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**ANTECEDENTS OF SUCCESS AMONG MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES:  
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ONGATA RONGAI, KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA  
AND NAMPA, IDAHO, USA**

***Abstract.** This comparative study sought to examine the success factors among micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA, within their distinct socio-economic landscapes. Ongata Rongai, originally a peri-urban settlement near Nairobi, has become a commercial hub where MSEs are crucial for job creation and poverty alleviation despite facing challenges like limited financial resources and inadequate infrastructure. Conversely, Nampa has diversified from agriculture to a robust economy with better financial access and support services, focusing on business growth, market penetration, and personal fulfillment. The specific objectives of this study included to assess how entrepreneurs in micro and small enterprises define and perceive business success, the extent to which entrepreneurship in micro and small enterprises is perceived to reduce poverty, the role of trade secrets in the competitive advantage, the predictors of success, and the key success factors among micro and small enterprises in Ongata Rongai, Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho USA. A mixed method research design was used, combining qualitative and quantitative data from MSEs with fewer than 20 full-time employees. Non-probability sampling included purposive, snowballing, self-selection, and convenience sampling. The study had 138 respondents from Nampa and 193 from Ongata Rongai. Findings revealed distinct differences: Ongata Rongai emphasized economic stability, community upliftment, and trade secrets, while Nampa focused on growth, innovation, and personal fulfillment. Both regions valued profitability and sustainability, influenced by their cultural and socio-economic contexts. Quantitative analysis highlighted these differences, with Ongata Rongai prioritizing trade secrets for competitive advantage and Nampa emphasizing financial resources, marketing strategies, and government support. Recommendations include improving financial resources, technology, and marketing strategies through funding, training, and legal support. Specifically, Ongata Rongai needs investment in infrastructure, technology transfer, and market access. Entrepreneurs should focus on customer-centric approaches, strong business networks, and creative innovation. Further*

*studies should explore the role of trade secrets, cultural impacts on business growth, and the effectiveness of international partnerships in local entrepreneurship.*

**Keywords:** *micro and small enterprises (mses), entrepreneurial success, socio-economic context, comparative analysis, Ongata Rongai, Kenya, Nampa, Idaho, USA, financial resources, trade secrets, business growth, cultural contexts*

**1. Background of the Study.** The economic landscapes of Ongata Rongai in Kajiado County, Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA, provide contrasting contexts for examining the antecedents of success among micro and small enterprises (MSEs). Historically, Ongata Rongai, ironically referred to as “Diaspora” by Nairobians (Pawkwa, 2022), evolved from a peri-urban settlement to a bustling commercial hub due to its proximity to Nairobi. This influx of businesses, driven by both local and migratory entrepreneurs, has made MSEs critical for job creation and poverty alleviation in a region marked by high unemployment rates and socio-economic disparities (Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development, 2020). Conversely, Nampa, Idaho, has transitioned from its agricultural roots into a diversified economy with manufacturing, retail, and service-oriented businesses, supported by a favorable business environment that values entrepreneurial initiative (Idaho Department of Commerce, 2022).

This comparative study aimed to understand how different socio-economic and cultural environments influence the success factors of MSEs. In Ongata Rongai, MSEs face challenges such as limited access to financial resources, inadequate infrastructure, and a competitive business environment. Despite these obstacles, many enterprises thrive through resilience, strong business networks, and the power of technology. The entrepreneurial landscape in Ongata Rongai is driven by the necessity to provide employment and improve living standards, with success often defined by the ability to generate consistent profits and sustain operations (Howard, 2023).

In contrast, MSEs operating in Nampa benefit from a more structured and supportive ecosystem (Nampa Economic Development, 2024). Historically, Nampa's growth has been bolstered by initiatives promoting business innovation and expansion, providing easy access to financial resources, comprehensive business support services, and a market that values innovation and adaptability (Nampa Chamber of Commerce, 2023). Entrepreneurs in Nampa

often define success through business growth, market penetration, and personal fulfillment. Despite changes in business models due to COVID-19, Nampa's supportive business climate encourages strategic planning, technology adoption, and robust marketing strategies, contributing to higher success rates among MSEs (Pethokoukis, 2023). By comparing these environments, the study aimed to identify key success factors, providing insights to inform policymakers, business support organizations, and entrepreneurs on how to create more conducive environments for MSE success globally.

**1.1 Socio-Economic and Entrepreneurial Overview of Nampa, Idaho, US.** Nampa, located roughly 20 KM West of Boise along Interstate 84 and 10 KM West of Meridian, is approximately 52 KM<sup>2</sup> in size and the second principal city of the Boise Metropolitan area. With a population of about 100,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022), Nampa has evolved significantly since its establishment in 1883 when the Oregon Short Line Railroad set up a water tank and station house. The area's agricultural prospects attracted many emigrants, leading to the cultivation of vast farmlands by the 1900s and the growth of Nampa's economy (Nampa Chamber of Commerce, 2023).

Today, Nampa is the largest city in Canyon County and Idaho's third-most populous city (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). Agribusiness remains the cornerstone of its economy, producing commodities like potatoes, sugar beets, onions, sweetcorn, livestock, dairy, and alfalfa. This agricultural base has supported the growth of numerous processing and manufacturing companies, including the Amalgamated Sugar Factory and the Sorrento Lactalis Cheese Factory. Beyond agriculture, Nampa hosts a diverse array of enterprises in industrial, hospitality, education, health, manufacturing, and commercial sectors, all supported by the Nampa Chamber of Commerce (Nampa Chamber of Commerce, 2023).

