	.110[*]
Highest education qualification attained	.132	125	.113[*]
Adoption of business development services	.272	125	.313[*]

Source: Obo-Bonney (2017)

This result informed the researcher to use parametric test tools to analyse the data. Specifically, the mean (*M*) was used as the measure of central tendency, and standard deviation (*SD*) was employed as a measure of dispersion to analyse adoption of business development services by SME managers in the Cape Coast Metropolis. In addition, one-sample t-test was employed to ascertain whether the sample was significantly different from the known difference in mean. In line with the usage of parametric test tools, ANOVA technique was used to analyse research objective two, and simple regression analysis was used to analyse the research objectives one, three and four.

Adoption of Business Development Services by SME Managers

Prior to analysing the research objectives of the present study, it was prudent to examine the SME manager's level of adoption of business development services. To do so, seven indicators/statements were measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale from score 1=weakest agreement, 2=weaker

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agreement, 3=weak agreement, 4=moderate agreement, 5=strong agreement, 6=stronger agreement, 7=strongest agreement. These scores were generalised based on respondents' views regarding each of the positive statements under "Adoption of Business Development Services" on the questionnaire. The cut-off point for the scale was arrived at, using the mean of the scale minus 0.1, as used by earlier researchers (Koomson, 2017; Oppong, 2019; Yeboah, 2013).

As such, a mean range of 1.0 to 3.9 *suggests low level of agreement* from respondents, while a mean range of 4.0 to 7.0 *suggests high level of agreement* from respondents. From Table 3, it is evident that the statements that measured the adoption of business development services on the questionnaire were within the mean interval of 5.534 to 5.877, signalling *high level of agreement* from respondents. At the same time, the standard deviation of the statements ranged from .853 to 1.297, suggesting virtually *low variability* in respondents' opinion. In addition, Table 2 shows that all the statements that measured SME managers' adoption of business development services were statistically significant at a confidence level of 95 per cent, because the t-values were greater than 1.96. Put in another way, the p-values were less than 0.05.

Table 3: One-Sample T-Test of Adoption of Business Development Services (n=125)

Statements/Indicators	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	p-value
In my business, we receive diverse regular training for all staff.	5.795	1.297	35.356	124	.000*
In my enterprise, we acquire bookkeeping services to help improve our accounting record keeping.	5.740	1.115	40.544	124	.000*
In my business, we solicit for information that is useful in the SME sector.	5.493	1.140	37.019	124	.000*
In my enterprise, we adopt technologies and logistical support that can enhance efficient services delivery.	5.644	.853	51.622	124	.000*
In my business, we seek advice on how to partner with large firms so that we can benefit from their network.	5.534	.941	45.394	124	.000*
We usually seek the services of business development agents to monitor our progress and make recommendations for improved growth.	5.877	1.162	40.312	124	.000*
B07. In my firm, we consider the business advice given to us by non-governmental organisations, NBSSI, and other government agencies.	5.562	.925	46.547	124	.000*

Source: Field survey, Obo-Bonney (2017)

The specifics of the statements were: (1) In my business, we receive diverse regular training for all staff [M=5.795, SD=1.297, t(124)= 35.356, p=.000, 2-tailed], (2) In my enterprise, we acquire bookkeeping services to help improve our accounting record keeping [M=5.740, SD=1.115, t(124)= 40.544, p=.000, 2-tailed], (3) In my business, we solicit for information that is useful in the SME sector [M=5.493, SD=1.140, t(124)= 37.019, p=.000, 2-tailed], (4) In my enterprise, we adopt technologies and logistical support that can enhance efficient services delivery [M=5.644, SD=.853, t(125)=51.622, p=.000, 2-tailed],

(5) In my business, we seek advice on how to partner with large firms so that we can benefit from their network [M=5.534, SD=.941, t(125)=45.394, p=.000, 2-tailed], (6) We usually seek the services of business development agents to monitor our progress and make recommendations for improved growth [M=3.877, SD=1.162, t(268)= 40.312, p=.000, 2-tailed], and, finally, (7) In my firm, we consider the business advice given to us by non-governmental organisations, NBSSI, and other government agencies [M=5.562, SD=.925, t(124)= 46.547, p=.000, 2-tailed].

