



*Ismail Kamar Shittu, M.A Ijaya (PhD), E.O. Oni (Phd), C.K. Dauda (Ph.D), A. Dauda (PhD)*

*Federal University of Technology Minna, Nigeria.*

### ABSTRACT

Business development strategies are pivotal for fostering organizational growth, competitiveness, and adaptability across industries. This study employs the Systematic Quantitative Assessment Technique (SQAT), as proposed by Pickering and Byrne in 2014, to systematically review 58 articles published between 2015 and 2024. Articles were sourced from six reputable databases, with a significant focus on Asia (36 articles), followed by Africa (7), Europe (3), and North America (2). Empirical studies dominated the review, accounting for 40 of the articles, while 18 were conceptual. Surveys (43%) were the most frequently used data collection method, while mixed methods and case studies were underutilized. Key research themes identified include Strategic Business Development (34.5%), Innovation and Entrepreneurship (25.9%), Technological Impacts (17.2%), Marketing Strategies (13.8%), and Policy Frameworks (8.6%). The findings highlight a growing recognition of business development strategies, particularly over the last five years, while underscoring the need for more diverse regional representation and methodological approaches. Future research should prioritize mixed-method studies and explore the integration of identified themes to provide a holistic perspective on business development strategies.

**Keywords:** Business Development Strategies, Systematic Quantitative Assessment Technique, Innovation, Enterprise Growth, Mixed Methods

### 1. Introduction

Business development is a critical component for the growth and sustainability of enterprises across various sectors. It encompasses activities, strategies, and innovations aimed at improving business performance, fostering market expansion, and ensuring long-term profitability (Roth and Morris, 2020). This concept has gained prominence in the last decade due to the increasing complexity of markets, rapid technological advancements, and the global shift towards more sustainable business practices (Dawra *et al.*, 2024). The dimensions of business development vary widely, including product innovation, market entry strategies, operational improvements, and human capital development (Ungureanu *et al.*, 2016; Rambe and Mosweunyane, 2017; Stormi *et al.*, 2020). These strategies are essential for firms to remain competitive and adapt to dynamic business environments. The relevance of business development extends beyond private enterprises, influencing public-private partnerships, non-profit organizations, and social enterprises alike (Bishop *et al.*, 2016; Lu *et al.*, 2021). Despite its importance, significant challenges persist, especially in developing economies. Limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, and evolving consumer needs often hinders the success of business development efforts (Alimukhamedova, 2021; Stormi *et al.*, 2020). On the other hand, businesses in developed economies face challenges such as market saturation and the need for continuous innovation to sustain growth.

Existing research highlights the growing recognition of business development as a tool for fostering economic growth, reducing unemployment, and improving standards of living globally (Piispanen and Paloniemi, 2015; Delaney *et al.*, 2019). For example, in emerging markets, the role of digital transformation in accelerating business development has been a recurring theme (Ermolina *et al.*, 2024). Similarly, studies from developed countries emphasize the integration of sustainability practices into business development strategies to address environmental and social challenges (Nozari, 2024).

This study aims to conduct a systematic review of literature on business development from 2015 to 2024, evaluating its evolution and identifying emerging trends and challenges within this period. The review is structured into three sections: a methodology section describing the data collection and



analysis process, a findings and discussion section presenting the key insights, and a conclusion and recommendations section summarizing the study and proposing areas for future research.

## 2. Methodology

This research reviews articles on business development published over the past decade (2015–2024) using the Systematic Quantitative Assessment Technique (SQAT) developed by Pickering and Byrne (2014). SQAT provides a structured and systematic approach for analyzing existing literature, enabling researchers to produce a comprehensive and quantitative summary of the field.