The Nampa Chamber of Commerce has played a pivotal role since 1892, developing business support through networking, advocacy, and community building. The Chamber maintains an updated business directory to help micro and small enterprises access services like advertising, banking, transport, and manufacturing support (Nampa Chamber of Commerce, 2023). Recognizing the importance of these enterprises, the City of Nampa collaborates with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Business Accelerators, which provide resources such as office space, consulting, training, and innovative programs to support business growth.

These initiatives, powered by the U.S. Small Business Administration, aim to strengthen the local economy, attract new businesses, support legislative action, grow tourism, and enhance agribusiness (Small Business Development Center, 2023).

**1.2. Socio-Economic and Entrepreneurial Overview of Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County, Kenya.** Ongata Rongai, situated within the Nairobi Metropolitan region, is a significant area in Kajiado County, Kenya, with a population of approximately 172,000 people residing in a 17 KM<sup>2</sup> (Howland, 2023). Despite its smaller size compared to Nampa, Ongata Rongai supersedes Nampa in population. The settlement started to grow in the 1950s, attributed to its proximity to Nairobi and employment opportunities catering to the nearby affluent Karen Estate. However, the area faces challenges such as poor development planning leading to unregulated growth and informal settlements, resulting in overcrowding and environmental concerns, including pollution of the Mbagathi River and traffic congestion (Howland, 2023).

The surge in population has led to heavy traffic congestion on Magadi Road, especially during weekends and public holidays, causing significant delays for commuters (Mwamba, Ndolo & Wandera, 2020). Furthermore, the entrepreneurial landscape in Ongata Rongai is characterized by micro and small business owners facing multiple challenges, including the harsh trading conditions, unfavorable regulations, heavy taxation, and limited access to affordable credit. These difficulties often force some businesses to open and close seasonally due to financial constraints, despite the aspirations and promise inherent in the entrepreneurial ventures (Mwamba, Ndolo & Wandera, 2020).

In the political realm, President William Ruto's "bottom-up" economic approach has generated mixed reactions within Kenya, with both praise and criticism from various quarters, some calling for a reassessment of tax policies and economic diversification to address the economic challenges faced by the low-income segment of the population (Amwai, 2023).

**2. Objectives of the Study.** This study sought to investigate the antecedents of success among micro and small enterprises in Nampa, Idaho and in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County, Kenya, and to create a comparative analysis of the two sets of data. The specific objectives of this study included the followings:

- I. To assess how entrepreneurs in micro and small enterprises in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA define and perceive business success.
- II. To investigate the extent to which entrepreneurship in micro and small enterprises is perceived to reduce poverty in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA.
- III. To evaluate the role of trade secrets in the competitive advantage of micro and small enterprises in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA.
- IV. To determine the predictors of success among micro and small enterprises in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA.
- V. To determine the key success factors among micro and small enterprises in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA.

### **3. Review of Literature**

**3.1. The Concept of Entrepreneurial Success.** Entrepreneurial success is a multidimensional concept that can be perceived differently across various regions of the world due to cultural, economic, and social factors. In many Western contexts, entrepreneurial success is often viewed through the lens of business growth, market penetration, and personal fulfillment (Polin & Golla, 2016). Entrepreneurs in these regions typically emphasize the importance of scaling their operations, achieving significant market share, and innovating to stay competitive. Personal fulfillment and work-life balance are also crucial components, reflecting a more individualistic approach to success where the entrepreneur's personal goals and quality of life play a significant role (Tahir, 2022). Additionally, access to capital, technological adoption, and robust marketing strategies are considered critical elements that contribute to the sustainability and growth of enterprises in these environments.

Conversely, in Africa, the concept of entrepreneurial success is often intertwined with community impact and socio-economic development which may also align with the African collectivist social mindset (UNCTAD, 2018). Although entrepreneurs focus on the ability to generate consistent profits, sustain operations over time, and create employment opportunities, the bigger picture of success may be measured by the entrepreneur's contribution to improving living standards and sustaining economic stability within the community. This communal perspective is driven by the necessity to address high unemployment rates and socio-economic

disparities. No wonder, Fuentelsaz, Maicas and Montero (2023) found out in their study, that Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, was the region with the highest score in the social status of entrepreneurs (75%) compared to other regions of the world. Entrepreneurs in the Kenyan context may also face unique challenges such as limited access to financial resources and inadequate infrastructure, which shape their definitions and perceptions of success (Wakiaga, 2024). Despite these obstacles, the emphasis on community support and local development highlights a more collective approach to entrepreneurial success, demonstrating how cultural and socio-economic contexts significantly influence entrepreneurial goals and outcomes.

### **3.2. Antecedents of Entrepreneurial Success**

**3.2.1. Trade Secrets.** A trade secret is any form of practice or process of an organization that is not known outside of the business unit (Brown, 2021). Trade secrets are divided into two broad categories: those held corporately, including sources of supplies, and those held by individual entrepreneurs, including special customer sets (Adomako & Adusei, 2021). Information considered a trade secret gives the company an actual or potential competitive advantage over its competitors and is often a product of internal research and development (Burrus, 2021). To be legally considered a trade secret, most jurisdictions suggest that an organization must take significant steps to conceal the information from public access; the secret must possess operational, competitive, intrinsic economic, or market value that an investment will want to protect (WIPO, 2020). Unlike patents, trade secrets cannot exist in the public domain (Brown, 2021). Some areas of business secrets may include technical information, such as manufacturing processes, laboratory test data, important information about designs and drawings, computer programs, and commercial information, including market data (Burrus, 2021).

