



Developing Business Linkages between Large Firms and Local SMEs in South Africa: An Intervention Study

Nomzakhe Maseko¹

¹ African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) South Africa

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Correspondence: nmaseko@gmail.com

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Author notes

Nomzakhe Maseko is affiliated with African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) South Africa and focuses on Business research in Africa.

Abstract

South Africa's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are a significant part of its economy, yet they often struggle to secure business linkages with larger firms, which can hinder their growth and development. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys to gather data from both large firms and SMEs across various sectors of the economy. Our analysis reveals that approximately 60% of SMEs in South Africa face challenges in securing business contracts with larger enterprises, primarily due to insufficient market visibility and lack of formal networking opportunities. The findings highlight significant barriers to effective business linkages between large firms and local SMEs. Recommendations include the development of targeted training programmes for SMEs and the creation of online platforms for fostering collaboration. Develop targeted training programmes for SMEs on market visibility, negotiation skills, and contract management; establish online platforms connecting potential suppliers with larger enterprises.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, Entrepreneurship, Interventions, Networks, SmallBusiness, FirmBehavior, GrowthStimulation*

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