In the light of the above discussion, it was manifest that the SME managers expressed their strong affirmation towards their adoption of business development services, as the mean for all the indicators were above 4.0 and all the indicators being significant at 5 per cent. This result confirmed the sampling frame of this study, in that, the respondents, who are managers of SMEs, have accessed or have been accessing business development services from NBSSI Office within the Cape Coast Metropolis, which was a requirement to partake in the present study.

Influence of Age of Managers on the Adoption of Business Development Services by SMEs

The first objective of this study sought to analyse the influence of age of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Simple regression analysis displayed in Table 4 showed that there is a positive effect of age on the adoption of business development services by SMEs.

Table 4: Simple Regression Analysis of Age on SME Adoption of Business Development Services

Variable	Method	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Significance	B-constant	b-Value
Age	Linear	0.872	0.631	0.432	45.654	0.001	3.986	0.018

Dependent Variable: Adoption of business development services

Source: Field survey, Obo-Bonney (2017)

As indicated by Adjusted R squared, 43.2 per cent of the variance of adoption of business development services by SME managers was explained by Age. The F value was 45.654, which was significant at 1% (0.001). Accordingly, the regression equation of Age was Adoption of Business Development Services = 3.986 + 0.018 (Age). Based on this finding, it can be concluded that, as age of SME managers increased, their adoption of business development services also improved.

This discovery indirectly mirrors the finding of a study by Lema (2013) in Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania, where the analyst found that age was a significant contributing factor to the performance of SMEs. In addition,

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the finding is consistent with the declaration by Ng'ang'a et al. (2014) in their systematic review, that age was a key individual characteristic that drives demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises in Kenya. Moreover, the finding resembled the revelation by Sharna (2015) in Oman, wherein the author discovered that age of users showed a statistically significant relationship with their willingness to use e-government services. Furthermore, the finding is at parallel with the outcome of a study by Welmilla et al. (2017) in Sri Lanka, wherein the authors disclosed that age had a positive impact on the development of small and medium business owners.

Besides, this finding is agrees with the conceptual framework of the recent citation that, age of managers of SMEs within the Cape Coast Metropolis influences their adoption of business development services. Likewise, this finding contributed to the Upper Echelons Theory, that strategic choices in a firm are partially predicted by the managers' background characteristics. However, other writers had a different opinion. In their study, Kupangwa and Dubihlela (2016) showed no significant difference in the age of employees with respect to e-business technology adoption and usage among SMEs operating in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. In the same way, Dzomonda and Fatoki (2018) showed no significant differences in age with respect to the financial management behaviours among rural entrepreneurs in South Africa.

Influence of Sex of Managers on the Adoption of Business Development Services by SMEs

The second objective of this research project sought to test the influence of sex/gender of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Following the lessons learnt from the literature review, independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the adoption of business development services by males and female managers of SMEs within the Cape Coast Metropolis. From Table 5 and 6, the results showed that there was significant difference in mean scores for males [(M=6.99, SD=1.10, t(101)=-12.94, p>0.05) and females [(M=4.79, SD=.845], with males recording the highest in terms of mean.

Table 5: Group Statistics for Male and Female Managers

	Sex/Gender	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error [3]
Adoption of business development services	Male	70	6.99	1.10	.27
	Female	55	4.79	.845	.18

Source: Field survey, Obo-Bonney (2017)

Table 6: Independent Samples T-Test between Male and Female Managers on the Adoption of Business Development Services

		Levene's test for equality of variance		T-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Adoption of business development services	Equal variances assumed	10.38	.00	-12.94	118.00	.00	-2.2	.32	-.48	-3.55
	Equal variances not assumed			-12.94	101.14	.07	-2.2	.32	-.32	-.355

Source: Field survey, Obo-Bonney (2017)

The significant difference in the adoption of business development services by males and females managers compares well with the study by Welmilla et al. (2017) in Sri Lanka, wherein the authors found support for significant differences in SME development between male and female owners, with males being advantaged, after conducting independent-test analysis. Nonetheless, this finding contradicts the study by Lema (2013) in Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania, where the author indicated that sex did not significantly contribute to the performance of SMEs. Identical to the study by Lema (2013), Dzomonda and Fatoki (2018) also showed no significant difference in sex/gender with respect to the financial management behaviours among rural entrepreneurs.