For micro and small enterprises, especially those operating in the developing world, business success is largely dependent on the agility with which the enterprises develop special, competitive innovations around their products and services, how they innovate around their commercialization, and how rigorously they guard such business secrets (Adomako & Adusei, 2021). Trade secrets control a significant part of the risk structure of an organization (Forrester Consulting, 2010). Most micro and small enterprises operating within third-world countries depend on trade secrets for sustainable success (Abdullah & Abdullah, 2021).

**3.2.2. Government Support.** Supporting micro and small enterprises in startup and growth is of central importance among economies seeking meaningful growth. Besides supporting the tax base, small businesses are a crucial avenue for economic empowerment of low-income households, especially in less developed economies (World Bank, 2020). Against this backdrop, most governments and responsible departments are usually occupied with policy formulation and implementation of strategies to support MSEs (UNCTAD, 2021). Governments worldwide offer various forms of support to MSEs, such as grants, research and development, and worker training programs (OECD, 2021). In Third-World Countries, MSEs receive support in the form of market exposure, tax incentives, and improvement of infrastructure, especially that which directly affects the micro and small enterprises, including constructing open-air markets (Mungai, 2022). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the governments have continued to create frameworks to support MSEs by designing legislative structures that support their growth (Mwaura, 2020). Besides, it is significantly easier for MSEs to do business with the governments following legislative amendments that relax requirements (Njenga & Ngugi, 2021).

**3.2.3. Business Planning and Sources of Capital** .Business planning and sourcing for capital are two wings of the same bird. There is no way the plan is complete without a thorough review of the source of finance for the venture. Financing a startup requires one to keep tabs with key projections outlined in the business plan. According to Marquee Equity (2022), the best chance of raising startup capital lies in being extremely educated about all the parameters of a business plan. A hastily written business plan that fails to rationally track key business startup variables will also most likely fail to get the enterprise the right capital needed for its takeoff and sustainability (Brett, 2021). Scholars have intimated that a great business idea backed by creativity and innovation attracts the best sources of capital to any business venture (Smith & Smith, 2022). However, most micro and small enterprises operate within innovative spaces that are homogeneous. As such, the entrepreneurs often find it very difficult to come up with unique or differentiated business ventures, making their investments less attractive to financiers and angel investors (Johnson & Brown, 2020). For that matter, most entrepreneurs at the micro and small level, especially in developing countries, depend upon personal sources, friends, borrowing, and in a few instances, government lending (Okello & Odongo, 2021).

**3.2.4. Entrepreneurial Thinking.** Entrepreneurship comes with distinct processes, entrepreneurial practices, decision-making systems, risk appetite, entrepreneurial education, and innovativeness. The mindset, attitudes, and behavior towards these elements are largely considered as elements of entrepreneurial thinking. Due to the general level of education in the developed world, there is an assumption that there exists a fairly good sense of thinking and comprehension of the entrepreneurial environment and processes (Kuratko, 2021). This assumption might not be entirely true. There are many entrepreneurs in the developed world that lack entrepreneurial acumen and thinking. On the flip side, a good percentage of the micro and small scale entrepreneurs in the developing world, or particularly in Kenya, with little or no formal education, have excellent entrepreneurial thinking and knowledge. Such entrepreneurial thinking is held within the cultural structure and passed from one generation to the next (Omwenga & Kinyanjui, 2021). Meanwhile the entrepreneurs in these spaces have the propensity to consider and make very complex decisions involving deeper entrepreneurial concepts (Ndemo, 2020).

**3.2.5. Marketing Strategy.** Marketing strategy is a fundamental component for the success of MSEs. It involves need and want identification and satisfaction, and the formulation and implementation of plans designed to reach and persuade potential customers to purchase products or services. An effective marketing strategy considers the target market, competitive landscape, and Unique Selling Propositions (USPs) of the business or its products and services (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2022). For MSEs, especially in developing countries, marketing strategies often need to be highly adaptive and resource-efficient due to limited financial and human resources. In these regions, businesses frequently rely on local market knowledge and informal networks to promote their products and services, while leveraging social media platforms for cost-effective marketing and customer engagement (Alford & Page, 2021). In contrast, businesses in developed countries may have the financial stamina to employ more structured and data-driven marketing approaches, using advanced analytics to understand consumer behavior, segment markets, and measure campaign effectiveness (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2022).

The importance of a tailored marketing strategy is underscored by the fact that consumer preferences and purchasing behaviors vary significantly across different regions and cultures.



For instance, MSEs in rural Kenya might prioritize strategies that emphasize community engagement and trust-building, while those in urban areas might focus on digital marketing and e-commerce channels (Kim & Mauborgne, 2021). Ultimately, the success of MSEs depends on their ability to design and implement marketing strategies that resonate with their target audiences and leverage available resources effectively. This requires a deep understanding of the local market dynamics and the ability to adapt to changing conditions rapidly.

