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**DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING AND CORPORATE STRATEGY**



**EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY ON ORGANIZATIONAL  
LEARNING ABILITY AMONG SMES IN KUMASI METROPOLIS**

**BY**

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**OCTOBER, 2023**

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work toward the MBA and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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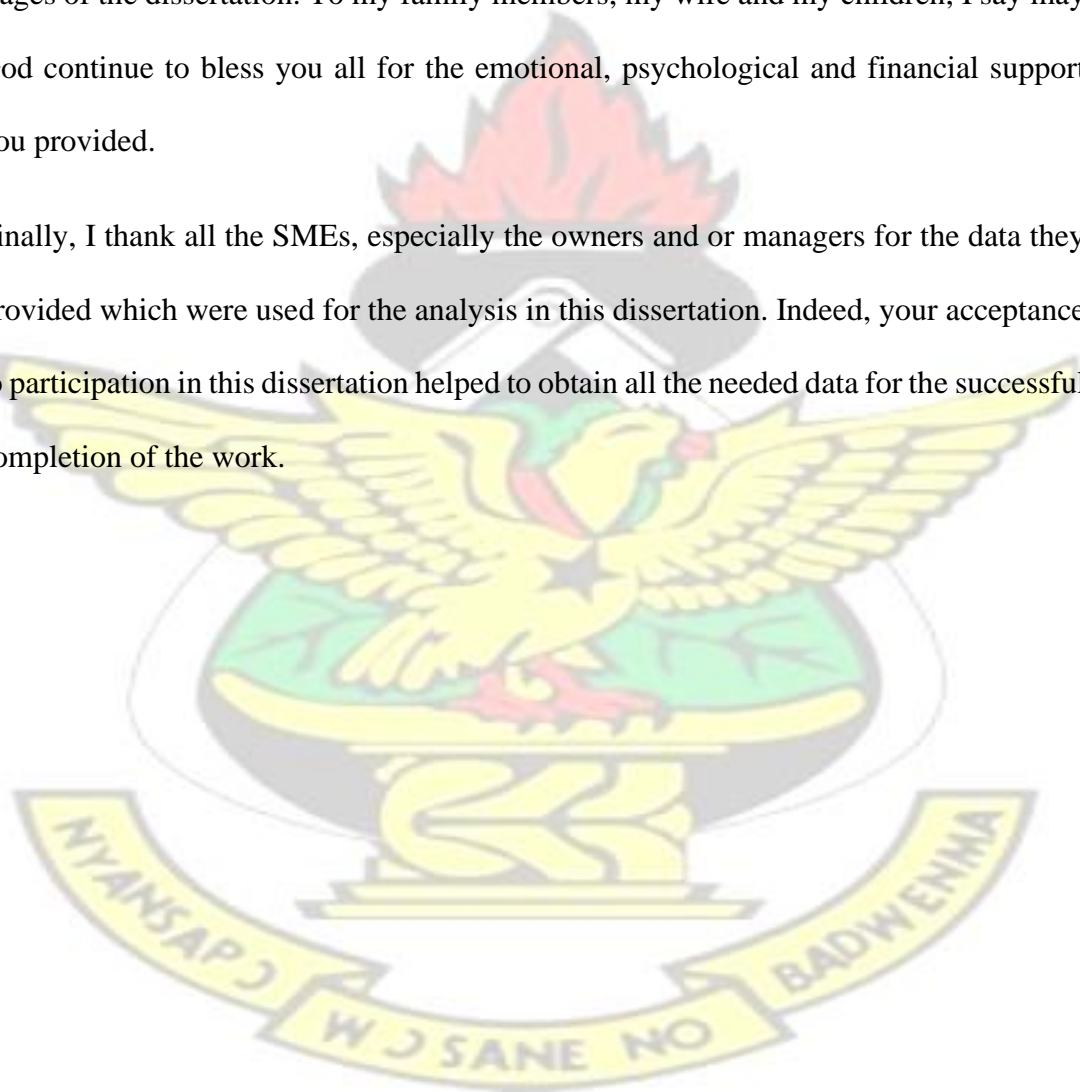
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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my Wife

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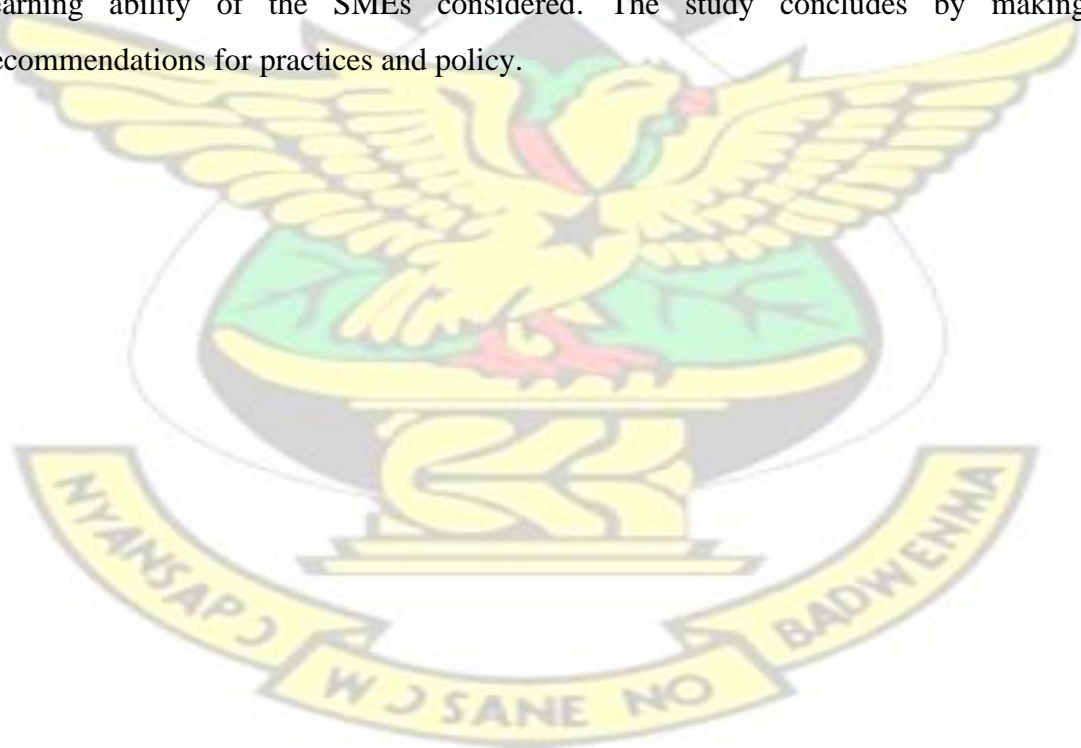
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## ABSTRACT

The importance of organizational agility and organizational learning abilities have formed part of major discussions among academicians and practitioners. However, these discussions have usually ignored the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). This study therefore examined the effects of organizational agility on organizational learning ability among SMES in the Kumasi metropolis. The study adopted the explanatory design and quantitative research approach to gather and analyse data from 292 respondents. The study used a questionnaire to gather the data for this study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data for the study. The results indicated that the organizational agility strategies associated with the small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis are high and effective. The findings further show that there is a high level of effectiveness associated with the implementation of such strategies. Furthermore, the study found a mixed relationship between the various categories of organizational agility factors and the organizational learning ability of the SMEs considered. The study concludes by making recommendations for practices and policy.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Organizations, particularly SMEs, who compete with large or massive firms, must continually adapt (Rahimiatani et al., 2018). Every business faces everyday issues related to globalisation, rapid technical advancements, competition, innovative business models, emerging new markets, and continuously changing consumer tastes, but SMEs are most affected (Saha et al., 2020). Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are crucial to the expansion and advancement of every economy in the globe. A significant source of entrepreneurial expertise, innovation, and employment is SME (Khalid and Firdaus, 2021). World Bank (2021) emphasized the role that SMEs play in the economic growth of emerging nations, by saying that they can account for up to 51% of the labour force and more than a third of GDP (GDP). For instance, in Ghana, SMEs account for 24.4% of GDP and the informal sector accounts for 74% of new jobs produced each year (Saha et al., 2020). Thus, organizational learning within SMEs is inevitable for sustainable growth in any country, including Ghana (World Bank, 2021). There is, therefore, the need to mitigate or prevent any adverse effect on SMEs' development.

The dynamic shifts in the corporate landscape compel companies to enhance their flexibility to endure, particularly when alongside traditional business risks and economic fluctuations (Malekifar et al., 2016). Among the foremost tactics to gain and retain a competitive advantage in the constantly changing market atmosphere is organizational agility (Bahrami et al., 2016). The capacity for organizational learning is essential for achieving business triumph due to the significant proliferation of product

options brought about by technological progress and interconnected factors (Bahrami et al., 2016).

To prevent liquidation, SMEs must, above all, stay abreast of market trends, incorporate new technology into their goods, and enhance customer connections (Khalid and Firdaus, 2021). Consumer requirements and behaviours are always changing (Malekifar et al., 2016). The speed and abundance of information in the modern day give consumers additional levels of choice. Customers are becoming smarter consumers. Given that customers' knowledge has been steadily growing, being information-ready has been essential to staying ahead of the competition (Bahrami et al., 2016). For SMEs to compete with large, well-established companies, they must increase their learning capacity and be adaptable in the employment market.

Some researchers have suggested investigations based on this matter, some of which are explained here. To effectively address the ever-changing landscape, businesses need to swiftly adapt by incorporating innovative strategies and vigilant technology monitoring. Saha et al. (2020) argue that both organizational agility and organizational learning are imperative for this purpose. Likewise, Hamad and Yozgat (2017) underscore the strategic value of agility and conclude that leaders in agile organizations foster environments conducive to learning. Notably, both organizational learning and entrepreneurial leadership play significant roles in shaping organizational agility, and entrepreneurial leadership also bears weight on organizational learning (Khalid and Firdaus, 2021). Moreover, this research unveils that the relationship between organizational agility and entrepreneurial leadership is somewhat mediated by organizational learning. The authors' study establishes a correlation between organizational agility and the capacity for organizational learning, particularly in the context of multinational corporations. However, there is a gap in research concerning



the nexus of organizational agility and learning in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Therefore, this study aims to enrich empirical literature by investigating the interconnectedness of organizational agility and learning within SMEs located in the Kumasi Metropolis.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) hold a pivotal position in the Ghanaian economy, constituting over 90% of businesses and providing employment for more than 70% of the workforce (Hagin and Caesar, 2021). Nonetheless, these enterprises often confront heightened vulnerability in the face of the swiftly changing business landscape compared to larger firms. Crucial to their ability to navigate and prosper in this dynamic environment are organizational agility and organizational learning ability (Calli and Calli, 2021). Thus, firms that have strong agility has traits comprising various factors, such as a focus on meeting customer needs, a commitment to innovation, and a readiness to engage in experimentation (Calli and Calli, 2021). On the other hand, organizational learning can enable an organization to proficiently recognize, acquire and integrate new knowledge, utilizing it to enhance its overall performance (Hindasah and Nuryakin, 2020).

The discussions on organizational agility and organizational learning abilities are increasing among academicians and practitioners (El Badawy et al., 2014), stressing its importance and what should practitioners take into account to develop it (Chiva and Alegre, 2009). Recently, organizational agility and organizational learning ability have taken the centre stage of discussions in business management across the world (Harraf, Wanasika, Tate, *et al.*, 2015). Existing research indicates a positive correlation between organizational agility, organizational learning ability, and organizational performance (Zeitun and Benjelloun, 2013). However, there is a noticeable dearth of studies



examining the relationship between these two constructs, particularly within the context of SMEs in developing nations, specifically Ghana. For instance, the work of Hamad and Yozgat (2017) delved into the examination of organizational agility and organizational learning within commercial banks in Jordan. They unveiled that agility plays a pivotal role in facilitating learning. Similarly, Bahrami, Kiani, Montazeralfarai, Zadeh, and Zadeh (2016) directed their attention to the mediating influence of organizational learning in the connection between organizational intelligence and organizational agility. Their research was conducted in four teaching hospitals located in Yazd City, Iran. It was determined by Bahrami et al. (2016) that there exists a statistically significant relationship between organizational learning and organizational agility.

Though organizational agility studies and organizational learning abilities are highly recommended for SMEs, none of the studies above specifically focused on SMEs. More importantly, all the studies above were conducted in countries with social, economic, and cultural characteristics entirely different from those of Ghana, making it unacceptable to holistically apply their findings to Ghana. This study, therefore, focuses on SMEs in Ghana, using SMEs in Kumasi Metropolis as a case study to establish the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning ability as a contribution to organizational agility and learning abilities studies.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this study are to:

1. evaluate the organizational agility strategies of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis.

2. to assess the organizational learning ability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis.
3. determine the effect of organizational agility on the organizational learning ability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How effective are the organizational agility strategies of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis?
2. Do the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis have the required organizational learning abilities?
3. What is the effect of organizational agility on the organizational learning ability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis?

#### **1.5 Significance of Study**

This study is significant for practitioners of SMEs in the Kumasi Metropolis. SMEs operate in a changing environment and as such they need to be agile to meet the growing competition to remain sustainable and profitable. This study through its analysis would bring to bear how effective are the organizational agility strategies adopted by the SMEs, as well as the learning abilities required by them in the phase of growing competition. This would help create awareness of the current state of organizational agility and organizational learning ability of SMEs in the Kumasi Metropolis. Through this awareness, the practitioners in the SME industry can adopt the best and appropriate organizational agility and learning abilities consistent with competition within the industry.