Influences of Work Experience on the Adoption of Business Development Services

The third objective of this dissertation sought to test the influence of sex/gender of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Simple regression analysis displayed in Table 7 showed that there is a positive effect of work experience on the adoption of business development services by SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Consequently, the regression equation of work experience was: Adoption of Business Development Services=2.456+0.124(Work Experience). The b-value of the equation or the gradient of the regression was 0.124, which was significant at 1% (significant = 0.000). As indicated by the Adjusted R squared, 21% of the variance of adoption of business development services was explained by the work experience of SME managers.

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Table 7: Simple Regression Analysis of Work Experience on the Adoption of Business Development Services

Variable	Method	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Significance	B-constant	b-Value
Education	Linear	0.648	0.428	0.215	14.580	0.000	2.456	0.124

Source: Field survey, Obo-Bonney (2017)

The positive effect of work experience on the adoption of business development services by SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis insinuate that, as work experience rises, SME managers increase their adoption of business development services. This discovery matches up with the proclamation by Ng'ang'a et al. (2014), in their systematic review that work experience was a key individual characteristic that drives demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises. In addition, the discovery emulates the outcome of a study by Isaga (2015) in Tanzania, wherein the author disclosed that industrial and managerial experience of managers influenced the growth of their SMEs.

Furthermore, the discovery was in consonance with a study by Sreih et al. (2016), in which the authors revealed that length of time as a business owner was a significant predictor of business' support for the community, and family firm performance. To add, the discovery was in conformity with the outcome of a study by Welmilla et al. (2017) in Sri Lanka, wherein the authors unveiled that SME owners who were more experienced had the possibility to survive in the industry. Besides, the discovery agrees with the conceptual framework of the recent study that, work experience of managers of SMEs

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within the Cape Coast Metropolis influences their adoption of business development services. Likewise, the discovery contributed to the Upper Echelons Theory that strategic choices in a firm are partially predicted by the managers' background characteristics.

Influences of Education of Managers on the Adoption of Business Development Services

The fourth and final objective of this research project sought to test the influence of education of managers on the adoption of business development services by SMEs operating within the Cape Coast Metropolis. Simple regression analysis demonstrated in Table 8 showed that there is a positive effect of education of managers on the adoption of business development services by SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Table 8: Simple Regression Analysis of Education of Managers on the Adoption of Business Development Services

Variable	Method	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Significance	B-constant	b-Value
Education	Linear	0.386	0.128	0.042	4.580	0.002	3.648	0.111

Source: Field survey, Obo-Bonney (2017)

Therefore, the regression equation of education of managers was: Adoption of Business Development Services=3.648 + 0.111(Education). The b-value of the equation or the gradient of the regression was 0.111, which was significant at

1% (significant = 0.002). As indicated by the Adjusted R squared, 4.2% of the variance of adoption of business development services was explained by the education of SME managers.

This outcome resembles the result of a study by Lema (2013) in Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania, that educational level was a significant contributing factor to the performance of SMEs. Moreover, the result is in line with the assertion by Ng'ang'a et al. (2014), in their systematic review, that awareness or knowledge was a key individual characteristic that drives demand for business development services by micro and small enterprises. Further, the result can be likened to the study by Sharma (2015) in Oman, wherein the author discovered that educational level of users showed a statistically significant relationship with their willingness to use e-government services.

Also, the result is identical to the outcome of a study by Isaga (2015) in Tanzania, where the author found that workshop and vocational training influenced the growth of SMEs. Besides, the result mirrors the study by Gyamfi (2015) in Kumasi-Ghana, where the author showed that lack of knowledge was a factor inhibiting the adoption of electronic marketing among SMEs. Additionally, the result is similar to the study by Sreih et al. (2016), in which the authors discovered that business owner's educational level was a significant predictor of business' support for the community, and family firm performance.