**3.2.6. Access to Technology.** Access to technology plays a crucial role in the growth and competitiveness of MSEs. Technology can enhance operational efficiency, improve product quality, expand market reach, and support innovation. For MSEs in developing countries, the adoption of technology can be radically transformative, enabling them to overcome traditional barriers such as limited market access and resource constraints (Abdullah & Abdullah, 2021). Basic technologies like mobile phones and internet connectivity provide critical communication and market access tools, with mobile money services revolutionizing transactions and financial inclusion in countries like Kenya (Mothibi & Mothibi, 2020). Social media platforms also offer cost-effective marketing and customer engagement opportunities, helping MSEs reach wider audiences (Zhou & Zhou, 2021).

In developed countries, access to technology for MSEs may involve more advanced tools and systems for cloud computing, e-commerce platforms, and complex data analytics. These technologies enable businesses to streamline operations through Business Process Reengineering, enhance customer experiences, and make complex data-driven decisions. For example, e-commerce platforms allow MSEs to sell products globally, while cloud computing provides scalable resources that can support business growth without significant upfront investment (Smith & Smith, 2020). Despite the over-recited benefits of technology, the digital divide is still a reality. Besides, challenges remain in ensuring equitable access to technology across the divides. Factors such as cost, digital literacy, and infrastructure perpetually impede the adoption of technology by MSEs, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Addressing these challenges through policy interventions, training programs, and partnerships is essential to unlocking the full potential of technology for MSEs in Africa (Adomako & Adusei, 2021).

#### 4. Research Methodology

##### 4.1. Research Design. This study applied a mixed method research design.

The researcher analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data. Neither qualitative nor quantitative approach could have single handedly provided the kind of data needed to help the study reach the desired conclusions. According to Creswell and Clark (2018), mixed method integrates philosophical frameworks of both post-positivism and interpretivism intertwining qualitative and quantitative data in a way that the research is able to reach objective findings. It applies logical ground perspectives, flexibility of thought and method and offers the research in-depth comprehension of the phenomenon under study (Maxwell, 2013).

**4.2. Target Population.** The population of focus for this study included all micro and small enterprises in Nampa, Idaho, US and those in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County, Kenya that maintain less than 20 full-time employees. The study avoided the use of financial delimitations. This was largely due to the ethical dimension of confidentiality. Furthermore, there is the culture of secrecy around revenue and profit especially among African entrepreneurs. The following is a tabulation of the number of businesses in Nampa, Idaho with employees numbering below 20 and the corresponding number of businesses (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number of Businesses in Nampa, Idaho with Less than 20 Employees

<b>Business Size</b>	<b>Number of Businesses</b>
1-4 Employees	4020
5-9 Employees	1257
10-19 Employees	786
<b>Total</b>	<b>6063</b>

Due to the state of informality among the micro and small enterprises in Ongata Rongai, the records in public domain were considered unreliable for the purposes of this study. According to Marete, Mathenge, and Ntale (2020), there were only 372 licensed micro enterprises in Ongata Rongai in the year 2020. This data does not seem to agree with

the observed facts on the ground. The weakness in terms of lack of clear statistical records of data regarding all the micro and small enterprises in Ongata Rongai (whether or not licensed) is part of what necessitates the use of qualitative or exploratory approaches in this study. According to Chang (2014), qualitative approaches are used in exploratory studies when the researchers do not know with accuracy, the facts or statistical foundations of such facts regarding the target population.

**4.3. Sampling Technique.** The sampling approach used in this study was largely non-probability. The specific types of non-probability sampling approaches included purposive, snowballing, self-selection and convenience. The main motivation for this decision was that important population parameters were not readily identifiable. Also, the subjects of interest to the researcher were not found to operate in similar business settings in the City of Nampa as they do at Ongata Rongai. Besides, the variables of interest in this study including government support, trade secrets, entrepreneurial thinking and business planning are considered to be of more qualitative nature. The study sample consisted of micro and small enterprise owners and operators of enterprises that have existed for more than one month. In Nampa, 138 respondents participated in this study. In Ongata Rongai, 193 participants participated in the study, bringing the total participants to 331.

**5.0. Findings and Comparative Analysis.** This study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was obtained through interviews, secondary data, focus group discussions, and expert opinions from highly qualified and experienced professionals. Other sources of qualitative data included city leaders such as Councilmen (Nampa) and entrepreneurs operating micro and small enterprises. Quantitative data was obtained through printed and online surveys. Due to the representativeness and significant variability of circumstances between Nampa, Idaho, and Rongai, Kajiado County, caution was exercised regarding the extent to which the findings could be subjected to inferential treatment and generalization.

## **5.1. Qualitative Findings**

**5.1.1. Definition of Entrepreneurial Success.** Data collected regarding the definition of entrepreneurial success in micro and small enterprises, from both study sites was assessed using thematic analysis. This method identified common themes and differences in how entrepreneurs in both regions perceive success in their business ventures. In Ongata Rongai, respondents predominantly defined entrepreneurial success through the lenses of economic stability and social impact. The majority emphasized the ability to generate consistent profits, sustain operations over time, and create employment opportunities for local residents. Additionally, many entrepreneurs highlighted the importance of contributing to the local economy and supporting community development initiatives as key indicators of success. A recurring theme was the desire to uplift living standards within the community, demonstrating a strong socio-economic focus.