This study is also significant to policymakers within the SME industry. Through this study, the policy makers within the SME industry such as the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) and Ghana Enterprise Development Commission (GEDC) would be aware of the current state of organizational agility and learning ability of SMEs and this would aid policy-making on the development of SMEs through organizational agility and learning.

The study is significant to research on organizational ability and learning within SMEs in Ghana. Currently, little is known about organizational agility and learning within the SME industry, though SMEs are facing keen competition. Through this study, empirical literature would be able to inform about how agile SMEs are in Ghana, particularly, in the Kumasi Metropolis. The study would also provide empirical literature on the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning in SMEs, helping to close the gap in the literature concerning the subject matter.

Lasting, the study would set the tone for research on organizational agility and organizational learning in SMEs in Ghana. Imperatively, the gaps that would be identified in the literature by this study would motivate other researchers to refocus on organizational agility and learning, thereby helping in the holistic understanding of organizational agility and organizational learning required for SMEs in Ghana.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study was conducted in Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti Region, Ghana which has a population of 5,440,463 with a growth rate of 5.3% p.a (GSS, 2021). The metropolis is dominated by SMEs such as pharmacy shops, provision shops, chemical/drugs stores, carpentry shops and mechanical shops of which some are Micro Enterprises-employing (less than 6 people), Very small Enterprises (employing 6-9

people), Small Enterprises (between 10 and 29 employees) and Medium Enterprises (between 29-50 employees) based on the classifications by Osei *et al* (1993). The study would however focus on very small enterprises, small enterprises and medium enterprises. The study contextually focuses on organizational agility and organizational learning and the relationship between them within SMEs.

### **1.7 Brief Methodology**

This study focused on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis. The metropolis was chosen for the study because it is a commercial centre with a variety of SMEs. The metropolis has a range of businesses from trading to mechanical works; helping to obtain varied views on the subject matter for this study. According to Osei et al. (1993), SMEs are grouped into Micro Enterprises-employing less than 6 people; Very small Enterprises, employing 6-9 people, Small,-between 10 and 29 employees and Medium, -between 29-50 employees. The study however focused on Very Small and Medium Enterprises in the Kumasi Metropolis since they are more structured and well-positioned to compete favourably with large scale enterprises in Ghana and foreign competition.

This study employed a quantitative research strategy where descriptive and explanatory research designs were employed to analyze the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning abilities. Data were collected from the managers/ owners of Very Small Enterprises, Small Enterprises and Medium Enterprises in the Kumasi Metropolis since they are more structured and well-positioned to compete favourably with large-scale enterprises and foreign competition. According to the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), there are about 1107 registered SMEs in Kumasi Metropolis.



The study used a structured questionnaire to collect all the data. The study adopted a questionnaire designed and used by Chiva et al. (2007) on organizational learning ability and a questionnaire by Charbobbier-Voirin (2011) on organizational agility. Hamad and Yozgot (2017) have used the same questionnaire and questionnaires are proven to have high construct validity and reliability.

The data collected were cleaned, coded and entered into SPSS version 25.0 for statistical analysis. The study used mean and standard deviation to determine the extent of the organizational agility and organizational learning ability of the SMEs. The study further uses the AMOS Structural Equation Model (SEM) to establish the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning ability.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

This research report is divided into five sections. The first chapter provides an overview of the thesis, encompassing the following elements: introduction to the study's background, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, scope of the study, and the structure of the report. The second chapter explores existing literature on organizational agility and learning capability in SMEs. This involves delving into theoretical, conceptual, and empirical reviews, as well as outlining the conceptual framework guiding the study. Moving on, the third chapter outlines the research methodology employed in data collection. Within this section, the researcher elucidates the research design, population and sampling strategies, and the tools employed for data gathering. Chapter four divulges the study's findings, presenting, analyzing, and interpreting the data gathered through the research instruments. Lastly, the fifth chapter offers a comprehensive summary of the entire study. This includes summarizing the results, offering recommendations, drawing conclusions, and suggesting areas for further investigation.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This section focuses on the theoretical review, conceptual review, and empirical review of the literature. The study is focused on the effects of organizational agility on organizational learning ability among SMEs in Kumasi Metropolis.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

The key theories that underpin this study are resource-based theory, contingency theory, dynamic capabilities theory and knowledge-based-view theory.

##### **2.1.1 Resource-Based Theory (RBT)**

The importance of this theory is demonstrated by Barney (1991) and Wernerfelt (1984), who contend that firms gain a competitive advantage by utilizing a variety of rare resources and that these firms can maintain their advantage when the said resources are unique or impossible for rivals to imitate. According to this notion, firms must use their skills to adapt to the changing economic environment to be flexible. Simply having the resources is not enough (Wuen et al., 2019). This idea states that organizations get a competitive edge by having unique and uncommon resources and competencies that are difficult for rivals to copy and replace (Wuen et al., 2019). Companies with these resources and capabilities can use them and outperform their rivals in terms of performance (Yu et al., 2017).

Although this theory can help with the selection and use of strategic resources, it is criticized for solely concentrating on businesses looking to gain a competitive advantage (Uurlu & Kurt, 2016). Another drawback of this approach is that it doesn't emphasize how well a company may use its resources to get an advantage over rivals (Uurlu & Kurt, 2016). The theory doesn't go far enough in explaining how managers

may gather these resources and coordinate them by utilizing their skills to boost organizational productivity, flexibility, and competitiveness (Yu et al., 2017). However, SMEs must adapt to the shifting business climate by utilizing a variety of resources, including technology, human resources, and networks with other industry players, to remain competitive (Tsai, 2017). These claims imply that the RBT's recommendations would make it possible for SMEs to take advantage of the skills and resources they already have to become more adaptable and perform better (Tsai, 2017).

## **2.2 Contingency Theory**

Fiedler developed the contingency theory in 1964 and said that an organization's internal and external circumstances determine the best course of action. This claim argues that a firm's ability to adapt to unforeseen changes in the environment depends heavily on both intra and inter-organizational elements (Sari et al., 2022). The contingency theory seeks to understand the relationships that exist between the many subsystems of a company as well as how the organization as a whole engages with its operating environment (Sari et al., 2022). The basic presumptions of this theory include: that performance is only measured using financial metrics; that performance is based solely on financial metrics; and that causal inference is drawn between the various variables even if the deterministic causal model may not be valid (Saha et al., 2017). As it takes into account businesses working in an open system where information and resources are exchanged using the input-process-output paradigm, the proposed theory is consistent with the current study (Saha et al., 2017).

For SMEs, the input includes both internal and external variations, the process includes how firms react to these changes, and the outputs are the outcomes or performance of the enterprises as a result of how they react to these environmental variations (Ocharo, 2018). Given that there are no specific contingent variables that companies can

concentrate on to boost their performance, the contingency theory is criticized for lacking clarity. Additionally, critics of the theory have criticized it for being extremely simplistic and for adopting a deterministic strategy that cannot address circular problems (Ocharo, 2018). However, the ongoing interest in studying organizational agility and performance reinforces the contingency theory's underlying tenets, particularly concerning the necessity of identifying various external aspects that businesses must pay attention to to gain a competitive edge (Sari et al., 2022).

### **2.2.1 Dynamic Capabilities Theory**

The dynamic capacities theory was developed by Teece et al. (1994) as an expansion of the resource-based viewpoint. The theory outlines how resources and competencies are developed and redeveloped to deal with a corporate environment that is always changing. The notion goes beyond the conventional wisdom that a company's success depends on sustainable management and the acquisition of priceless, unique, rateable, and non-replaceable resources (Ekweli & Hamilton, 2020). According to the dynamic capacities idea, a company must constantly adapt to the dynamic business environment and know when to grow, shrink, or remain constant. There is no agreement among experts as to what is correct or wrong regarding dynamic capabilities theory because they all have distinct perceptions and ideas (Ekweli & Hamilton, 2020).

Because it examines how businesses might thrive in the face of multiple markets and competitive uncertainty, this theory is appropriate for this study (Govuzela & Mafini, 2019). As seen, the corporate environment is always changing, and this development cannot be stopped by ethical or business-related concerns (Gerald et al., 2020). A high level of dynamism is necessary for an organization to be agile in seizing opportunities and letting go of potential errors, and this theory can best explain this dynamism. SMEs can base their operations on the dynamic capabilities theory by implementing novel

strategies that would allow them to foresee the future or quickly adapt to the continuously changing business environment to get a competitive edge and enhance their performance (Govuzela & Mafini, 2019).

The ability of an organization to adapt to a dynamically changing business environment is at the heart of dynamic capabilities theory. To put it another way, to make the best strategic decisions and to reconfigure and repurpose all potential and resources, businesses must be sensitive to perceiving, seizing, and moulding internal and external opportunities and threats (Gerald et al., 2020). In fact, during the past 10 years, dynamic managerial competencies and capabilities have emerged as a result of the organization's implementation of a collaborative approach as a key organizational element (Govuzela & Mafini, 2019). Additionally, competitors found it challenging to replicate dynamic skills because of unique traits, cultural norms, and complex imitability (Dharmadasa, 2017). Strong dynamic capabilities therefore act as a strong base for organizational agility.

### **2.2.2. Knowledge Based-View Theory**

This perspective, which has its roots in the literature on strategic management, expands and builds upon the Penrose (1959)-first advocated resource-based view of the company (RBV) (Wernerfelt 1984, Conner 1991). The idea of knowledge, which is present in both the practices and procedures of organizations as well as their goods and services, is widely acknowledged to be a key theme of organizational learning. The knowledge-based view, which sees businesses as a repository of knowledge and competencies, thus serves as the theoretical basis for organizational learning (Ekweli & Hamilton, 2020). This perspective contends that organizations have an advantage over markets due to their higher capacity for knowledge creation and transfer (Chukwuma & Madukwe, 2020). This is in addition to the possibility that the only



lasting competitive advantage is the capacity to learn faster than rivals (Arsawan et al., 2022). Anyimadu-Antwi (2019) makes the case that learning is essential in the current business environment and that quick learning helps workers reach their peak performance faster, drive organizational productivity and agility, and enable quicker response to competitive threats, opportunities to develop new products, and customer requirements. Thus, in a developing global knowledge economy, organizational learning becomes a competitive resource.

As stated by Adhiatma et al. (2022), organizations need to bolster their abilities for both individual and collective learning to meet the evolving demands of their clientele. The initial establishment of appropriate knowledge management systems is vital for achieving this goal. According to Ahmed-Ishmel et al. (2018), the process of organizational learning is seen as dynamic and knowledge-driven, spanning various levels of action from individuals to groups, and even encompassing the entire organizational framework. They further argue that for this learning to permeate throughout the organization, four dimensions—system perspective, unity, experimentation, and knowledge transfer—are indispensable.

Management commitment is identified as the driving force behind the implementation of organizational learning strategies, fostering a culture that values knowledge creation, transfer, and acquisition as fundamental principles (Ahmed-Ishmel et al., 2018). The notion of a unified identity among members is a crucial aspect within a systemic viewpoint (Arsawan et al., 2022). While knowledge transfer and integration are closely intertwined processes that occur concurrently rather than sequentially, unity and experimentation revolve around cultivating an environment that embraces fresh ideas and diverse perspectives, both from within and outside the organization. This, in turn, facilitates ongoing enhancement, expansion, and refinement of individual knowledge



(Arsawan et al., 2022). This necessitates the development of a set of procedures delineating how new and established knowledge is managed, shared with team members, and seamlessly integrated into day-to-day operations.

Moreover, the perspective of the knowledge-based view presents a strong comprehension of the significance of knowledge as a vital component of organizations and as a determinant of a company's survival, as highlighted by Chukwuma & Madukwe (2020). Companies continue to reap advantages from their ability to acquire knowledge and learn as an organization. This process of organizational learning plays a pivotal role in the sustained existence, performance, and continuous enhancement of knowledge over time, as emphasized by Dabi et al. (2021). This can be identified as a cognitive process through which data is collected, conveyed, understood, and stored, as noted by Chukwuma & Madukwe (2020). Furthermore, a central objective of organizational learning is to share information internally within the company and externally with partners, aiming to preserve such valuable knowledge. This sharing contributes to the creation of a competitive advantage through organizational learning, enabling businesses to adeptly respond to shifts in their environment and implement innovative practices that amplify productivity, as outlined by Dabi et al. (2021). This process also encompasses the introduction of novel concepts and adjustments in behaviours, which are integral components of organizational learning.

### **2. 3. Conceptual Review**

This **section** aims to elucidate the fundamental notions in connection to the study's goals, facilitating readers' comprehension of the undertaken research. Within the context of the conceptual examination, it will expound upon the meanings of organizational learning ability (OLA), its various manifestations, and its significance. Additionally, the concept of organizational agility, its different forms, and its

importance will be discussed. Furthermore, the definition of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), their economic impact, and the obstacles encountered by such enterprises in Ghana will also be explored.

### **2.3.1. Concept of organization learning ability (OLA)**

Organizational learning ability (OLA) has many definitions. Organizational learning ability (OLA) is the procedure by which knowledge shared by a group of people is acquired, maintained, and changed through cultural devices and group actions, according to Dharmadasa (2017) and Ekweli and Hamilton (2020). OLA is characterized as a process of investigation wherein organization members collectively generate shared values and knowledge by drawing upon both their personal experiences and the experiences of their peers (Dabi et al., 2021). It requires producing, obtaining, understanding, transmitting, and keeping fresh and up-to-date knowledge (Gerald et al., 2020). The capacity for organizational learning, according to Hamad and Yozgat (2017), can help businesses obtain competitive advantages. Learning organizations are better able to anticipate events, trends, and market shifts than their competitors, which can enable them to develop more adaptable structures to address issues (Gerald et al., 2020).