To add, the result confirmed the result of a study by Welmilla et al. (2017) in Sri Lanka, where the authors presented that when educational level goes up, development of SMEs goes up too. Moreover, the result looked

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similar to the study by Dzomonda and Fatoki (2018) in South Africa, wherein the researchers found support for significant difference in the level of education with respect to the financial management behaviours among rural entrepreneurs. Besides, the result confirmed the conceptual framework of the present study, that education of managers of SMEs within the Cape Coast Metropolis influences their adoption of business development services. By the same token, the result contributed to the Upper Echelons Theory, that strategic choices in a firm are partially predicted by the managers' background characteristics.

Multivariate Analysis

Additionally, as a multivariate analysis, the multiple regression analysis was used in order to examine the simultaneous influence of all the independent variables on the dependent variable. The Adjusted R Square was 0.610, which indicated that 61 per cent of the variation in adoption of business development services by SMEs was illuminated by the four independent variables jointly. The F value was 32.985, which was significant at 1% ($p = 0.00$), which suggested that the four independent variables significantly explained 61 per cent of the variation in the adoption of business development services by SME managers operating within the Cape Coast Metropolis, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate	F	Sig. F
0.872	0.635	0.610	0.41448	32.985	0.000

Source: Field survey, Obo-Bonney (2017)

The discovery was in consonance with the conceptual framework of the present study, that personal characteristics of managers of SMEs within the Cape Coast Metropolis influenced their adoption of business development services. Likewise, the discovery confirmed the Upper Echelons Theory, that strategic choices in a firm are partially predicted by the managers' background characteristics.

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis

Furthermore, a stepwise regression was done in order to find out the extent of contribution of each variable to R Square value or the total explanatory power of the regression model. As shown in the Table 10, the results of stepwise regression indicated that there were four predictor variables that could significantly contribute to the Adjusted R Square value. The results of the stepwise multiple regression analysis indicated that work experience of managers contributed 45.70% to the variance in the adoption of business development services by SME managers in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Age, education and sex/gender contributed about 22.30%, 12.70%, and 6.20% respectively.

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Table 10: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	R Square	R Square Change	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig. value
Experience	0.457	0.457	0.454	134.674	0.000
Age	0.680	0.223	0.514	80.281	0.000
Education	0.807	0.127	0.564	66.220	0.000
Sex/Gender	0.869	0.062	0.610	54.005	0.000

Source: Field survey, Obo-Bonney (2017)

Summary of Key Findings

In line with the research objectives of the present study, the findings showed that:

1) There was a positive effect of age on the adoption of business development services by managers of SMEs operating in the Cape Coast Metropolis;

2) There was significant difference in the adoption of business development services by male and female manages of SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, with males being advantaged over females;

3) There was a positive effect of work experience on the adoption of business development services by SME managers in the Cape Coast Metropolis; and

4) There was a positive effect of education of managers on the adoption of business development services by SME managers operating in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

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Chapter Summary

This Chapter presented the results and discussion. First of all, the demographic characteristics of respondents were displayed and discussed, using frequencies and percentages. Subsequently, a test for normality of data was conducted, using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. This test was necessary to inform the decision to employ either parametric or non-parametric test tools in analysing the data. Afterwards, the chapter examine SME managers' adoption of business development services, using descriptive statistical tools, namely mean, standard deviation and one-sample t-test. Finally, the research objectives of the study were analysed, using independent-samples t-test and regression analysis.