Conversely, in Nampa, Idaho, entrepreneurial success was described in terms of personal and business growth. Entrepreneurs frequently mentioned scaling their businesses, achieving significant market penetration, and expanding their customer base as a primary measure of success. Innovation and the ability to adapt to market changes were also highlighted as critical factors. Furthermore, several respondents noted personal fulfillment and work-life balance as essential components of success, reflecting a more individualistic approach compared to the communal perspectives observed in Ongata Rongai.

Both regions shared common themes such as profitability and business sustainability, indicating that regardless of location or regional variations, these remain universal determinants of success for entrepreneurs. However, the emphasis on communal impact in Ongata Rongai contrasted with the focus on innovation and personal achievement in Nampa. These findings suggest that while the core elements of entrepreneurial success are similar, cultural and socio-economic contexts significantly shape how success is perceived and prioritized among micro and small enterprise owners in different regions.

**5.1.2. Entrepreneurship and Poverty Reduction.** Analyzing the responses to the question regarding the extent to which entrepreneurship has helped reduce poverty in Ongata

Rongai, Kajiado County, Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA, using thematic analysis revealed distinct perspectives rooted in each region's socio-economic environment.

In Ongata Rongai, respondents largely viewed entrepreneurship as a crucial tool in poverty reduction. Many entrepreneurs pointed out that their ventures have provided the much-needed employment opportunities, particularly for younger people and women. This directly contributes to improving household incomes and reducing poverty levels. There was a strong emphasis on the role of small businesses in building economic self-sufficiency and empowering individuals to break free from the cycle of poverty. Additionally, several respondents noted that entrepreneurial activities stimulate local economies by increasing demand for goods and services, thus creating a ripple effect that benefits the broader community.

In contrast, respondents from the City of Nampa, emphasized the role of entrepreneurship in providing economic mobility and opportunities for wealth creation. Many highlighted that entrepreneurship enables individuals to innovate and access new markets, which can lead to significant financial gains and long-term economic stability. Respondents also mentioned that successful businesses often reinvest in the community, supporting local initiatives and contributing to overall economic growth. A direct link to poverty reduction was less explicitly engraved. Instead, there was a strong emphasis on self-fulfillment, self-actualization and achievement of upward mobility.

**5.2. Quantitative Findings.** Likert scale questions were crafted to generate quantitative data. The agenda was to assess the perceptions and attitudes of respondents regarding various facets of trade secrets, entrepreneurial success, and key success factors in micro and small enterprises. The survey instrument (questionnaire) presented respondents with a series of statements relating to these variables of study. Each statement was rated on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The two datasets (Nampa, Idaho, USA data and Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County, Kenya data) in this study were independently treated to correlation analysis for the sake of further comparison of data to unveil the variabilities and phenomenon against each factor.

**5.2.1. Comparative Dynamics of Trade Secrets.** Analysis of the Likert scale responses concerning trade secrets from the two data sets unveiled notable disparities in the perceived

significance and management of trade secrets between the two regions. Table 2 below presents the findings against the Likert Scale.

Table 2. Comparative Dynamics of Trade Secrets

Statements Regarding Trade Secrets	Ongata Rongai (Weighted Means)	City of Nampa (Weighted Means)
a. Trade secrets exist within my enterprise	4.5	3.2
b. We actively seek to acquire critical competitive information that we later hold as trade secrets	4.2	3.0
c. Our trade secrets determine the competitive advantage and commercial value of the enterprise	4.6	3.3
d. We actively protect our trade secrets	4.7	3.4
e. Access to trade secrets was a key consideration at startup	4.3	3.1
f. Our survival and sustainability depend on how we protect our trade secrets	4.8	3.5
<b>Composite Means</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.3</b>

In Ongata Rongai, respondents demonstrated a substantially higher inclination towards trade secrets compared to their counterparts in the City Nampa. The weighted mean for each statement illustrated this trend. For instance, acknowledgment of trade secrets' existence within enterprises scored 4.5 (strong acknowledgement) in Ongata Rongai as compared to 3.2 (neutral) in Nampa. Moreover, in Ongata Rongai, the active pursuit of critical competitive information scored 4.2 (agreement), contrasting with Nampa's score of 3.0 (demonstrating neutrality). Similarly, the perception that trade secrets determine competitive advantage and commercial value received a strong agreement with a weighted mean of 4.6 in Ongata Rongai, as compared to 3.3 in Nampa demonstrating neutrality. Protection of trade secrets also received a strong sense of agreement in Ongata Rongai, with a mean of 4.7 compared to a neutral response in Nampa's 3.4.

Considerations of trade secrets during startup were significantly more prevalent in Ongata Rongai, scoring 4.3, as opposed to Nampa's 3.1. Finally, the belief that survival and sustainability hinge on protecting trade secrets received a mean of 4.8 in Ongata Rongai and 3.5 in Nampa. Overall, the composite mean from the Likert scale in Ongata Rongai was 4.5, while in

Nampa, it stood at 3.3. These findings suggest a substantially higher emphasis and prioritization of trade secrets in Ongata Rongai compared to Nampa, potentially reflecting differing business environments or cultural attitudes towards proprietary knowledge protection.

**5.2.2. Predictors of Entrepreneurial Success.** The comparative analysis of Likert scale responses regarding factors affecting the antecedents of success among micro and small enterprises between Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County, Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA, revealed distinct differences. In Nampa, respondents exhibited higher agreement on most selected antecedental factors contributing to business success compared to Ongata Rongai. Table 3 enumerates the findings obtained.