OLA has a favourable impact on interpersonal interactions because businesses that are more devoted to organizational learning exhibit better business success (Idrees et al., 2022). Customers are a constant source of knowledge for businesses, and if that knowledge is gathered from a variety of geographical places, it may be a valuable resource for creating innovative knowledge combinations that spur innovation (Gerald et al., 2020). Similar to Ghana, where SMEs are notorious for having one of the lowest sustainability rates in the world, organizational learning capability is crucial there (Idrees et al., 2022). Accordingly, SMEs in the nation should stress organizational

learning skills to enhance their creativity, problem-solving, efficiency, and effectiveness as well as to change them for long-term success, according to various research (Imhanrenialena & Sinclair, 2019; Michna, 2015).

Similar to how Yu et al. (2017) and Wuen et al. (2019) described organizational learning ability (OLA), they stressed the significance of supporting learning processes and processing information to adapt to the quickly changing business environment. Additionally, organizational learning ability (OLA) was defined by Tsai (2017) as the process of creating new knowledge that affects how corporate organizations behave. Although there are several definitions, the essential idea of organizational learning ability (OLA) can be taken from the component of information acquisition through the learning process (Tsai, 2017).

### **2.3.2. Forms of Organizational Learning Ability**

Adhiatma et al. (2022) assert that the ability to learn organizationally is correlated with the ability to generate and effectively generalize concepts. When used in an organizational environment, the term "learning" refers to the transfer of information to other individuals, groups, or functions (Chukwuma & Madukwe, 2020). As a result, Argyris and Schön (2021) suggest three forms of organizational learning, including:

1. **Single-loop learning.** This happens when mistakes are found and fixed while businesses stick to their current goals and practices. Chukwuma and Madukwe (2020) define single-loop learning as activities that advance knowledge, firm-specific competencies, or procedures without changing the core functions of an organization's operations. Other names for single-loop learning include "Lower-Level Learning," "Adaptive Learning," "Coping," and "Non-Strategic Learning" (Dabi et al., 2021).

2. **Double-loop learning.** This occurs when an organization questions and modifies its existing norms, procedures, policies, and goals, while also identifying and rectifying shortcomings. Adjustments made to the organization's reservoir of knowledge, specialized competencies, or methodologies are integral aspects of double-loop learning (Dharmadasa, 2017). This form of learning is also referred to as "Higher-Level Learning," "Generative Learning," and "Learning to Enhance Organizational Capacities" (Ekweli & Hamilton, 2020). Strategic learning, as defined by Gerald et al. (2020), is the process through which an organization comprehends its environment in manners that expand the scope of objectives it can pursue or broaden the array of resources and activities accessible for pursuing these objectives.

3. **Deutero-learning.** This occurrence transpires when enterprises grasp the implementation of single-loop and double-loop learning. If companies lack an awareness of the necessity for learning, neither of the initial two types of learning will transpire. The recognition of one's lack of knowledge becomes a catalyst for acquiring knowledge (Gerald et al., 2020). To facilitate learning, it becomes crucial to identify the orientations or styles of learning, as well as the underlying processes and structures (facilitating factors). Ekweli and Hamilton (2020) have identified seven distinct learning styles and ten enabling elements that impact the learning process. For example, pinpointing the performance gap between desired outcomes and actual achievements serves as one of these facilitating variables. This acknowledgement prompts companies to realize the imperative of learning and the need to establish an appropriate environment and methodologies (Hamad & Yozgat, 2017). This awareness also encompasses



recognizing the potential for extended periods of positive feedback or effective communication to potentially impede learning progress (Hamad & Yozgat, 2017). Whereas single-loop learning entails embracing change without questioning foundational assumptions and core concepts, double-loop learning and Deutero-learning delve into the reasons and methods for transforming the organization (Ibata-Arens, 2016). As Dodgson (2020) points out, the nature of organizational learning is also influenced by its location within the organizational framework. Consequently, learning can occur across a spectrum of organizational functions, encompassing areas such as marketing, administration, sales, design, engineering, production, and research and development.

### **2.3.3. Importance of Organizational Learning Ability (OLA)**

The organizational learning ability (OLA) of a company is defined as its capacity to adjust its operational strategies in response to disruptions and unpredictability in the business landscape (Dharmadasa, 2017). Companies that possess integrated OLA capabilities are more adept at predicting and addressing emerging prospects and difficulties. In alignment with this, Gerald et al. (2020) assert that OLA relates to a firm's acumen for discerning or anticipating innovative developments within its operating environment. The company's competence in recognizing and promptly addressing environmental opportunities and challenges is referred to as environmental responsiveness (Govuzela & Mafini, 2019).

The ability to recognize changes quickly before they become a threat or an opportunity is the essence of organizational learning (OLA). Therefore, without prompt action and the ability to anticipate and plan for change, there cannot be an OLA. According to



Ibata-Arens (2016), OLA is an organization's capacity to recognize and promptly address opportunities and challenges brought on by a business environment. A swift and thoughtful response is required for it to count as an OLA manoeuvre. It is the capacity for swift and intentional change. This transformation entails quick changes to investment plans, asset allocation, and strategic initiatives (Idrees et al., 2022).

Small and medium-sized enterprises' (SMEs') capacity to adapt quickly to change may mean the difference between a company's survival and demise (Idrees et al., 2022). This is because businesses that adopt OLA as a method of operation can readily outwit companies that react slowly to change. According to Gerald et al. (2020), OLA is a tool that organizations can use to reinvent themselves, adapt to their environment, and eventually survive. According to research on organizational learning ability (OLA), SMEs in particular can succeed in a competitive climate by being responsive, competent, flexible, and quick, which will ensure their continuous relevance and survival (Imhanrenialena & Sinclair, 2019).

Organizational learning is a dynamic process that is impacted by the structural and social context of commercial organizations, according to Michna (2015) and Nicholas (2019). According to Martin (2001), organizational learning ability (OLA) is a crucial process that enables SMEs to manage ongoing changes while achieving growth. This is a result of the regular configuration procedure used to reinvent new capabilities for competitive advantage (Imhanrenialena & Sinclair, 2019).

#### **2.3.4. Concept of organizational agility**

The ability of the corporation to meet the problems in its environment includes organizational agility (OA). To meet business difficulties and outperform the competition, researchers describe OA as the company's capacity to react to unforeseen

changes and then anticipate them by rearranging resources, capabilities, and strategies efficiently and effectively (Imhanrenialena & Sinclair, 2019; Ocharo 2018). Businesses must encounter unforeseen difficulties before reacting and acting.

In contrast, agility is characterized by Michna (2015) as "the competence to not only endure but also thrive in a competitive landscape characterized by perpetual and unforeseeable shifts, achieved by swiftly and effectively responding to evolving markets through customer-centric product and service innovations." Meanwhile, Sari et al. (2022) articulate it as "the effectiveness in managing and applying knowledge, enabling an organization to flourish amid a perpetually changing and unpredictable business backdrop." Though Saha et al. (2017) and Tsai (2017) define agility as "a firm's adeptness at confronting and adjusting within an ever-changing and uncertain business setting," the latter elucidation emphasizes the added dimension of "a firm's capability to sense alterations in the environment and promptly react." Correspondingly, Saha et al. (2017) echo this stance, asserting that it signifies "an organization's capacity to attain its objectives by enhancing its product portfolio, enriching the expertise of its workforce, fostering organizational growth, and streamlining its maneuvers within a rapidly shifting context."

According to Uurlu and Kurt (2016), OA is the capacity of an organization to generate value by routinely altering its decisions in response to changes in the external environment. Through OA, a company commits to preserving and sustaining the motivation to accomplish its strategic goals and develops the flexibility necessary to adjust to market changes while keeping its momentum in the creation of new business prospects (Wuen et al., 2019). The main objective of OA is to integrate the company's several strategic goals, including responsiveness, excellence, flexibility, operational commitment, innovation, and adaptability, which are essential for seizing opportunities

(Yu et al., 2017). Due to the modern business environment's preference for innovation and agility, businesses must repeatedly implement unique concepts (Tsai, 2017). The survival of a firm also depends on its ability to come up with original ideas, create workable goods, services, or processes, and create new value for the company.

#### **2.4. Forms of Organizational Agility**

To gain a competitive advantage, an organization must be agile in its ability to see opportunities, seize them, and act. OA is broken down into two components by Tsai (2017). The first is the ability to sense. This skill turns into the organization's capacity to perceive changes in the outside world of commerce. This skill is important for a business to respond quickly and effectively to challenges by adjusting resources, internal and external information, and strategy in response to market changes (Sari et al., 2022). The second factor is response capacity, which refers to a company's ability to deal with issues quickly and effectively by arranging and coordinating its internal and external resources. This capability is used to come up with fresh approaches to problems in the marketplace and build high-quality, competitive companies (Saha et al., 2017). In this study, OA refers to a company's capacity to act in a way that will accomplish a goal effectively and efficiently, as well as lessen uncertainty and boost competitiveness (Saha et al., 2017).

Organizational agility can take three different forms: decision-making agility, sensing agility, and acting agility. Sensing agility includes continuously seeing and inspecting changes in the business environment. Customer preferences, competition strategy, and technology advancements could all be examples of how the environment can change (Ocharo, 2018). However, decision-making agility entails gathering, compiling, reorganizing, and assessing pertinent market data from various sources to support their immediate influence on the organization (Sari et al., 2022). The goal is to reorganize

the company's resources to take advantage of all available opportunities and to reduce environmental risks to productivity. The term "acting agility," which is synonymous with "practising agility," describes a set of tasks necessary for reassembling resources inside an organization along with modifying business procedures in light of the decision-making agility to deal with changes in the business environment (Sari et al., 2022).

According to Nicholas (2019), there are two types of organizational agility: operational adjustment agility and market-capitalizing agility. The former describes an organization's capacity to quickly adapt to and capitalize on changes through ongoing evaluation and rapid product and service improvement to meet the needs of customers (Imhanrenialena & Sinclair, 2019). In ambiguous corporate situations, this type of agility serves as an entrepreneurial, growth-oriented, and change-embracing tactic (Idrees et al., 2022). The internal business procedures used by a company to deal with environmental changes are the focus of operational adjustment agility. Based on the current developments in the business environment, creative concepts are translated quickly and fluidly to ensure quick execution or implementation (Nurcholis, 2019).

#### **2.4.1. Importance of Organizational Agility**

Higher revenues, happier customers and workers, improved operational efficiency, and a shorter time to market are all advantages of increased agility (Idrees et al., 2022). Organizational agility can result in businesses that can create the right goods and services for the right clients at the right time, place, and cost (Michna, 2015). Building organizational agility inside businesses is a technique to manage risks and unforeseen changes that businesses may encounter (Adhiatma et al., 2022). In a world that is fast changing due to digitalization, globalization, and deregulation, organizational agility is



particularly crucial for the most knowledge-intensive firms (Ahmed-Ishmel et al., 2018).

Agile organizations are both desirable and attainable. There is broad agreement that organizational agility is essential in the current environment and that most organizations still have a long way to go before they are agile (Anyimadu-Antwi, 2019). An applied practice that produces business performance is organizational agility (Arsawan et al., 2022). Naturally, having the power to alter and refresh business models depends on organizational agility (Chukwuma & Madukwe, 2020). Financial and operational success are both enhanced by organizational agility. Customer happiness has the most performance impact, which also helps to increase financial performance overall (Dabi et al., 2021).

In the quickly evolving corporate world of today, organizational agility is an essential differentiation. Organizational agility, according to almost 90% of executives polled by the Economist Intelligence Unit, is essential for corporate success (Dabi et al., 2021). The majority of chief executive officers (CEOs) and chief information officers (CIOs) surveyed concur that quick decision-making and execution are crucial to a company's ability to compete (Dharmadasa, 2017). According to the literature, organizational agility does not imply the absence of a strategy but rather emphasizes strategic thinking, a clear vision, and a joint idea of strategy formulation and implementation rather than dividing the two (Dodgson, 2020). Strategically agile businesses are those that can adapt to the shifting, unexpected, and diverse demands of their clients while lowering the risks of supply disruptions on the back end (Ekweli & Hamilton, 2020).

Higher revenues, happier customers and workers, improved operational efficiency, and a shorter time to market are all advantages of increased agility (Gerald et al., 2020).

Additionally, the research supports the theoretical and logical connections between organizational agility and its four components, namely technical competence, collaborative innovation, organizational learning, and internal alignment (Ekweli & Hamilton, 2020). This suggests that organizational agility and its four characteristics enhance the operational effectiveness of SMEs.

## **2.5 Concept of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)**

There are a multitude of definitions for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). Different organizations and countries have established their criteria for categorizing SMEs, often based on factors like headcount, revenues, or assets. As previously mentioned, the absence of a universally accepted SME definition stems from the subjective nature of labelling a business as small or large (Hamad & Yozgat, 2017). As highlighted by Govuzela and Mafini (2019), diverse nations and continents adopt distinct SME definitions. Ibata-Arens (2016) identified several core criteria, such as employee count, financial stability, sales volume, relative size, initial capital investment, and industry segmentation, which are combined in varying ways to formulate definitions. Notably, Dharmadasa (2017) emphasized prevalent metrics present across many definitions, including fixed assets (capital investment), gross output (annual turnover), and the number of paid employees.

In countries like the United States, Britain, and Canada, SMEs are characterized by their annual revenue and the count of salaried employees. For instance, in Britain, an enterprise is classified as small or medium-sized if it employs fewer than 200 paid staff members and generates an annual revenue of at least €2 million (Dabi et al., 2021). The Research Institute for Management Sciences at the University of Delft in the Netherlands defines a small-scale industry as one with 10 to 99 employees, led by a

manager who exclusively handles managerial tasks and isn't directly engaged in production (Dabi et al., 2021).