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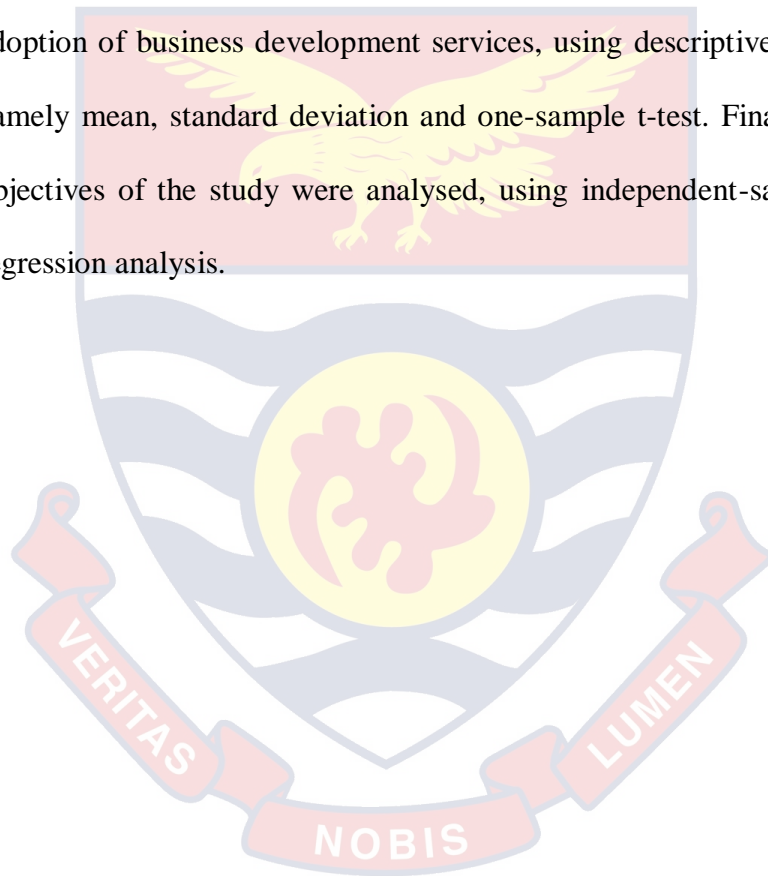
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study sought to assess the influence of small and medium-sized managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis. This chapter presented the summary of the study, including major findings derived from the study. Conclusions arrived at and recommendations arising from the findings. The chapter ended with a suggestion for future research.

Summary

The present study assessed the influence of SME managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The research objectives of this study were to: analyse the influence of age of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis; test the influence of sex/gender of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis; examine the influence of work experience of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis; and ascertain the influence of education of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

This study was guided by the Upper Echelons Theory. Based on the stated research objectives, the quantitative research approach was adopted for the study. In line with the quantitative research approach, the explanatory

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research design was adopted for this study. The cross-sectional survey design was employed. The study was conducted in the Cape Coast Metropolis. All managers of SMEs that have been registered with the NBSSI in the Cape Coast Metropolis, numbering 884 as at January 2017, formed the target population of this study. Data from NBSSI suggested that, of the 884 SMEs, only 160 managers of these SMEs have accessed business development services. As such, the 160 SMEs, comprising 115 small and 45 medium entreprises, formed the sampling frame for the study. A census was used to select all 160 SMEs to serve as sample for the present study.

Data collection was conducted within a period of four weeks, from the day the instrument was administered (1st August, 2017) to the day they were finally retrieved (29th August, 2017). The study employed structured questionnaire (Appendix A) as the sole instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was made up of two sections (Sections A and B), comprising 11 items altogether. The first section solicited for the personal/demographic characteristics of respondents, consisting of four items, namely age, sex/gender, number of years in business, and highest educational qualification attained. The demographic characteristics of respondents were measured on a categorical scale.

The second section contained statements geared towards obtaining data on the adoption of business development services by SMEs. Sample item was: "In my enterprise, we acquire bookkeeping services to help improve our accounting record keeping" (B02), which was anchored on a seven-point Likert-type scale: score 1=weakest agreement, 2=weaker agreement, 3=weak agreement, 4=moderate agreement, 5=strong agreement, 5=stronger

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agreement, 7=strongest agreement; consisting of seven items. The study employed an interval scale as the scale of measurement for measuring the adoption of business development services. Ethical considerations were voluntary participation, right to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of information. Pre-testing of the instrument was done before the main study.