Table 3. Predictors of Entrepreneurial Success

Statements Regarding Factors Affecting (Predictors of) Success	Ongata Rongai (Weighted Means)	City of Nampa (Weighted Means)
a. The investment had ready access to financial resources required for startup purposes	2.1	4.2
b. The enterprise has created and implemented a good marketing strategy for the enterprise	3.3	4.5
c. The enterprise has access to the necessary technologies it requires to operate optimally	3.2	4.4
d. The government helps enterprises succeed in business	2.8	4.0
e. The enterprise has a well written business plan that it implements	3.0	4.3
f. The overall planning and execution give me confidence that my business will succeed	3.4	4.6
g. There exists a good sense of entrepreneurial knowledge and thinking guiding the enterprise	4.0	4.0
<b>Composite Means</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>

For the statement about ready access to financial resources required for startup purposes, respondents in Nampa indicated a significantly higher level of agreement with a weighted mean of 4.2, compared to Ongata Rongai's 2.1. Similarly, enterprises in Nampa portrayed a stronger implementation of good marketing strategies, with a weighted mean of 4.5, compared to 3.3 in Ongata Rongai. Access to necessary technologies for optimal operation was also rated, and

found to score higher in Nampa, with a weighted mean of 4.4, compared to 3.2 in Ongata Rongai. The perception that government assistance helps enterprises succeed was more favorable among respondents in Nampa, with a weighted mean of 4.0, compared to Ongata Rongai's 2.8. This was a finding that went against expectation especially in view of the general presupposition that the Kenyan government has put in place many initiatives to support micro and small enterprises as a stepping stone to poverty alleviation in the country.

Additionally, enterprises operating in Nampa demonstrated that they had better-written business plans that they had actively implemented, with a weighted mean of 4.3, compared to Ongata Rongai 3.0. Confidence in overall planning and execution resulting in business success was also higher among Nampa respondents, with a weighted mean of 4.6, compared to 3.4 in Ongata Rongai. However, the sense of entrepreneurial knowledge and thinking guiding the enterprise was rated the same in both sites, with a weighted mean of 4.0. This is an outstanding finding demonstrating that entrepreneurs may be having a generally strong and a similarly rated sense of confidence regarding their entrepreneurial concept and knowledge base. The composite mean for the entire Likert scale in Nampa was 4.3, indicating a generally high agreement with the selected antecedental factors driving success. In contrast, the composite mean in Ongata Rongai was 3.1, reflecting lower agreement or neutrality with these factors.



**5.2.3.Key Success Factors.** It was important to gauge the key success factors and the perceptions of both datasets about the selected factors. Table 4 presents the data obtained.

Table 4. Key Success Factors

<b>Statements Regarding the Key Success Factors</b>	<b>Ongata Rongai (Weighted Means)<sup>i</sup></b>	<b>City of Nampa (Weighted Means)</b>
a. My enterprise creates sustainable job opportunities	3.4	4.3
b. My enterprise contributes significantly to the growth of my city and country	4.0	4.0
c. My enterprise places business existence and survival at the center of its operations	4.1	3.0
d. My enterprise pays serious attention to expansion and growth	3.2	4.2
e. My enterprise is a platform for commercialization of research, creativity, and innovation	2.0	2.5
f. My enterprise considers customer satisfaction above profit seeking	3.7	4.6
g. My enterprise gives me a sense of confidence in my own worth or abilities; self-respect	2.4	4.7
<b>Composite Means</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.9</b>

In Nampa, enterprises reported a higher weighted mean of 4.3 for creating sustainable job opportunities compared to Ongata Rongai's 3.4. This indicates that businesses in Nampa are more effective or perceive themselves as more effective in generating long-term employment. Additionally, both sites rated their contribution to the growth of their city and country equally, with a mean score of 4.0, demonstrating a shared belief in the positive impact of their enterprises on local development. With reference to the centrality of business existence and survival, enterprises in Ongata Rongai place greater importance on this factor, with a weighted mean of 4.1, compared to 3.0 in Nampa. This suggests that businesses in Ongata Rongai may face a higher propensity of challenges and business mortality that necessitate a focus on survival, possibly due to a more volatile economic environment or weaker support systems.

Attention to expansion and growth was rated higher in Nampa at 4.2 than in Ongata Rongai at 3.2, indicating a stronger emphasis on scaling up operations among Nampa's enterprises. This difference may be attributed to better access to resources and a more supportive business climate in Nampa, allowing for more aggressive growth strategies. The commercialization of research, creativity, and innovation received relatively low ratings from both sites, with Nampa scoring a weighted mean of 2.5 and Ongata Rongai 2.0. These low scores suggest that neither location sees significant resultant activity or success in leveraging innovation for commercial purposes, highlighting a potential area for development. Rather, most businesses under this study on both locations may be holding the attitude that considers research a tertiary concept to entrepreneurial success.

Customer satisfaction above profit seeking is another area where Nampa's enterprises scored higher, with a weighted mean of 4.6, compared to 3.7 in Ongata Rongai. This difference implies that businesses in Nampa may prioritize customer relationships and long-term loyalty more than their counterparts in Ongata Rongai, possibly due to differing market dynamics, entrepreneurial culture and customer expectations. In terms of providing a sense of confidence and self-respect, enterprises in Nampa reported a higher weighted mean of 4.7, compared to 2.4 in Ongata Rongai. This suggests that entrepreneurs in Nampa derive considerably more personal satisfaction and self-respect and self-actualization from their business activities compared to their counterparts in Ongata Rongai.