The review process followed five key steps as recommended by Pickering and Byrne (2014). The procedure and overview of the systematic review is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Overview and Description of Review Structure

S/N	Dimensions	Context Details
1	Define topic	Business development articles published between 2015 and 2024.  What is the time distribution of the business development articles?  In which countries was the research undertaken?
2	Develop research questions	What types of business development articles were published (Conceptual vs. Empirical)?  What methods of data collection were utilized?  What specific themes were explored, and what were the major findings
3	Define topic	Business development articles published between 2015 and 2024.
4	Develop research questions	1) Six databases were utilized namely: Emerald, Elsevier, Springer, Taylor and Francis, Wiley. 2) All in title search using the phrase “Service Delivery
5	Read and assess publications	1) Abstracts and excerpts from articles were read to ensure subject aligns with service delivery. Findings and conclusions were also read to make suggestions. 2) Only peer-reviewed conceptual and empirical articles were included.

**Source: Author’s Computation, 2024.**

A total of 87 articles were analyzed, sourced from six reputable academic databases known for their inclusion in Scopus indexing. These databases ensure high-quality and peer-reviewed publications. The distribution of articles across the databases is shown in Table 2.



**Table 2: Articles Reviewed by Publishers**

S/N	Database	Number of Articles
1	Emerald	29
2	Elsevier	17
3	Taylor and Francis	18
4	Sage	6
5	Springer	12
6	Wiley	5
7	<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>

Source: Author's Computation, 2024.

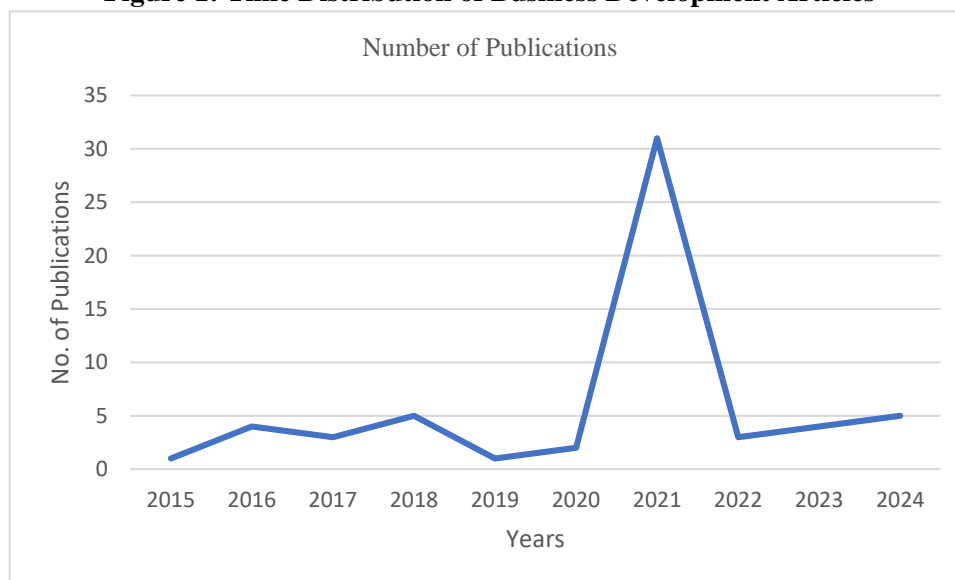
### 3. Findings and Discussions

The chosen databases represent a wide range of disciplines and perspectives, ensuring a comprehensive review of literature on business development. The results aimed at the answering the raised research questions are thus presented in the subsisting paragraphs;

#### 3.1 Time range of business development articles

This subsection presents the description of the time distribution of business development articles over the last decade.