Postwar Japan defined small and medium-sized businesses in the manufacturing sector as those with capital under ¥50 million or fewer than 300 employees, while the commerce and service sectors used criteria of under ¥10 million or fewer than 50 employees (Gerald et al., 2020). In Indonesia, a medium-sized industry involves 10 to 50 workers and employs motive power, as outlined by the Indonesian Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises. Furthermore, small-scale enterprises are broadly identified as businesses, households or cottages, with less than 10 full-time employees and no machinery usage (Yu et al., 2017). In India, the official definition of a small-scale industry quantitatively hinges on manufacturing enterprises with plant and machinery investments not exceeding 750,000 rupees. This definition, placing substantial emphasis on employment, reflects India's concerns related to capital scarcity and unemployment (Yu et al., 2017).

The definition of an SME varies over time and between organizations in Ghana. To identify what it refers to as micro and small-sized firms, the Ghanaian government has employed a variety of definitions and criteria (Adhiatma et al., 2022). It makes use of working capital as well as investments in machinery and equipment at some point. In the past, capital expenses and turnover were utilized as criteria. The Ministry of Trade and Industry, responsible for overseeing micro and small-scale businesses, has taken a relatively permissive approach, particularly concerning the values of fixed costs incurred (Anyimadu-Antwi, 2019). According to the Ghana Statistical Service (SSG), which published industrial statistics, small-scale industries employ 29 individuals or fewer, while the remaining entities are classified as medium- and large-scale enterprises (Anyimadu-Antwi, 2019). In Ghana, an SME is defined under the Venture Capital Fund

Act 2004 (Act 680) as an industry, project, endeavour, or economic activity that employs a maximum of 100 people and whose total asset base, excluding land and buildings, does not surpass the equivalent of \$1 million in cedi value (Argyris & Schön, 2021). Furthermore, the Registrar General's Department maintains records indicating that approximately 90% of registered firms in Ghana fall under the SME category. Data from the Social Security National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) also reveals that 90 per cent of companies employ fewer than 20 individuals. Businesses with less than 29 employees are considered micro and small firms, according to the National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI) (Anyimadu-Antwi, 2019). Micro businesses are defined as those with 1 to 5 employees and fixed assets under USD 10,000, excluding land and buildings. Small businesses typically have 6 to 29 employees and fixed assets worth no more than USD 100,000, excluding land and buildings. The National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) expanded the classification of SMEs into four distinct groups: Micro enterprises (comprising less than five employees), Small enterprises (comprising six to 29 employees), Medium enterprises (comprising 30 to 99 employees), and Large enterprises (comprising 100 or more employees) (Arsawan et al., 2022).

### **2.5.1 Contributions of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to an Economy**

According to Chukwuma and Madukwe (2020), one of the main arguments in favour of emphasizing SMEs is that they are significant employers of labour, which makes them essential for addressing the issues of unemployment and poverty stated by Chukwuma and Madukwe (2020), compelling indications exist that small enterprises play a noteworthy role in generating employment opportunities for a diverse range of workers, encompassing youth, seniors, part-time labourers, and those facing cyclical joblessness. This assertion rests on observations at both the national and regional levels.



Ekweli and Hamilton (2020) suggest that micro and small enterprises (MSEs) assume an intermediary function in the progression of large-scale enterprises. By generating jobs in rural areas, they lessen regional imbalances and more quickly mobilize local resources than large-scale companies (Gerald et al., 2020). According to Govuzela and Mafini (2019), small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) support national development by having a favourable impact on the distribution of income, both functionally and nominally. By concentrating efforts on SMEs, industries become more decentralized, speeding up rural development and reducing urban immigration and its associated traffic issues (Govuzela & Mafini, 2019).

Focusing on small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) has another benefit in that they contribute to the manufacturing sector's value-added and the economy's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Hamad & Yozgat, 2017). For instance, 99% of businesses that were SMEs produced 84% of the jobs in the European Union between 2002 and 2012. (Ibata-Arens, 2016). More recently, the World Bank (2021) emphasized the role that SMEs play in the economic growth of developing countries, highlighting the fact that they can make up as much as 51% of the labour force and more than a third of GDP (GDP). For instance, in Ghana, SMEs account for 24.4% of GDP and 74% of all new jobs created annually are in the unorganized sector (Saha et al., 2020). The influence of modern small businesses on the development of a competitive pricing system is another notable contribution (Michna, 2015). The abundance of tiny businesses creates a wide range of piece enterprise enterprises, creating a competitive environment that is almost ideal.

Small firms thus serve as a built-in deterrent to the price-setting authority of enormous monopolistic or oligopolistic conglomerates (Michna, 2015). In addition to the reasons

mentioned above, economists have discovered certain benefits associated with small-scale businesses (Hamad & Yozgat, 2017).

### **2.5.2 Challenges in Facing Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Ghana**

Micro and small enterprises in Ghana encounter a diverse array of challenges, encompassing both financial and non-financial impediments. Financial constraints encompass the obstacles faced by micro and small enterprises (MSEs) when it comes to securing funding. The absence of adequate resources and funding has significantly hindered the realization of many promising business concepts and the expansion of established enterprises (Imhanrenialena & Sinclair, 2019). These businesses struggle with factors such as inadequate financial histories, the high risks inherent in initiating new ventures—which often dissuade banks—and insufficiency of collateral. This, along with poor record keeping and a lack of awareness regarding their business risks, contributes to the difficulty small business proprietors face in obtaining funds for business growth (Ibata-Arens, 2016).

Effective record-keeping significantly underpins business integrity. Unfortunately, pervasive corruption in Ghanaian society has permeated the fabric of entrepreneurship, rendering many operators, particularly those in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), unable to maintain comprehensive records (Michna, 2015). Numerous business owners opt to evade tax payments to appropriate authorities. Another obstacle hindering easy access to funding for small and medium-sized enterprises from banks and specialized financial institutions is inadequate governance structures (Govuzela & Mafini, 2019). Recent industry investigations indicated a preference among operators for loans over equity contributions. This preference has contributed to the lack of investment in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) funds (Govuzela & Mafini, 2019). To enhance their chances of securing funding, owners of small and medium-sized

businesses (SMEs) should focus on creating a realistic business plan backed by financial projections that highlight the viability of their operations (Idrees et al., 2022). These businesses ought to also prioritize maintaining accurate financial records, establishing robust internal controls, and ensuring proper legal registration with relevant authorities. Most importantly, owners must possess a deep understanding of the industry in which they intend to operate (Idrees et al., 2022).

## **2.6 Empirical Review**

This section will review some authors who conducted studies on the key objectives of their work. Based on the key empirical gap raised in the section, the methodology and the approach to the study are formed.

### **2.6.1 Evaluate the organizational agility strategies of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis**

By examining innovation roles and strategic flexibility, Arsawan et al. (2022) concentrated on fostering organizational agility in SMEs. The study used descriptive analysis, specifically employing a quantitative approach. The results of the study showed that social capital had a considerable impact on organizational agility, innovation, and collaborative knowledge generation. Furthermore, the study found that collaborative knowledge generation had little to no effect on organizational agility. The study further asserts that the association between innovation and organizational agility was not moderated by strategic flexibility. Although the study by the authors was insightful, it lacked the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings to elevate the literature.

Dabi et al. (2021) employed a descriptive analysis methodology, specifically employing qualitative techniques, to investigate the correlation between intellectual agility,

entrepreneurial leadership (measured by future orientation and community building), and the innovation capacity of micro and small businesses within an efficiency-driven economy. The research highlighted that entrepreneurial leadership effectively moderates the impact of employee intellectual agility on the innovativeness of micro and small enterprises. Furthermore, the study revealed that intellectual agility significantly influences future orientation, which subsequently impacts the potential for innovation and community engagement. While the authors' study offered valuable insights, the utilization of a qualitative approach in interpreting the results introduced potential researcher bias when attempting to formulate definitive conclusions.

Ahmed-Ishmel et al. (2018) employed a descriptive analysis approach, specifically utilizing quantitative methods, to investigate the impact of financial technology on the operational aspects (payments/collections) of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The study concentrated on evaluating how financial technology (FinTech) influences the economy, subsequently fostering positive effects on a country's development. The research also delved into the pros and cons associated with the adoption and funding of FinTech. The findings revealed that both SMEs and financial authorities commonly initiate extensive campaigns to support emerging FinTech enterprises and integrate FinTech into their day-to-day operations, ensuring their adaptability and success in the modern business landscape. While the authors' inquiry provided valuable insights, it lacked the inclusion of theoretical and conceptual analysis to validate the findings and generate a definitive interpretation.

Gerald et al. (2020) researched the impact of strategic foresight (SF) on the competitive advantage (CA) of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Anambra State. Their study employed a descriptive analysis approach, specifically utilizing quantitative methods. The study findings demonstrated a positive correlation between strategic foresight (SF)



and competitive advantage (CA) ( $r = .968$ ). Moreover, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) revealed that variations in strategic foresight account for 92% of the changes observed in competitive advantage ( $R^2 = .938$ ;  $F = 4070.780$ ,  $p$ -value 0.05). While the authors' research was insightful, it would have benefited from an incorporation of theoretical and conceptual examination to reinforce the existing literature and attain a conclusive analysis.

Ekweli and Hamilton (2020) investigated the interrelation between organizational agility and product innovation within the banking industry of the Nigerian economy. Their research employed a cross-sectional survey research design. The study's participant pool consisted of 36 senior and middle-level managers from 18 Deposit Money Banks, with a sample size of 36 respondents. The hypotheses were subjected to analysis using the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient, maintaining a significance level of 0.05. The research findings revealed a robust correlation between organizational agility and product innovation within the Nigerian banking sector. Although the authors' study was informative, the inclusion of theoretical and conceptual examination would have been beneficial to achieve a more definitive conclusion.

Govuzela and Mafini (2019) delved into the correlation between optimal business practices, organizational agility, and the performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in South Africa. The research employed a cross-sectional survey research design along with a quantitative methodology. A standardized questionnaire was administered to 564 owner-managers of SMEs selected at random. Through the employment of structural equation modelling, hypotheses were assessed. The outcomes underscored that organizational agility experienced substantial enhancement due to four core business best practices: technological capacity, collaborative innovation, organizational learning, and internal alignment. Furthermore, the study disclosed that

organizational agility significantly bolstered business performance. The study's inference suggested that a proficient alignment of the four considered business best practices could profoundly amplify SMEs' performance. Despite the study's informative nature, a comprehensive theoretical and conceptual analysis was essential to arrive at a more definite conclusion. The authors' research revealed the tangible impact of organizational agility strategies on the success of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by substantially elevating their operational standards and profitability. However, the majority of the authors' inquiries lacked the necessary theoretical and conceptual underpinning to attain a conclusive resolution.

#### **2.6.2 Assess the organizational learning ability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis**

Anyimadu-Antwi (2019), who used descriptive analysis and a quantitative approach, concentrated on evaluating organizational learning techniques in small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) in Ghana. The study found that SMEs' extremely slow growth may have a major detrimental effect on their capacity to engage in learning practices. The findings also imply that while looking for learning opportunities, employees tend to behave rather passively. The cost of offering such opportunities, the change in attitude among returning employees, and the attrition rate among employees who were given learning opportunities were the three difficulties that had a substantial impact on SME operators' ability to engage in organizational learning activities. It's interesting to note that a sizeable percentage of SME owners were completely satisfied with the benefits of such learning activities and that satisfaction increased with time. Although the author's study was insightful, the qualitative methodology used in the study led to bias on the part of the researchers who had to translate the results into a conclusive analysis.

Imhanrenialena and Sinclair (2019) employed descriptive analysis, specifically utilizing quantitative methods, to explore the interconnection between organizational learning capability and the innovativeness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with a particular focus on SMEs affiliated with the Enugu Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (ECCIMA). The research unearthed notable relationships: firstly, a noteworthy correlation was identified between information sharing and creativity within SMEs; secondly, there was a close association between openness and product innovation in SMEs; thirdly, a substantial influence on process innovation was observed in SMEs. Consequently, it can be concluded that organizational learning capability significantly and positively influences the innovative prowess of small and medium-sized enterprises. Despite the study's informative nature, the inclusion of a theoretical and conceptual assessment was necessary to achieve a more conclusive outcome.

As the study used descriptive analysis, specifically employing a quantitative method, Wuen et al. (2019) concentrated on the impact of organizational learning on SME performance with competitive strategy serving as the mediating effect. The study found that organizational learning and competitive strategy have a substantial impact on SME success. Additionally, in Brunei Darussalam, the competitive strategy significantly mediates the relationship between organizational learning and SME performance. The research's conclusion recommends that organizational learning initiatives should be supplemented with competitive strategy requirements. Although the study by the authors was insightful, it needed a theoretical and conceptual analysis to back up the literature.

Michna (2015) conducted descriptive analysis, specifically using qualitative methodologies, and concentrated on the connection between organizational learning

and SME performance in Poland. According to the survey, the following factors are most important for increasing sales and employment: teamwork, collaboration, team learning, and leaders' attitudes. The study further demonstrated that organizational learning and performance had an empirical relationship. In actuality, this means that firms with higher levels of organizational learning will probably perform better. The study was insightful, but because it took a qualitative approach, the researchers were biased when they tried to conclude from the results.

A study on learning in small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) was done by Tsai (2017) with a focus on Taiwanese SMEs. In particular, a quantitative method was used for the data collection in the study's descriptive analysis. According to the study, there may be variations in how organizational learning is formed depending on whether the firm is family-owned or not. Although the authors' study was insightful, a theoretical and conceptual examination was not conducted to reach a clear analysis.