The self-administered questionnaire process was used to collect data from the managers of the SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The researcher identified participants at their work places and handed over the questionnaires to them, with the help of five field assistants, who were trained by the researcher. After the data collection exercise, the completed questionnaires were subjected to scrutiny to ensure that any possible error arising from incomplete and wrongly filled-in questionnaires were eliminated or minimised. The error-free questionnaires were carefully coded and edited to avoid missing values, after which the data were processed. IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, version 23 was used to analyse the data collected and the results attained were displayed in tables.

The demographic characteristics of respondents were analysed, using frequencies and percentages. Descriptive statistical tools, namely mean, standard deviation and one-sample t-test were used to analyse SMEs adoption of business development services. The first objective of the study, which sought to analyse the influence of age of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, was analysed, using regression analysis. The second objective of the study, which sought to test the influence of sex/gender of managers on the adoption of

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business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, was analysed, using the independent-samples t-test, as used in earlier studies.

The third objective of the study, which sought to examine the influence of work experience of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, was analysed, using regression analysis. Similarly, the fourth and final objective, which sought to ascertain the influence of education of managers on the adoption of business development services among SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, was analysed, using regression analysis. In line with the research objectives of the present study, the findings showed that:

1) There was a positive effect of age on the adoption of business development services by managers of SMEs operating in the Cape Coast Metropolis;

2) There was significant difference in the adoption of business development services by male and female manages of SMEs in the Cape Coast Metropolis, with males being advantaged over females;

3) There was a positive effect of work experience on the adoption of business development services by SME managers in the Cape Coast Metropolis; and

4) There was a positive effect of education of managers on the adoption of business development services by SME managers operating in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Conclusions

The present study assessed the influence of SME managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Based on the key findings of the study, the study concluded that the higher the ages of managers, the higher their adoption of business development services. Moreover, the study settled that a gap exists between males and females regarding the adoption of business development services by SME managers in the Cape Coast Metropolis, with females accessing less of business development services as compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, the study established that SME managers who were more experienced highly adopted business development services. Finally, the study concluded that the higher the educational level of SME managers, the higher their adoption of business development services.

Recommendations

After assessing the influence of SME managers' personal characteristics on the adoption of business development services in the Cape Coast Metropolis, it was prudent to make recommendations to improve the existing situation. The study recommends that a lot of marketing effort, workshops and seminars should be directed at the young adults, as well as the less educated who are at the helm of affairs to educate them on the importance of BDS business performance. Moreover, the study recommends delivery agents, namely NBSSI, AGI, EMPRETEC-Ghana Foundation, GEPC, PED and NGOs, both local and international, should consider lessening the

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obstacles faced by women managers of SMEs in accessing BDS to stimulate their interest in its adoption.

Additionally, the study recommends that SME managers should share and implement best practices and experiences among themselves so as to increase adoption of business development services. Finally, the study recommends that delivery agents, such as NBSSI, non-governmental organisations, should assist SMEs managers who are less educated with managerial skills to stimulate their interest in the adoption of many other business development services that would help them grow their businesses and become competitive.

Suggestion for Further Research

The Upper Echelons Theory also identifies a number of broad individual characteristics, which were not within the purview of this research project, but are important in influencing decisions made by firm managers. For example, the manager's socio-economic background has been identified as influencing decisions made, such as choice to use business development services. In essence, firms whose mangers come from disproportionately lower social economic backgrounds will tend to pursue business development strategies and such firms will experience greater growth and profit variability than will firms whose top managers come from higher socio-economic groups.

Furthermore, the SME managers' family background could be considered, as their parents' entrepreneurial history is likely to influence their adoption of business development services. Other variables, such as ethnicity or population group, can also be explored. In addition, the theory covers the

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psychological characteristics of managers, which were not within the scope of the present study, and, therefore, can be explored in future research works. In doing so, future research could consider employing the Big Five personality dimensions of personality, namely extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability and openness to experience.

