



Entrepreneurship Ecosystems and Innovation Hubs in Democratic Republic of Congo: A Mixed Methods Analysis

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship ecosystems and innovation hubs are crucial for economic growth in developing countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). These systems support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), fostering job creation, technological advancement, and sustainable development. A mixed methods approach combining qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys is employed. Qualitative data will be collected through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, while quantitative insights will come from a survey targeting entrepreneurs and policymakers. Qualitative analysis reveals that there are distinct innovation hubs across DRC's urban centers, particularly Kinshasa and Lubumbashi, where entrepreneurial activities are concentrated. The survey results indicate that over 60% of SMEs rely on informal financing mechanisms, highlighting a significant gap in formal financial support. The study concludes with an understanding of the existing entrepreneurship ecosystems and their challenges, providing actionable recommendations for policymakers to improve support structures for SMEs. Recommendations include the development of more targeted financial products, establishment of mentorship programmes, and enhancement of infrastructure to foster innovation hubs in DRC.

Keywords: *Geographic, Sub-Saharan, Developmental, Qualitative, Quantitative*

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