Dharmadasa (2017) used a cross-sectional survey and a specially quantitative approach to collect data, focusing on organizational learning, innovation, and performance in family-controlled manufacturing SMEs in Australia. The results of the study showed a positive relationship between management advancement and formal planning and the performance of family-owned SMEs. Furthermore, in terms of innovation and business performance, our research has found a strong relationship between innovation and business performance in family SMEs. The study discovered that networks influence company performance indirectly through innovation. Regarding the "between" results, they showed that staff development and management development had a greater influence on firm performance in non-family SMEs whereas formal planning and innovation had a higher impact on family SMEs than on non-family SMEs. In terms of



networks, the study discovered that family SMEs had larger network effects on innovation than non-family SMEs.

Yu et al. (2017) directed their research towards examining the impact of organizational learning and knowledge management innovation on the technological capability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). They adopted a descriptive analysis approach, specifically employing qualitative methods. The study's outcomes validated the subsequent hypotheses: (1) Knowledge management innovation exhibited an inverted U relationship with technological capability; (2) Knowledge management innovation exerted a progressively positive influence on both exploitative learning and exploratory learning; (3) Higher levels of exploitative learning corresponded with improved technological capability when accompanied by more knowledge management innovations, while the impact of exploratory innovation on this relationship was minor. Although the authors' study was illuminating, the application of qualitative methodology introduced a potential researcher bias when translating the outcomes into a conclusive analysis.

As shown by the author's findings, remaining agile has a favourable effect on SMEs because it aids in gaining a competitive edge and determining the ideal strategy to enhance new market trends. To improve the literature and produce a conclusive study, the majority of them did not, however, make use of theoretical and conceptual reviews. To understand the subject matter clearly, the research is centred on this background.

### **2.6.3 The effect of organizational agility on the organizational learning ability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis**

The research conducted by Hamad and Yozgat (2017) employed descriptive analysis, specifically employing quantitative methods, to explore the impact of agility practices

on the organizational learning capacity within commercial banks in Jordan. The authors' findings indicated that agility holds strategic significance, with administrators in agile organizations being capable of fostering a conducive environment for learning. Although the authors' study was intriguing, its conclusions did not directly address small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Idrees et al. (2022) employed descriptive analysis, specifically using quantitative methods, to centre their study on the role of knowledge management capabilities (KMC) in influencing new product development performance, with organizational agility acting as a mediating factor. The research highlighted that both knowledge application and sharing exert a substantial and favourable influence on the innovation of new products. The interplay between knowledge management capabilities and new product development is predominantly channelled through organizational agility. Moreover, the findings unveiled that the presence of business model innovation significantly shapes the relationship between organizational agility and KMC. While the authors' study offered valuable insights, the absence of theoretical and conceptual examination hindered the study's capacity to arrive at a conclusive analysis.

Nicholas (2019) concentrated on the mediating impact of organizational agility (OA) and knowledge exploitability (KE) on the link between new market exploration (NME), the creation of marketing programs (DMP), and product diversity (PD) (SCA). Structural equation modelling was used to examine data from 189 Batik SMEs in Indonesia (SEM). The findings indicate that knowledge exploitability is significantly impacted by new market exploration and marketing program development; product diversity is significantly impacted by organizational agility and knowledge exploitability; and organizational agility is significantly impacted by sustainable competitive advantage. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that knowledge

exploitability and organizational agility mediate the relationship between the investigation of new markets, the creation of marketing strategies, and the diversification of products with a long-term competitive advantage.

Adhiatma et al. (2022) directed their focus towards the challenging task of establishing digital ecosystems for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), discussing the drive for digitization among these businesses due to advancements in information technology. The central aim of this study was to formulate a model that illustrates the interrelation between SMEs' change readiness, agile leadership, and the dynamic implementation of digital ecosystems within the creative industry in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. The investigation employed a quantitative method, specifically utilizing descriptive analysis. The report provides current insights and future requisites for the adoption of digital ecosystems among SMEs in Indonesia's creative sectors. The study also pinpoints three essential prerequisites—organizational adaptability, agile leadership, and dynamic capability—as essential facets for navigating Industry 4.0 challenges. While the authors' research was enlightening, it was wanting in terms of theoretical and conceptual scrutiny, which could have buttressed the existing literature and offered a more comprehensive understanding of the study's objectives.

The research carried out by Saha et al. (2017) employs descriptive analysis with a specific focus on qualitative methods. The study's objective is to explore and investigate the perceptions surrounding organizational learning and organizational agility processes, and how they influence the integration of disruptive technological innovation as a novel strategy to expedite organizational innovation and enhance competence. As per the study's findings, organizational learning, characterized by the learning capabilities and strategies of human resources within an organization, and organizational agility, defined as a company's ability to swiftly embrace, adapt to, and

embrace environmental changes, exert a substantial influence on disruptive technological innovation, thereby elevating organizational competitiveness. The authors' study provided valuable insights; however, the utilization of qualitative methodology introduced potential researcher bias when translating the results into a definitive conclusion.

Ocharo (2018) used a descriptive methodology, more specifically a quantitative approach, and the study's focus was on the impact of strategic agility on competitiveness in small and medium-sized businesses in Kenya's Starehe Sub-County of Nairobi City County. The study found that the four aspects of strategic agility—responsive capability, organizational learning, overall quality management, and innovation capability—all positively affect a firm's ability to compete. The author's investigation was insightful, but it lacked the theoretical and conceptual understanding needed to reach a firm conclusion.

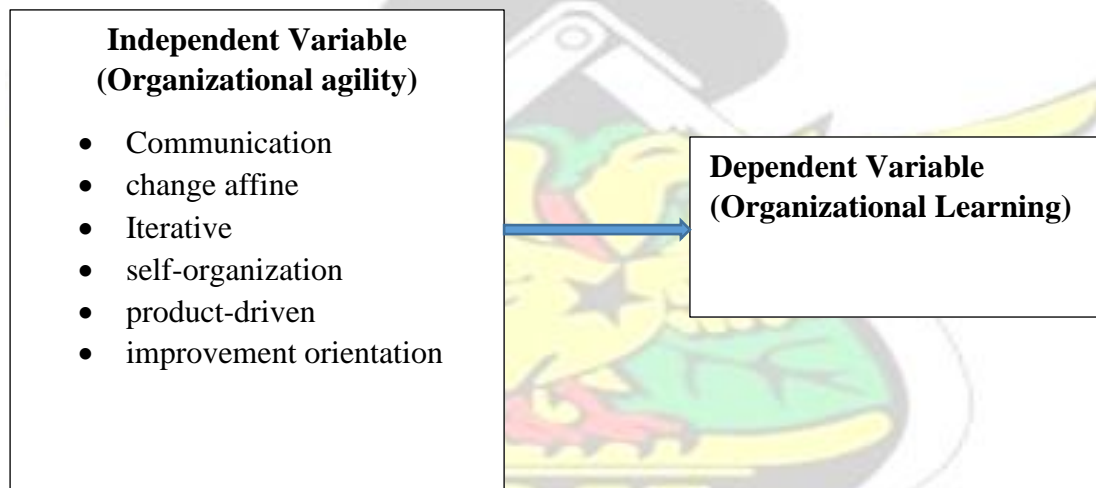
The goal of the Sari et al (2022) study was to look into specific elements that may encourage or inhibit SMEs from remaining flexible and competitive throughout the pandemic. Twelve SME top management and owners were interviewed as part of the research's qualitative explorative methodology. The survey found that to improve business scale, explore new markets, come up with new ideas, and take risks, SMEs must be proactive, innovative, and creative to increase their agility and competitiveness. SMEs have been found to have difficulty being agile because of resistance to change and poor response to top management concerns. By providing entrepreneurs with enablers and inhibitors to remain competitive under ambiguous circumstances like the pandemic, this study also contributes to the theory of competitive and entrepreneurial theory. The study by the authors was informative, yet the qualitative methodology used led to researcher bias when transcribing the study's results to come to a firm conclusion.



According to the author's research, organizational learning capacity and organizational agility are related in how they affect small and medium-sized businesses. Fewer studies, however, have looked at how organizational learning capacity and organizational agility relate to SMEs. It is against this background that the study is focused on reaching a definitive conclusion.

## 2.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is based on the works of Charbobbier-Voirin (2011) on organizational agility and Chiva et al. (2007) on organizational learning as well as theories such as Resource Theory, Contingency Theory and Knowledge view theory. The conceptual framework is shown in Figure 2.1.



**Source:** Adapted from Charbobbier-Voirin (2011) and Chiva et al. (2007)

Charbobbier-Voirin (2011) considered the importance of organizational agility and also identified that organizational agility is assessed through indicators like communication change affine, iterative, self-organization, product-driven and improvement orientation. It is important to note that organizational agility is expected to influence organizational performance and growth through organizational learning. Thus, this study expects organizational agility to improve organizational learning.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The research centres on examining how organizational agility influences the organizational learning capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Kumasi Metropolis. The study employs appropriate methods and materials for its investigation. This chapter expounds upon the methodology employed in this research. It encompasses the research approach and design, the study population, the sampling process and sample size determination, data collection procedures, identification of study variables, specification of the model, and the approach to data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Approach and Design**

This study uses a quantitative research approach to investigate the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning ability among SMEs in Kumasi Metropolis. This study uses a quantitative approach because it is ideal for testing research hypotheses (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Kothari, 1966). Cooper and Schindler (2011) also noted that the quantitative approach is undertaken when the primary emphasis is to depict, clarify or forecast, while the investigator distances himself from the research to prevent skewing the findings. Thus, the use of a quantitative research approach in data analysis makes the results and findings in this study a more objective and true reflection of reality than it would have been if a qualitative research approach had been used (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). Moreover, with the use of a quantitative approach, this study can generalize its outcomes to all SMEs in the Kumasi Metropolis. Leedy and Ormrod (2010), explained that though quantitative studies like any other studies use sample data, the sample data used in the quantitative studies are more reflective of the study population, making it possible for realization.

In consonance with the quantitative approach, this study uses an explanatory research design. This is because explanatory research design is ideal for estimating cause and effect (Onsomu 2018; Saunders et al., 2013). In this current study, the aim objective is to estimate the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning ability; hence, the use of explanatory design. Also, the explanatory research design seeks to find out why and how certain phenomena occur (Singh, 2010). Thus, aside from aiding in testing hypotheses or estimating the impact of one variable on others, it is good for describing phenomena like organizational agility and learning ability, revealing their true state (Kothari and Garg, 2014).

### **3.3 Study Population**

This study focuses on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis. The metropolis was chosen for the study because it is a commercial centre with a variety of SMEs. The metropolis has a range of businesses from trading to mechanical works; helping to obtain varied views on the subject matter for this study. As outlined by Osei et al. (1993), small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are categorized into several groups: Micro Enterprises, encompassing those with fewer than 6 employees; Very Small Enterprises, which employ between 6 and 9 individuals; Small Enterprises, consisting of those with 10 to 29 employees; and Medium Enterprises, comprising businesses with a workforce of 30 to 50 individuals. The study, however, focuses on small enterprises and medium enterprises in the Kumasi Metropolis since they are more structured and well-positioned to compete favourably with large-scale enterprises in Ghana and foreign competition. According to the Registrar of Business in Kumasi Metropolis, there are 1078 active small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi Metropolis as of June 2023.

### 3.4 Sampling and Sample Size

This study uses simple random sampling to sample the small and medium enterprises for data. The simple random sample implies that every small and medium enterprise in the Kumasi Metropolis has an equal chance of being selected for the study (Taherdoost, 2018). This sampling gives a better estimate of measurements in the research relative to purposive sampling (Chawla and Sondhi, 2016). Here, every potential small and medium enterprise has a known and non-zero probability of being chosen for the survey. It is one of the most desired and accepted single-stage random selection techniques (Kumar, 2011). The sampling was done via a lottery method. To fulfil the principle of lottery simple random sampling technique, this study obtains the list of all small and medium enterprises from the Registrar of Businesses in the Kumasi Metropolis. Each small and medium enterprise is given a serial number and each number is written on a separate piece of paper. The pieces of paper are put into a container. The researcher after shaking the container severally then picks the pieces of paper one after the other without replacement, until the required sample size is obtained.

To determine the appropriate sample size for the study, the research utilizes the straightforward random sampling equation proposed by Yamane (1967), as illustrated in equation 1. Israel (1992) highlights that the challenge of accurately estimating population variance has led to the growing preference for sample size calculation based on proportion. Among various proportion-based sample size formulas, Yamane's (1967) equation stands out as the most simplified method for determining sample size. Yamane's (1967) formula serves as an approximation to other sample size determination formulas, such as Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) and Cochran's (1977) formulas, for proportion estimations with a 95% confidence level and a population proportion of 0.5.



in equation 1, the sample size for this study

2 small and medium enterprises v  
% non-response rate, increasing

**ment**

questionnaire to collect all the data for two main reasons. First, questionnaires are more convenient to administer and relatively less costly (Carmeli, Cohen, & Elizur, 2007). Specially, it is easier to process and analyze data obtained through questionnaires (Luong & Ha, 2011). The questionnaire used to collect the data in this study focuses on the socio-demographics and job characteristics of respondents. Section I of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents includes age, gender, education level. Also, the items on job characteristics of the respondents include job title, job level and job positions. Section II considers the organizational

4 items) and each item has five-p

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strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). According to Charbobbier-Voirin (2011), each component of organizational agility has a reliability score (Cronbach's Alpha) of least 0.7, indicating that the instrument is reliable. Section III focuses on organizational learning and is adapted from Chiva et al. (2007) and it has 10 items with a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). According to Chiva et al. (2007), the organizational learning instrument is reliable with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.893.

