



Linking Giants to Mites: Insights into Business Linkages between Large Firms and Small-Sized Enterprises in South Africa

Nkosingiphani Mkhwanazi¹

¹ Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Nelson Mandela University

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Correspondence: nmkhwanazi@outlook.com

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Author notes

Nkosingiphani Mkhwanazi is affiliated with Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Nelson Mandela University and focuses on Business research in Africa.

Abstract

In South Africa, there is a growing recognition of the importance of fostering business linkages between large firms and small-sized enterprises (SMEs). These relationships are crucial for economic growth and innovation. This qualitative study employs semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders from both large firms and small-sized enterprises operating within the same industry sectors. Data analysis is guided by thematic content analysis. Interviews revealed that 60% of SMEs reported receiving support in terms of supply chain integration, technology transfer, and market access from larger corporations. However, challenges such as bureaucratic red tape and lack of trust hinder these relationships. The study highlights the potential for enhanced collaboration between large firms and local SMEs to drive economic development in South Africa. Policymakers should facilitate a more supportive regulatory environment and encourage cultural shifts towards greater collaboration among different business sizes.

Keywords: *Africanization, Contextual Analysis, Geographical Indicators, Institutional Logics, Network Theory, Qualitative Inquiry, Small Business Studies*

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