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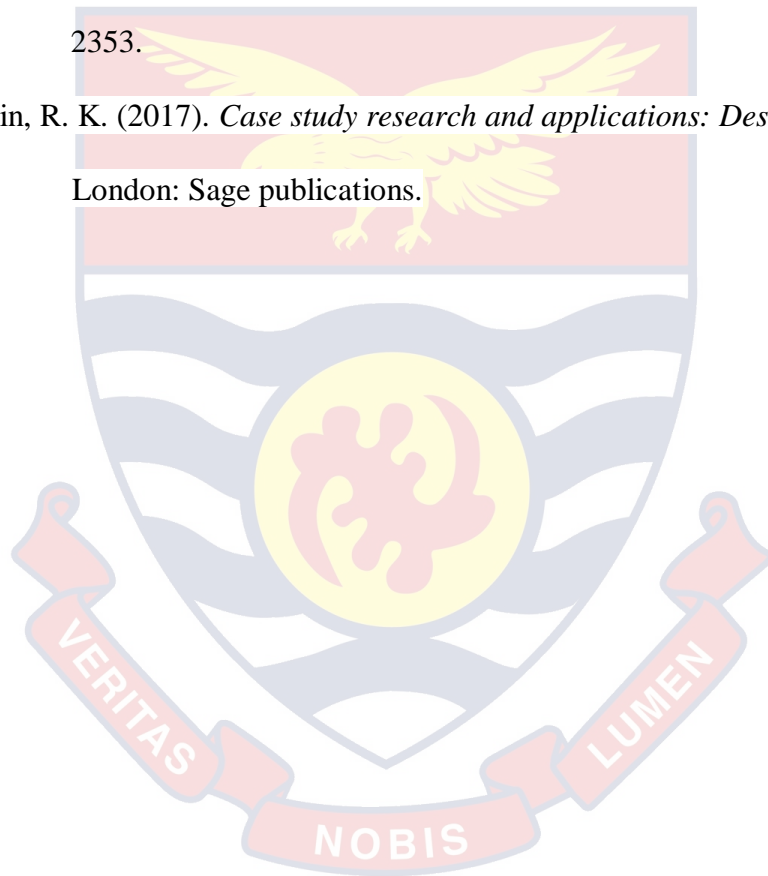
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SME MANAGERS

ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF SME MANAGERS' PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ON THE ADOPTION OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN THE CAPE COAST METROPOLIS

This questionnaire is designed to gather information for a research project in partial fulfilment of the requirement for Master of Business Administration degree in Entrepreneurship and Small Enterprise Development from the University of Cape Coast (UCC). Your participation is necessary and your responses will be treated confidential and for academic purpose only.

Please tick [√] the appropriate response where options are provided and write your response where spaces are provided.

Section A: Demographic Characteristics

A01. Age [years]: 18 to 30 years [   ] 31 to 50yeares [   ] 50+ years [   ]

A02. Sex: a. Male [   ] b. Female [   ]

A03. How long have you been operating as a business?

 a. Less than 3 years [   ] b. 3 to 5 years [   ]   c. 6 to10 years [   ]   d. More than 10 years [   ]

A04. Highest educational qualification: a. Basic School [   ]

b. Secondary School [   ] c. Vocational Training [   ]

d. University Education [   ]

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Section B: Adoption of Business Development Services

Business development services are services aimed at improving the performance of the enterprise, its access to markets, and its ability to compete. Each of the following statements relate to the adoption of business development services by SMEs within the Cape Coast Metropolis. Please indicate your level of agreement to each of the following statements anchored on the scale: 1=weakest agreement, 2=weaker agreement, 3=weak agreement, 4=moderate agreement, 5=strong agreement, 5=stronger agreement, 7=strongest agreement

Business Development Services							
B01. In my business, we receive diverse regular training for all staff.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B02. In my enterprise, we acquire bookkeeping services to help improve our accounting record keeping.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B03. In my business, we solicit for information that is useful in the SME sector.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B04. In my enterprise, we adopt technologies and logistical support that can enhance efficient services delivery.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B05. In my business, we seek advice on how to partner with large firms so that we can benefit from their network.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B06. We usually seek the services of business development agents to monitor our	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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progress and make recommendations for improved growth.							
B07. In my firm, we consider the business advice given to us by non-governmental organisations, NBSSI, and other government agencies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Thank you or your valuable time