### **3.6 Piloting the Instrument**

Having designed the questionnaire for the study, it is demanded of the researcher to pilot it to guarantee the reliability and validity of the constructs adopted in measuring the various variables under investigation. Even more imperative is the frequent challenges that have been largely cited in the extant literature regarding participants' misinterpretation of questions (Hilton, 2017). Pretesting the instrument can help overcome the challenges during the actual field work (Kumar, 2011). Accordingly, the study piloted the questionnaire on 20 small and medium-scale enterprises in Ejisu in the Ashanti Region of Ghana and this helps to know the possible challenges that the researcher is likely to face during the actual questionnaire administration to redress before the main data collection begins.

Following the pre-test phase, the research proceeds to assess the questionnaire's reliability and validity. The pilot test data is employed by the researcher to evaluate reliability through the utilization of Cronbach's Alpha test. The Cronbach's Alpha test yielded an overall alpha score of 0.897 for organizational agility and 0.876 for organizational learning. According to Cronbach (1983), an alpha score of at least 0.7 ( $\alpha \geq 0.7$ ) is indicative of questionnaire reliability. Therefore, given that the Cronbach's alpha scores for the utilized instruments exceed 0.7, the entirety of the questionnaire can be deemed reliable

### **3.7 Questionnaire Administration**

This asks for permission from the managers or owners of the selected small and medium in the Kumasi Metropolis. Approval for the data collection is given and dates are fixed for the data collection from the managers or owners of the sampled small and medium enterprises. The study follows the recommendation of Grix (2009) for data collection where the study explains the purpose of the study to all the participants, the extent of their engagement and the benefits of the study to the enterprises and the respondents.

The researcher hires the services two Field Assistants to help in the data collection. The Field Assistants are trained to understand how to handle the questionnaire and the data collected, to understand the questions contained in the questionnaire and how to open questionnaire administration. Both the researcher and the Field Assistants administer the questionnaire to the managers or owners of the sampled small and medium enterprises on the premises of the enterprises. The study encourages all the respondents to fill in the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher or the Field Assistants; to ensure a high response rate and to clarify any misunderstanding about some of the research questions. Each respondent is given a maximum of 30 minutes to fill in the questionnaire.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

The collected data undergoes cleansing, coding, and entry into STATA version 16.0 for subsequent statistical analysis. Mean and standard deviation are employed in the study to ascertain the scope of organizational agility and organizational learning ability within SMEs. Additionally, the study utilizes the AMOS Structural Equation Model (SEM) to establish the influence of organizational agility on organizational learning ability. SEM combines confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with multiple regression analyses to explore potential connections between latent variables. SEM consists of two components: the measurement framework (primarily CFA) and the structural model

(encompassing multiple regression models). To address the study's objectives, the SEM methodology is employed to validate which variables of organizational agility impact the organizational learning of small and medium enterprises.

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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter of the study focuses on providing the results, as well as the discussions of the main objectives that were set for the study. In addition, the analysis is made for each of the specific objectives that have been set by the study. The results are presented below. Primarily, the study seeks to investigate the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning ability among small and medium-scale enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis in Ghana. The chapter provides a summary of the analysis conducted for this study, beginning with a descriptive analysis of the study's participants and moving on to the analyses conducted for each set of study objectives.

#### **4.1 Demographic Distribution of Participants**

The demographic distributions of the participants, who are managers and leaders of the selected small and medium-scale businesses in the Kumasi metropolis in Ghana, recruited for the study are presented in this section. Table 1 below provides an overview of the results for the distribution of the demographic factors, including age and gender, as well as the educational level, work experience, and managerial levels of each of the selected respondents of the study.

Table 1: Demographic Distributions and Personal Information of Sample

Variables	Items	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Gender	Male	201	68.4
	Female	93	31.6
Age	25 years or less	29	9.9
	26 – 35 years	55	18.7
	36 – 45 years	121	41.2
	46 years or more	89	30.3
Educational Level	Diploma	126	42.9
	Bachelor	155	52.7
	Master's Degree	8	2.7
	Doctorate	5	1.7
Working Experience	5 years or less	29	9.9
	6 – 15 years	130	44.2
	16 – 25 years	124	42.2
	26 years or more	11	3.7
Managerial Level	Manager	84	28.6
	Assistant Manager	117	39.8
	Head of Division	93	31.6

**Source:** Field Data (2023)

The focus of the current study was on all of the 1107 small and medium-scale enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis of Ghana, out of which a sample of 294 respondents within the category of organizational leaders was selected for further analysis of the current study. From table 1 above, the gender classification of the sample is such that there is a lot more male respondent (Freq. = 201; Perc. = 68%) than there is female respondent (Freq. = 93; Perc. = 32%) for the study. In addition to the gender classification, the age distribution of the respondents indicates that the majority of the selected sample falls within the age range of 36 years to 45 years, making up a total of

121 (41%) of the employees of the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. A total of 55 (19%) respondents were between the ages of 26 years and 35 years, while 89 (30%) respondents were of the ages 46 years and above. The age category with the least representation was found to be those employees who are aged 25 years and below, making up a total of 29 (10%) respondents.

The results of the analysis as indicated in table 1 further shows the distribution of the sample based on their educational level. The classifications are made on 4 educational classes, i.e., Diploma, Bachelor, Master's degree, and Doctorate qualifications. The output indicates that the majority of the respondents – a total of 155 (53%) respondents – have a Bachelor's degree as their highest qualification. Those respondents with a Diploma qualification have the second most frequency as their highest educational qualification makes up a total of 126 (43%). Only 5 respondents have a doctorate in the sample of selected SME employees, while a total of 8 respondents have had a master's degree as their highest educational qualification, making up a total of 2% and 3% respectively.

In addition to the above, the output shows the distribution of respondents based on their years of work experience, and the managerial level of the respondents. Few of the selected employees have had work experience that amounts to 26 years or more, making up a frequency of 11 employees and a percentage of 4%. This is also the same for employees who have had a working experience for 5 years or less – totalling 29 (10%) employees. A total of 124 (42%) employees have had between 16 years and 25 years of experience, and a total of 130 (44%) of the employees have work experience spanning between 6 years and 15 years in the SME business sector. In addition to the above, a majority of the respondents occupy the managerial level position in the form of assistant manager 117 (40%). A total of 93 (32%) occupy the position as heads of

division at the various SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. Lastly, 84 (29%) of the selected respondents occupy managerial positions as managers of the various SMEs they work at.

The results of the study as shown in table 1 above show that the demographic distribution of the studies is predominantly male, educated, and experienced. From the viewpoint of Thomas et al. (2017), should all micro and small-scale business owners experience difficulties, it is not statistically sufficient to say that women entrepreneurs are the main cause of such, and so are disadvantaged. The study argues that making the intentional effort to limit the usual problems and barriers that are faced by women in managerial positions, would go a long way to encourage the inclusion of women in such positions, especially for small and medium-scale organizations. The study however corroborates the distribution of the male-female at the managerial levels of SMEs, further adding that males assuming higher leadership positions at such organizations are four times more likely to occur than females. Additionally, Saint-Michel (2018) discovered that male entrepreneurs have at least twice as much prior work experience as female entrepreneurs, as a result, male-owned businesses last longer than those owned by women, justifying why there are a lot more male owners and male-occupied positions than is the case for females.

Regarding the demographic variable age, it has been discovered that the characteristics of consultative and participatory leadership styles differ between older and younger managers – indicating some of the reasons why there are a lot more older leaders than the younger ones as shown in the results of the current study. More geriatric managers desired greater participation and broader consultations than younger managers (Ali et al., 2020). Significant discrepancies between leaders of various age groups in diverse work situations have been found to exist in the literature for several studies (Saint-



Michel, 2018). According to a study conducted on young managers by Garcia-Solarte et al. (2018), different leadership behaviours may be strengthened or weakened depending on the age of the leader (Zbihlejšová et al., 2018). Additionally, it has been discovered that an organization's entrepreneurial behaviour varies according to the age and educational background of its managers (Garcia-Solarte et al., 2018).

According to Ahmadi et al. (2020), organizations that embrace age diversity gain a lot from it, just like they do from other types of diversity. It does, however, present problems. Workplace relationships might become strained as a result of the different expectations and needs of the various generations. It is not always simple to report to someone a lot older or younger than an employee. When differences are not appropriately handled, prejudice and stereotyping can also develop. Nyoni and Bonga (2018) argue that the educational level of the management of small and medium-scale businesses may also have an impact on how they see the business climate and how their company operates. An entrepreneur's grasp of market economic regularities and ability to predict business environment conditions increase with their level of education – helping them make important decisions that are critical to the growth and expansion of the organization.

Higher education for owners and managers of organizations, such as a university degree, has been linked to better business performance when measured in terms of sales or profitability, and this is also true for sustainability (Nyoni & Bonga, 2018; Ahmadi et al., 2020). Additionally, higher-educated individuals in managerial positions are better able to manage the financial risks unique to their companies (Ahmadi et al., 2020). According to Li et al. (2016), a graduate owner or leader of a firm can obtain a variety of sources of funding with ease, allowing him or her to invest to boost a small business' innovation in a particular industry. According to Hassi et al. (2021), if an

entrepreneur is driven or educated enough to run a business, gender cannot affect the performance of such a business entity. Management members who have received the necessary education to manage their company are more successful than those who have not (Li et al., 2016). For instance, small and medium-scale businesses with educated staff and leaders are more likely to form strategic alliances and regularly create new items to satisfy consumer demand (Hassi et al., 2021). Soomro et al. (2019) claim that because educated entrepreneurs have a better understanding of business models and proposals that are more well-organized, banks are more willing to support them. According to Zia et al. (2021), an entrepreneur's higher education is favourably correlated with his or her firm growth. This is an indication that the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis are in good hands as the management of these businesses have had enough education to be able to successfully run the business to reach their set aims and goals.

#### **4.2 Evaluation of the Organizational Agility Strategies of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Kumasi Metropolis.**

This section of the study looks at addressing the first objective of the study, which was to evaluate the organizational agility strategies of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis in Ghana. The analysis of questionnaire received from each respondent is analysed to determine the extent of the organizational agility using mean and standard deviation. The results of the analysis are displayed in Table 2 below. Organizational agility is classified as communicative, change, iterative, self-organization, product-driven, and improvement-oriented.

Table 2:Evaluating the Organizational Agility Strategies of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Kumasi Metropolis.

	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
<b><i>Communicative</i></b>				
Each team member is aware of the tasks of the other team members.	1	5	3.231	1.345
Requirements are gathered from the customer in collaboration with the team.	1	5	3.51	1.188
The team meets on a scheduled basis several times a week to exchange information directly.	1	5	3.238	1.409
All project stakeholders know the current progress of the product development.	1	5	3.149	1.477
<b><i>Change-affine</i></b>				
Proposed changes in the requirements can be adapted by the customer during the project.	1	5	2.769	1.378
Each iteration is completed with the delivery of the working product to the customer.	1	5	2.891	1.41
Changed requirements are seen as an added value of the product for the customer and not as an additional workload.	1	5	3.323	1.294
The customer regularly inspects the working product concerning the realization of the business value.	1	5	3.898	1.137
<b><i>Iterative</i></b>				
The autonomous assignment of tasks is not restricted by organizational procedures.	1	5	3.483	1.414
The developers determine their tasks autonomously from the open requirements.	1	5	3.861	1.213
Projects can be started without fully defining the requirements at the beginning of the project.	1	5	2.609	1.322
Detailed project planning is only available for the next iteration	1	5	2.949	1.358
<b><i>Self-organization</i></b>				
The scope of work for an iteration is decided by the team.	1	5	4.109	0.953
The team is accountable for its actions.	1	5	4.265	0.929
Decisions regarding the execution of their work can be made by the team without the involvement of a managing authority.	1	5	2.752	1.262
The entire team actively collaborates on project planning.	1	5	4.371	0.802
<b><i>Product Driven</i></b>				
Productive working time is used for work on the product.	1	5	4.159	0.9
The customer is directly participating in all project decisions.	1	5	2.211	1.176
All subject matter experts are actively involved in the identification of the requirements.	1	5	4.371	0.925
Documentation is critically reviewed for its value.	1	5	4.204	0.734
<b><i>Improvement-oriented</i></b>				
In regular retrospectives, the approach of the project is reflected with the aim of improvement.	1	5	3.908	1.175

All team members actively participate in the continuous improvement of the project.	1	5	3.799	1.152
Sights gained from retrospectives are turned into concrete improvement measures.	1	5	4.174	0.529
Improvements can be explored experimentally during the project.	1	5	3.605	1.291

*Source: Field Data (2023)*

The results of the analysis as shown in table 2 above indicate that there is a generally higher level of organizational agility at the various SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. For the communicative aspect of organizational agility strategies, the output indicated that each member of the team at the facilities is aware of the task of each other (Mean = 3.231; Std. Dev. = 1.345), requirements are gathered from the customer in collaboration with the team (Mean = 3.51; Std. Dev. = 1.188), the team meets on a scheduled basis several times a week to exchange information directly (Mean = 3.238; Std. Dev. = 1.409), and all project stakeholders know the current progress of the product development (Mean = 3.149; Std. Dev. = 1.477). The results show that communication as an organizational agility strategy is an effective and efficient strategy since the mean score is higher than half of the recording scale, which was from 1 to 5. Moreover, the standard deviation scores are all higher than 1 – indicating the responses were not clustered around the mean (neutral), and so respondents were clear in their responses to the questions posed.