The composite mean for Nampa across these key success factors was 3.9, while for Ongata Rongai, it was 3.3. These composite means highlight a significant difference in the overall perceived success and effectiveness of enterprises between the two locations, with Nampa's businesses generally reporting higher satisfaction and performance across the assessed dimensions. The implications of these findings underscore the necessity for tailored support mechanisms in Ongata Rongai to address the unique challenges faced by its enterprises and to enhance their capacity for growth, innovation, and long-term sustainability.

#### **5.2.4. Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Antecedental and Consequential Factors.**

Conducting a correlation coefficient analysis on both the Rongai and Nampa datasets was crucial for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between the various factors influencing business success in distinct geographical contexts. By examining the correlations

between different variables categorized as antecedents of success and key success factors, the researcher was able to identify patterns and trends that illuminate the underlying dynamics driving entrepreneurial outcomes. The discussions thereafter only capture a few key aspects. However, each of the findings on the respective correlation matrices are core to the body of findings of this study. Table 5 presents the correlation coefficients obtained from the Ongata Rongai data.

Table 5 Ongata Rongai Correlation Coefficient Data

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<b>Antecedents (Variables Driving Success)</b> 1. External Factors & Support Mechanisms	1												
2. Trade Secrets	0.75	1											
3. Government Support	0.89	0.96	1										
4. Business Planning & Capital Sources	0.94	0.99	0.97	1									
5. Entrepreneurial Thinking	0.87	0.92	-0.34	0.95	1								
6. Marketing Strategy	0.85	0.89	0.9	0.92	0.94	1							
<b>Key Success Factors</b> 7. Creating Sustainable Job Opportunities	0.75	0.64	0.59	0.68	0.57	0.48	1						
8. Contribution to Local & National Growth	0.86	0.77	0.72	0.8	0.7	-0.15	0.81	1					
9. Centrality of Business Existence	0.95	0.87	0.85	0.89	0.83	0.77	0.63	0.72	1				
10. Attention to Expansion & Growth	0.97	0.89	0.86	0.91	0.85	0.82	0.7	0.79	0.91	1			
11. Commercialization of Research & Innov.	0.84	0.68	0.67	0.73	0.64	0.61	0.52	0.64	-0.56	0.83	1		
12. Customer Satisfaction	0.69	-0.34	0.5	0.58	0.49	0.47	0.42	0.58	0.72	0.78	0.91	1	
13. Providing Confidence & Self-Respect	0.58	0.44	0.41	0.47	0.39	0.38	0.33	0.49	0.63	0.7	0.83	0.92	1

In Ongata Rongai, the correlation analysis revealed several key relationships between antecedents of success and key success factors. External factors and support mechanisms showed strong positive correlations with multiple variables, notably with business planning and capital sources (0.94) and attention to expansion and growth (0.97), suggesting that external support and resources were critical in planning and growth initiatives. Trade secrets also showed high correlations with business planning and capital sources (0.99) and government support (0.96), indicating that these secrets were tightly linked to planning and external support mechanisms.

Entrepreneurial thinking, while generally correlated with other antecedents, showed a negative correlation with government support (-0.34), which suggested some tension between government policies and entrepreneurial mindsets. Marketing strategy was strongly correlated with entrepreneurial thinking (0.94) and business planning and capital sources (0.92), underscoring the role of strategic marketing in business planning and entrepreneurial success.

Among the key success factors, creating sustainable job opportunities was found to be fairly strongly correlated with external factors and support mechanisms (0.75) and trade secrets (0.64), indicating the importance of these factors in job creation. Considering external factors and support mechanisms, it generated a correlation coefficient of 0.97 against attention to expansion and growth, and 0.95 against centrality of business existence. It also generated correlation coefficients of 0.84 against commercialization of research and innovation. These correlations highlighted the importance of external factors and support mechanisms for sustaining and growth.

Customer satisfaction and providing confidence and self-respect were positively correlated with each other (0.92), implying that customer satisfaction significantly impacted entrepreneurs' confidence and self-respect. However, the negative correlation between customer satisfaction and trade secrets (-0.34) suggested a potential trade-off between secrecy and customer relations.

Data from Nampa was analyzed and presented on Table 6:

Table 6. Nampa Correlation Coefficient Data

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<b>1. External Factors &amp; Support Mechanisms</b>	1												
<b>2. Trade Secrets</b>	0.78	1											
<b>3. Government Support</b>	0.84	0.92	1										
<b>4. Business Planning &amp; Capital Sources</b>	0.88	0.93	0.96	1									
<b>5. Entrepreneurial Thinking</b>	0.82	0.87	0.22	0.91	1								
<b>6. Marketing Strategy</b>	0.79	0.85	0.88	0.9	0.86	1							
<b>7. Creating Sustainable Job Opportunities</b>	0.77	0.64	0.67	0.69	0.63	0.58	1						
<b>8. Contribution to Local &amp; National Growth</b>	0.85	0.73	0.76	0.79	0.7	0.31	0.81	1					
<b>9. Centrality of Business Existence</b>	0.89	0.78	0.82	0.84	0.76	0.72	0.65	0.74	1				
<b>10. Attention to Expansion &amp; Growth</b>	0.91	0.81	0.83	0.87	0.8	0.76	0.68	0.78	0.82	1			
<b>11. Commercialization of Research &amp; Innov.</b>	0.71	0.61	0.63	0.66	0.59	0.55	0.48	0.58	0.16	0.64	1		
<b>12. Customer Satisfaction</b>	0.65	0.25	0.57	0.61	0.52	0.48	0.42	0.51	0.55	0.59	0.72	1	
<b>13. Providing Confidence &amp; Self-Respect</b>	0.55	0.46	0.48	0.52	0.43	0.41	0.36	0.45	0.47	0.51	0.65	0.72	1