The components of the second factor – Change-affine – also showed that this strategy is an essential strategy for SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. According to the output, proposed changes in the requirements can be adapted by the customer during the project (Mean = 2.769; Std. Dev. = 1.378), each iteration is completed with the delivery of the working product to the customer (Mean = 2.891; Std. Dev. = 1.41), changed requirements are seen as an added value of the product for the customer and not as an



additional workload (Mean = 3.323; Std. Dev. = 1.294), and customers regularly inspect the working product concerning the realization of the business value (Mean = 3.898; Std. Dev. = 1.137). For the iterative component, the results indicated that the autonomous assignment of tasks is not restricted by organizational procedures (Mean = 3.483; Std. Dev. = 1.414), the developers determine their tasks autonomously from the open requirements (Mean = 3.861; Std. Dev. = 1.213), projects can be started without fully defining the requirements at the beginning of the project (Mean = 2.609; Std. Dev. = 1.322), detailed project planning is only available for the next iteration (Mean = 2.949; Std. Dev. = 1.358).

In addition, the results indicated that the self-organization component of organizational agility is effective at the various SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. The results show that the scope of work for an iteration is decided by the team (Mean = 4.109; Std. Dev. = 0.953), the team is accountable for its actions (Mean = 4.265; Std. Dev. = 0.929), decisions regarding the execution of their work can be made by the team without the involvement of a managing authority (Mean = 2.752; Std. Dev. = 1.262), the entire team actively collaborates on project planning (Mean = 4.371; Std. Dev. = 0.802). For the product-driven strategy, the output shows that productive working time is used for work on the product (Mean = 4.159; Std. Dev. = 0.9), the customer is directly participating in all project decisions (Mean = 2.211; Std. Dev. = 1.176), all subject matter experts are actively involved in the identification of the requirements (Mean = 4.371; Std. Dev. = 0.925), and documentation is critically reviewed for its value (Mean = 4.204; Std. Dev. = 0.734).

Also, for the improvement-oriented strategy of organizational agility, the study found that in regular retrospectives, the approach of the project is reflected with the aim of improvement (Mean = 3.908; Std. Dev. = 1.175), all team members actively participate

in continuous improvement in the project (Mean = 3.799; Std. Dev. = 1.152), sights gained from retrospectives are turned into concrete improvement measures (Mean = 4.174; Std. Dev. = 0.529), and improvements can be explored experimentally during the project (Mean = 3.605; Std. Dev. = 1.291). The indication from the table shows that a majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statements under each factor that was considered for the classification of the organizational agility of the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis – this is shown by the lower standard deviation scores and the higher mean scores of the components considered.

Organizational agility has elevated to a strategic goal for businesses across all industries, particularly in recent years. In other words, the capacity to quickly and successfully implement organizational change has evolved into a crucial corporate function, and so the implementation of such a strategy by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi metropolis – as indicated by the results in table 2 above – is a justifiable action. According to Troise et al. (2022), better executions and collaborations are required due to the ongoing increase in business pace, particularly concerning strategic goals among SMEs. An individual SME will become far more responsive as a result of any kind of business demands or market developments. Due to the expanding market competitiveness in every industry, real-time development and improved staff coaching are also necessary. Therefore, firms must adopt or use a far nimbler strategy to empower employees, HR executives, and managers if they are to succeed in these areas, and the only way to implement that strategy is through the organizational agility of such an organization (Troise et al., 2022).

In the viewpoint of Priyono et al. (2020), organizational agility is fundamentally about a company's ability to respond to changes in its market environment, as a result, both improvement-oriented and change are necessary for agility, or for developing it. The

improvement-oriented component of organizational agility entails the capacity for rapid movement and a high level of change responsiveness. A secure foundation, platform, or backbone, on the other hand, means that nothing can shake or move it. Over time, even when other business factors change often, this dependable foundation of the organization will serve as an anchor point that remains consistent (Ahmed et al., 2022). According to the study of Priyono et al. (2020), such a transformation is necessary because when firms lack an agile approach, the decision-making process as a whole becomes arduous and employee engagement levels plummet. Because of this, considerable adjustments must be made to fully utilize the benefits that agility delivers to the business.

According to Rozak et al. (2021), there is no doubting the necessity for businesses to have a variety of agile management strategies at their disposal. Such a posture may contribute to more operational freedom within the business. As a direct result, each project's output should have its specifications, and the firm management should acknowledge that this is not a situation where a one-size-fits-all approach can be used. If the business is serious about achieving true agility, it must make sure that every employee is capable of doing so – a situation that can be attributed to the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis given the nature of the response and the analysis made above. Arsawan et al. (2022) add that to accomplish such levels of effectiveness, the business must instil in its workforce a culture of organizational agility. Furthermore, the organization needs to cultivate agile leaders. The fundamental objective would be to provide individuals with the technical, strategic, expert, soft skill, and leadership attributes needed to practice organizational agility (Ahmed et al., 2022).

Koçyiğit and Akkaya (2020) argue that teams with high levels of agility have long understood that making incremental improvements is typically much more

advantageous than making huge changes all at once. As a result, teams have the authority to intuitively decide how projects are managed effectively. This indicates that to implement better decision-making processes, each of the components of organizational agility as indicated in this study must be applied efficiently and effectively in SMEs and other organizations at all costs. The team can grow more innovative and produce a better product over time when they can concentrate on the learning criteria of fully understanding organizational agility (Rozak et al., 2021). The adoption and use of technology is a further part of organizational agility according to (Arsawan et al., 2022). Given how quickly technology develops, organizations must constantly refresh their understanding of the agile methodology and their awareness of newer technology to continue to develop. Market information and client input ought to be included as well.

Despite being essential for operation, many businesses continue to struggle to acquire organizational agility (Troise et al., 2022). According to Liu and Yang (2018), these businesses that struggle with the implementation and operationalization of organizational agility are usually big and large firms. These businesses have a history, and the majority of them have benefited from managerial hierarchy to develop and prosper and so find it difficult in certain instances to implement the components of organizational agility as seen with the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. Akkaya and Qaisar (2021) argue that for large organizations all management and management-related activities take place at the top. Thus, establishing agility becomes a challenge when such firms attempt to switch and do various experiments to become more flexible by giving junior managers or staff more room. Because it has historically produced positive results for them, the majority of them choose to continue with their legacy of disregarding organizational agility, hence its low usage at larger firms. From the



viewpoint of Kosasi et al. (2017), without regard for how the corporate world is constantly changing, these big or larger organizations continue to rule everything from the top down.

Akkaya and Qaisar (2021) add to the possible reasons why the use of the various components of organizational agility may be high at the various SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. According to the study, more than just rules and strict structures are needed for an organization to be agile. Dynamism, Self-organization, Product Driven, Improvement-oriented, and stability are necessary. It needs genuine leadership that can fit into the modern environment such as these to function appropriately. Unfortunately, according to Liu and Yang (2018), most firms find it difficult to do this since it calls for a reduction in hierarchical structures and rigid processes – something that is especially usually associated with bigger or larger organizations. Kosasi et al. (2017) add that the ability to think creatively and take on challenges that do not have the potential to change frequently in the corporate environment or its operations is an essential requirement for organizational agility. These challenges, which hardly ever change, can serve as the organization's foundation. Ali et al. (2018) also argue that organizational agility is lessened by fixity at any given organization. Further arguing that organizational agility enables a team to concentrate on certain objectives and gain expertise in carrying out every aspect of their functional area, including employing the finest procedures and resources to carry out their particular function. Understanding where an organization can stretch current resources and goals to do new things in new ways and what specifics need to be maintained the same to facilitate faster adoption and productivity can help a firm to start evaluating the organization's agility (KHALID & FIRDAUS, 2021).

### 4.3 Assessing the Organizational Learning Ability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis.

This section of the study looks at addressing the second objective of the study, which was to assess the organizational learning ability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis in Ghana. The analysis of questionnaire received from each respondent is analysed to determine the extent of the organizational learning ability using mean and standard deviation. The results of the analysis are displayed in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Assessing the Organizational Learning Ability of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Kumasi Metropolis

	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
People here receive support and encouragement when presenting new ideas.	1	5	3.966	0.796
Initiative often receives a favourable response here, so people feel encouraged to generate new ideas.	11	5	4.276	1.069
People are encouraged to take risks in this organization.	1	5	3.691	1.204
People here often venture into unknown territory.	1	5	3.112	1.336
It is part of the work of all staff to collect, bring back, and report information about what is going on outside the company.	1	5	2.214	1.316
There are systems and procedures for receiving, collating and sharing information from outside the company.	1	5	4.017	0.999
People are encouraged to interact with the environment: competitors, customers, technological institutes, universities, suppliers etc.	1	5	4.524	0.633
There is free and open communication within my work group.	1	5	4.466	0.499
Policies are significantly influenced by the views of employees	1	5	4.197	0.989
People feel involved in main company decisions	1	5	3.884	1.253

*Source: Field Data (2023)*

The results of the mean and standard deviation analysis as shown in table 3 above indicate a generally high level of organizational learning ability in the Small and Medium Enterprises located in the Kumasi metropolis in Ghana. This is shown by the relatively high mean scores as seen for each factor considered in the analysis. The results show that employees receive support and encouragement when presenting new ideas (Mean = 3.966; Std. Dev. = 0.796). Also, initiatives made at the various SMEs often receive a favourable response, as a result, employees feel encouraged to generate new ideas in their various departments (Mean = 4.276; Std. Dev. = 1.069). In addition to the above, employees are encouraged to take risks in this organization (Mean = 3.691; Std. Dev. = 1.204), and they are often encouraged to venture into unknown territory (Mean = 3.112; Std. Dev. = 1.336).

Moreover, SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis make it a point to ensure that it is part of the work of all staff to collect, bring back, and report information about what is going on outside the company (Mean = 2.214; Std. Dev. = 1.316). There are efficient systems and procedures for receiving, collating and sharing information from outside these organizations (Mean = 4.017; Std. Dev. = 0.999), and employees are encouraged to interact with the environment, which includes competitors, customers, technological institutes, universities, suppliers (Mean = 4.524; Std. Dev. = 0.633). In addition, there is free and open communication within work groups at the workplace (Mean = 4.466; Std. Dev. = 0.499). Organizational policies at these SMEs are significantly influenced by the view of employees (Mean = 4.197; Std. Dev. = 0.989), and employees feel involved in main organizational decisions (Mean = 3.884; Std. Dev. = 1.253).

Organizational learning enables team members to continue to flourish both individually and collectively in their professional development (Kang et al., 2022). Business leaders may use it to make sure that while their staff develops, they are also learning and

learning new things for their company. You might be able to use organizational learning with your team and increase their output and efficiency if you have a better understanding of what it is. According to Ur Rehman et al. (2019), if a group wishes to experience general growth and consistently adjust to a changing marketplace, organizational learning is crucial – a justification to why it is high in the various SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. Taubes et al. (2021) add that, although some businesses currently offer professional development or training programs, organizational learning enables employees to remain relevant in a constantly changing business environment. As a result, SMEs can promote an equal distribution of knowledge and information by assembling a team in which all members are both students and teachers. In such an atmosphere, every employee is allowed to participate in the organizational learning process and make a big contribution thanks to this.

The efficiency, originality, and flexibility of any team of employees may increase as a result of the development of an organizational learning ability within it (Ur Rehman et al., 2019). Increased employee loyalty and commitment to their jobs, higher rates of efficiency and productivity leading to higher revenue, leader development across the organization, and improved adaptability between teams and the organization as a whole can all be considered among the main advantages of an efficiently and effectively implemented organizational learning ability, according to (Wang et al., 2015). This assertion might be among the motivations for the high rate of organizational learning ability at the various small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis. Kang et al. (2022) find organizational learning as an effective tool for employee and organizational growth, asserting that, organizational learning is a learning behaviour and process that can improve an organization's long-term adaptability. This can help the organization overcome any form of strategic limitations and boost its core



competitiveness according to studies in literature such as (Wang et al., 2015; Toubes et al., 2021; Kang et al., 2022), it is the method by which business organizations such as SMEs foster long-term, sustainable innovation that leads to improved organizational performance.

Indeed, in the current big data era, human resource service businesses must be able to continuously absorb, update, and apply new information due to the complexity and changeability of their problems in the view of Tian et al. (2020). This is a platform that is readily available through organizational learning. The behaviour orientation of enhancing, updating, reconstructing, and recreating resource capability is the heart of organizational learning ability, which is a higher-order capability for the firm growth and development of SMEs (HINDASAH & NURYAKIN, 2020). Furthermore, according to Cui et al. (2022), organizational learning is the key to altering and restructuring the operational capabilities of the human resource service business. The study adds that the implementation of organizational learning ability is essential for an organization's dynamic capability. According to Gomes and Wojahn (2017), macro-organizational learning combined with organizational learning can help businesses increase their competitive edge. Consequently, by utilizing organizational learning, developing cutting-edge service offerings, seizing market opportunities, reorganizing the value chain, cutting costs, and maximizing resource allocation, businesses can improve their core competitiveness.

According to Cui et al. (2022), organizational learning develops as a result of experience within a company and enables such an organization to maintain competitiveness in a constantly changing environment. These actions of organizational learning for SMEs can result in a Process improvement that can boost productivity, accuracy, and revenues. Gomes and Wojahn (2017) believe that employees are mostly

thought of as the functional processes that enable organizations to learn via experience, however, if knowledge is transmitted, it can help with learning across the entire organization. Given this assertion, it is certain that the implementation of organizational learning would help SMEs attain important milestones and continue in existence to provide their services to individuals in society. Another important aspect of organizational learning ability, according to Dada and Fogg (2014), is that other than just keeping employees, organizations can preserve knowledge by utilizing knowledge repositories like communication tools, procedures, learning agendas, routines, networks, and transactive memory systems.

Valdez-Juárez et al. (2019) agreed that organizational learning is an important step to organizational growth, justifying its use in industries other than SMEs. The study asserts that an important factor to consider from the perspective of organizations is the strategy of having a communicated organizational purpose. According to the study, each division of the organization, as well as the organization as a whole, must have a clearly defined mission that the staff members comprehend as well as how they contribute to its accomplishment. The company must encourage employee adherence to these objectives (Dada & Fogg, 2014). According to Valdez-Juárez et al. (2019), “building a shared vision” produces conflict as employees attempt to close the gap between the desired state and the actual state, which results in learning. Alashwal et al. (2019) add that the creation of a learning environment depends heavily on the leaders of the organization. According to the study, these managerial techniques are crucial for creating learning organizations. Managers and professionals must be dedicated to achieving organizational objectives as well as the purpose of learning, fostering a culture of trust and meritocracy where individuals are approachable and setbacks are seen as a necessary part of the learning process. Leaders must identify performance

gaps and then assist in defining goals that promote the learning of skills necessary to close the gaps. Through their motivating actions, such as asking for feedback, being open to criticism, owning up to mistakes, and allowing their staff to make decisions and take chances, leaders play a crucial role in creating a learning atmosphere (Alashwal et al., 2019).

#### **4.4 Effect of Organizational Agility on Organizational Learning Ability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi Metropolis.**

This section of the study looks at addressing the third and final objective of the study, which was to investigate the effect of organizational agility on the organizational learning ability of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi metropolis in Ghana. The analysis of the questionnaire received from each respondent is aggregated for both variables to complete the analysis. Organizational agility is classified as communicative, change, iterative, self-organization, product-driven, and improvement-oriented, and the study relied on the use of the AMOS Structural Equation Model (SEM) to establish the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning ability. The results of the analysis are displayed in Figure 1 and Table 4 below.





association with the learning ability of SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis (Coef. = 0.0206; p-value = 0.333). This association implies that the awareness of tasks by team members, gathering requirements from customers in a collaborative effort, team meetings that occur regularly to exchange information directly, and the fact that all project stakeholders are aware of the current progress of the product development are all essential strategies that encourage organizational learning abilities of SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. However, the established impact of communication on the organizational learning ability of SMEs is statistically insignificant at a statistical level of 5%.

The output as shown in figure 1 and table 4 above further indicates that continued changes in the organizational structure of the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis provide a negative impact on the organizational learning ability of these firms (Coef. = -0.0927; p-value = 0.0001). The relationship as shown in the result implies that, as the organization experiences a lot of changes such as proposed changes in the requirements that can be adapted by the customer during a particular project, each iteration is completed with the delivery of the working product to the customer, changed requirements are seen as an added value of the product for the customer and not as an additional workload, the customer regularly inspects the working product concerning the realization of the business value, the organizational learning ability of the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis decreases by a magnitude of 0.0927. This relationship is statistically significant at a significance level of 5%.

The relationship between self-organization, as an organizational agility construct, and the organizational learning ability was also found to be negative (Coef. = -0.1744; p-value = 0.0001). This relationship indicates that any unit's increase in the construct results in a decrease in the organizational learning ability of the SMEs in the Kumasi

metropolis. Such factors causing the decreasing relationship include the scope of work for an iteration being decided by the team, the team is accountable for its actions, and decisions regarding the execution of their work can be made by the team without the involvement of a managing authority, and the entire team actively collaborates on project planning. The relationship established was a statistically significant relationship at a statistical level of 5%. The product-driven construct (Coef. = -0.0309; p-value = 0.346), as well as the improvement-oriented construct (Coef. = -0.0221; p-value = 0.562) also had a negative association with the organizational learning ability of the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. These associations were found to be statistically insignificant at a level of 5%.

In addition to the above, the iterative construct of the organizational agility variable had a positive impact on the organizational learning ability of the small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis (Coef. = 0.0616; p-value = 0.033). This implies that for any unit's increase in the iterative construct of organizational agility, which includes the autonomous assignment of tasks is not restricted by organizational procedures, the developers determine their tasks autonomously from the open requirements, projects can be started without fully defining the requirements at the beginning of the project, and detailed project planning is only available for the next iteration, the organizational learning ability of the small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis experience some form of growth which estimated to have a magnitude of 0.0616. The relationship was found to be statistically significant at a statistical level of 5%.

Organizational agility is essential in today's dynamic corporate climate – a fact that is backed by several studies in literature, and one which has been corroborated by the results of the current study. Subramanian and Suresh (2022) believe that this level of

importance that has been placed on organizational agility is because organizations must innovate and adapt fast if they want to seize opportunities and maximize difficulties posed by the competitive environment. These businesses will be able to make use of organizational agility's potential by giving employees more freedom, welcoming disruption, and experimenting with how work is done. Thomas et al. (2017) argue that, the ability of a company to integrate, develop, and restructure internal and external resources and skills to address quickly changing circumstances is something that provokes and heightens the learning capabilities of such an organization. This skill shows an organization's capacity to develop and put into practice novel ideas. This capacity is developed through ongoing learning processes and path-dependent company histories. It is believed that a company's capacity for learning will in the long run affect its capacity to develop and execute innovative techniques more quickly than its rivals (Subramanian & Suresh, 2022).

The findings are corroborative of the findings of Jin and Li (2022). According to the study, the learning capacity of any given organization is particularly improved and, ultimately, its capacity to engage in innovative practices by a highly committed managerial team that supports learning through the implementation of organizational agility by allocating the necessary resources, removing barriers that might obstruct the learning process, and encouraging employees to gather, share, and experiment with new ideas. Building a common identity among an organization's members through the development and deployment of organizational agility strategies will provide an important foundation for improved organizational learning ability of large firms, as well as small and medium organizations (Jin & Li, 2022). Liao et al. (2019) assert that communication and iterative strategies increase the possibility of organizational learning capabilities of companies. Further arguing that, for learning to take place,

openness to communicating new ideas is essential, and experimentation requires testing ideas and trying out new approaches, which calls for a risk-taking culture, the ability to learn from mistakes, and a culture of creativity (Liu, 2020). Martínez-Costa et al. (2018) add that, communication is essential for enhancing learning capability because it allows firms to incorporate new information into existing operations and store it in a repository for future use in addition to communicating it to staff members through meetings, teamwork, and conversations.

Liu (2020) believes organizations rely heavily on organizational agility to reach high levels of organizational learning as the study found. According to the study, innovative businesses see learning as a strategic tool for tackling difficult organizational issues and accomplishing their long-term objectives by coming up with new products and services, as a result, they would try all means appropriately necessary for the organization to attain such heights to continue growing and remain relevant in the sector within which such an organization is located. To do this, managers of these organizations work to implement and ensure the use of organizational agility strategies such as product-driven decisions, strategies that are jeered towards improvement-oriented ends, and self-organization techniques. This is however a contradictory finding to the findings of the current study, as it was found in this study that all of these factors such as self-organization, improvement-oriented strategies, and product-driven decisions are inversely associated with the organizational learning of SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis.

The results corroborate the findings of Hamad and Yozgat (2017) however, in the sense that change is sometimes negatively associated with the organizational learning abilities of organizations, regardless of the sector where they find themselves. According to the study, this is especially so given the difficulty and sometimes misunderstood notion



that the continued use of change as an organizational agility strategy would almost always positively affect the organizational learning ability of SMEs. The investigations of the study led to the discovery of several unique SME-related problems, including factors such as self-organization, product-driven, and improvement-oriented, as well as a failure to utilize outside knowledge sources. Positively, knowledge is transmitted more rapidly and directly through condensed communication channels, giving SMEs an advantage in the management and transmission of knowledge, according to (Martínez-Costa et al., 2018)



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter of the current study concentrates on providing an overview of the entire study to this point, which includes the methodology used in the study, the key findings that the analysis of the data gathered revealed, as well as the provision of a conclusion based on the findings made. Recommendations will also be made as a result of the findings made, in conjunction with other studies relating to the subject matter in the research literature. To increase the productivity and operations of the various Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kumasi metropolis, this study investigated the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning ability among SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. The provision of the best possible future research opportunities will be added for future reference.

#### **5.1 Summary of Methodology**

The research approach that was adopted in the analysis of the current study was the quantitative research approach due to its ability to improve impartiality and allow for more generalization of the results found. This research approach was essential in finding solutions to all of the three research objectives that were set for this study to fully investigate and understand the impact that organizational agility has on the organizational learning ability of SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. The framework of processes and techniques that were applied and utilised throughout this research study was characterized by the use of the case study research design, making it easy and simple to declare variables and procedures with as much precision and detail as possible.

The study population was the entire SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. The metropolis has a range of businesses from trading to mechanical works; helping to obtain varied views on the subject matter for this study. According to Osei et al. (1993), SMEs are grouped into Micro Enterprises-employing less than 6 people; Very small Enterprises, employing 6-9 people, Small, -between 10 and 29 employees and Medium, -between 29-50 employees. The study however focuses on Very Small and Medium Enterprises in the Kumasi Metropolis since they are more structured and well-positioned to compete favourably with large scale enterprises in Ghana and foreign competition. A sample of 294 leaders and/or owners of these SMEs were selected using the Yamane sampling technique.

A three-part questionnaire was developed and employed by the study to gather the data needed for the analysis that encompassed the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, as well as details relating to the organizational agility and organizational learning ability of the various SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. An introductory letter from the department was needed to gather the data. The field data collected was coded and entered into the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) v23, while the same statistical software was used to perform an AMOS Structural Equation Model (SEM) for the study. Moreover, descriptive statistics such as the mean, and standard deviation measures are used in the analysis.

## **5.2 Summary of Findings**

The study aimed to investigate the effect of organizational agility on the organizational learning ability of small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis. To accomplish this task, the study set three specific objectives, which aimed at assessing how effective the organizational agility strategies of small and medium enterprises are

in the Kumasi metropolis, whether or not the small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis have the required level and form of organizational learning abilities, and finally to investigate the effect of organizational agility on organizational learning abilities of the small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis.

Concerning the first research objective of the study, which was to evaluate the organizational agility strategies of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis in Ghana, the study found that the organizational agility strategies associated with the small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis are high and effective. Of the six components adopted by the study as classifications of organizational agility, the results indicated that communication, change-affine, iterative, self-organization, product-driven, and improvement-oriented were high and effective in the various SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis, with self-orientation, product driven, and improvement-oriented recording higher means than the rest of the components in the analysis made. Elements such as decisions taken by teams for the scope of work for an iteration, the accountability of teams and team members for their actions, and the collaboration of teams on the planning of the project were effectively employed at these organizations. On the other hand, factors such as decisions regarding the execution of their work being made by the team without the involvement of a managing authority received low grades.

Concerning the second research objective of the study, which was to assess the organizational learning ability of small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis, the study again found that there is a high level of effectiveness associated with the implementation of such a strategy. The study found that initiatives by employees receive favourable responses at the SMEs and so are encouraged to generate more of such ideas to the benefit of the organization. Moreover, employees are



encouraged to interact frequently with customers, competitors, and other important mechanisms in the organization's environment, and free and open communication within the working groups at the various small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis. The only downside of the organizational learning ability analysis relates to the limitation of staff members when it comes to the collection, bringing back, and reporting information about what is going on outside of the organization. Overall, organizational learning ability is effectively efficient in the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis.

Concerning the last research objective, which was set to determine the effect of organizational agility on the organizational learning ability of small and medium enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis, the study found a mixed relationship between the various categories of organizational agility factor and the organizational learning ability of the SMEs considered. The results indicated that, while communication and iterative both have a positive influence on the organizational learning abilities of the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis, only the impact of the iterative component of organizational agility was statistically significant. The rest of the components of the organizational agility factor, i.e., change, self-organization, product-driven, and improvement-oriented had a negative influence on the organizational learning ability of the organizations considered. However, only change, and self-organization had a significant association with the organizational learning ability of SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis at the specified significance level of the study.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The organizational agility of an organization is a phenomenon that is often associated with the rapid changes an organization adopts to respond appropriately to the changes in its environs and the market within which such an organization is found. There have

been several illustrations of how organizational agility positively affects an organization through its influence on the organizational learning ability of organizations. This study aimed to understand the effect of organizational agility on the organizational learning ability of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Kumasi metropolis. Based on the results found, it can be concluded that the implementation and effective use of organizational agility and organizational learning ability is high at the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis. Moreover, organizational agility has a significant impact on the organizational learning ability of SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis.

#### **5.4 Recommendation**

The following suggestions are made for consideration based on the conclusions drawn from the study's findings:

1. One of the ways SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis can continue to effectively utilize organizational agility to improve organizational learning ability and by extension performances through employee empowerment. The management of these firms should endeavour to create innovative work groups across the various departments of the organization and inspire and encourage collaborations across teams. The creation of cross-functional teams will be essential to the removal of blockages that limit the implementation and use of organizational agility at the SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis.
2. Secondly, SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis are encouraged to continually experiment with how work is done in their various organizations. Through these innovative ideas, a comprehensive foundation for the success of organizational agility can be established. Moreover, instead of investing time and resources into specific plans as to how to develop and sustain the organization, management of SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis can direct resources towards

identifying areas that need to become more agile within the company environment.

3. Lastly, it is recommended that SMEs in the Kumasi metropolis must restructure to minimize bureaucracy and hierarchies within the organizations, and then empower employees in the organization. This would create an environment of diverse, self-directed teams that would make teams and decisions to get things done. It would serve as an opportunity to ensure constant change within the organization through strengthening the relationships between managers and teams in the organization.



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