In Nampa, the correlation analysis highlighted significant relationships. Among the key findings, external factors and support mechanisms showed strong positive correlations with business planning and capital sources (0.88) and attention to expansion and growth (0.91), indicating the critical role of external support and resources in planning and growth initiatives. Trade secrets were highly correlated with business planning and capital sources (0.93) and government support (0.92), underscoring the importance of these secrets in strategic planning and the influence of governmental backing.

Entrepreneurial thinking presented a more complex picture. While it had strong positive correlations with business planning and capital sources (0.91) and trade secrets (0.87), it showed a negative correlation with government support (-0.22). This negative correlation suggested that increased government intervention might sometimes conflict with entrepreneurial activities, possibly due to regulatory constraints or differing priorities. Marketing strategy was also strongly

correlated with business planning and capital sources (0.9) and trade secrets (0.85), highlighting its essential role in strategic planning and maintaining competitive advantages.

Among the key success factors, creating sustainable job opportunities was positively correlated with several antecedents, including external factors and support mechanisms (0.77) and trade secrets (0.64), indicating that external support and proprietary knowledge were crucial for job creation. Contribution to local and national growth also showed strong correlations with external factors and support mechanisms (0.85) and government support (0.76), emphasizing the role of supportive environments and governmental policies in promoting local and national development.

The centrality of business existence and attention to expansion and growth showed strong positive correlations with external factors and support mechanisms (0.89 and 0.91, respectively), indicating that a robust support mechanism was essential for business sustainability and growth. However, customer satisfaction showed a relatively low correlation with trade secrets (0.25), suggesting that prioritizing trade secrets might not significantly impact customer satisfaction. This finding implied that businesses needed to balance secrecy with customer relationship management.

The correlations involving providing confidence and self-respect were notable, as this factor was positively correlated with customer satisfaction (0.72), indicating that satisfied customers contributed significantly to the entrepreneurs' self-respect and confidence. This factor also had moderate correlations with other antecedents, highlighting the interconnectedness of customer satisfaction, business confidence, and overall success.

## **6. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

**6.1. Summary and Conclusion.** This study analyzed the definition and drivers of entrepreneurial success, the role of entrepreneurship in poverty reduction, the significance of trade secrets, and the key success factors for micro and small enterprises in Ongata Rongai, Kajiado County, Kenya, and Nampa, Idaho, USA. Using thematic and correlation coefficient analyses, the study uncovered distinct regional differences and similarities. In Ongata Rongai, entrepreneurial success is predominantly seen through the lens of economic stability and community impact, with a strong emphasis on generating consistent profits and creating local employment. Conversely, Nampa's entrepreneurs prioritize personal and business growth,

scaling operations, and achieving market penetration. Both regions, however, consider financial profitability and business sustainability as universal markers of success. When it comes to poverty reduction, Ongata Rongai's entrepreneurs view their ventures as crucial for providing employment and uplifting community living standards, while Nampa's respondents focus on economic mobility and wealth creation. The analysis of trade secrets revealed a much higher emphasis on their importance and protection in Ongata Rongai compared to Nampa. The correlation coefficient analysis highlighted significant relationships between external support mechanisms, business planning, and success factors in both regions, though some negative correlations between entrepreneurial thinking and government support were noted.

The findings of this study illustrate the impact of cultural and socio-economic contexts on entrepreneurial success. In Ongata Rongai, the communal approach to entrepreneurship, with a focus on economic stability and community upliftment, contrasts sharply with Nampa's individualistic focus on growth and market success. Despite these differences, both regions recognize the fundamental importance of financial stability and business sustainability. The higher emphasis on trade secrets in Ongata Rongai reflects a potentially more competitive or business secrets oriented environment, whereas Nampa's lower emphasis might indicate a more open approach to business practices. The negative correlations between entrepreneurial thinking and government support in both regions suggest that reliance on external assistance may sometimes stifle innovation and independent business strategies.

**6.2. Recommendations and Areas for Further Studies.** Based on the findings, it is recommended that governments and relevant international agencies such as the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation enhance access to financial resources, technology, and marketing strategies for micro and small enterprises in Ongata Rongai and Nampa. This can be achieved through funding programs, training workshops, and legal support for intellectual property protection. Specifically for Ongata Rongai, the international partners working closely with the local government could assist by investing in infrastructure development, facilitating technology transfer, and providing market access through partnerships with local businesses. Entrepreneurs in both regions should focus on adopting customer-centric approaches, leveraging strong business networks, and embracing innovation to drive growth. Areas for further studies include examining the role of trade secrets as a predictor of entrepreneurial success, exploring

the impact of cultural factors on business growth, and assessing the effectiveness of international partnerships in enhancing local entrepreneurship ecosystems.

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