**Figure 1: Time Distribution of Business Development Articles**



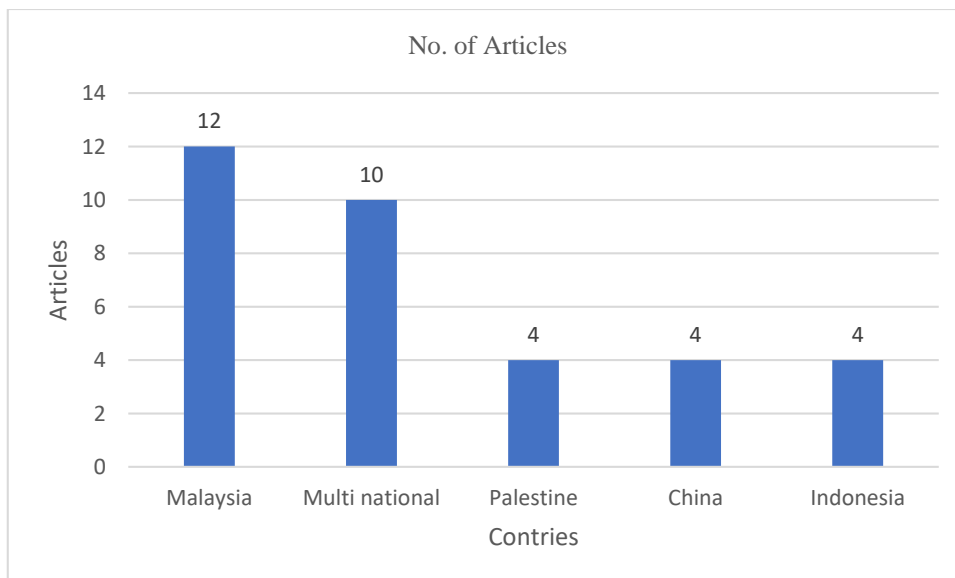
Source: Author's Computation, 2024.

The systematic review of 58 articles on business development spans from 2015 to 2024, with a notable peak in 2021 (Smyth *et al.*, 2019; Mierin *et al.*, 2019; Ulanov, 2019, McDonnall and Sui, 2019), which accounted for 41.38% of the total publications. This surge indicates a growing interest in business development research during this year, likely influenced by global economic changes and challenges. The years 2018 (15.52%) and 2022 (12.07%) also show significant contributions, while earlier years like 2015 and 2019 reflect limited activity. The temporal distribution of articles highlights a significant increase in research output around the year 2021, suggesting heightened academic engagement in



response to the evolving business landscape, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The overall trend indicates a gradual rise in interest, with most articles published in recent years, reflecting the contemporary relevance of business development studies.

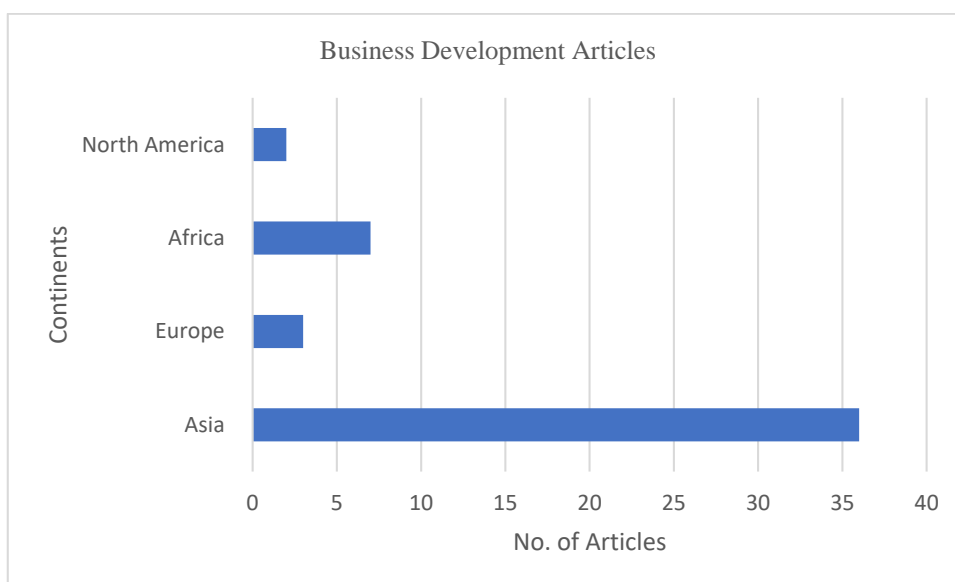
### 3.2 Geography of Business Development Articles



**Figure 2: Geographical Distribution of Business Development Articles (Country)**

Source: Author’s Computation, 2024.

This systematic review encompasses 58 articles on business development from 2015 to 2024, with a significant concentration in Malaysia (20.69%) (Alam *et al.*, 2021; Zhao *et al.*, 2021) and multi-national contributions (17.24%). Palestine (13.79%) and China (12.07%), (McWatters *et al.*, 2016; Cao *et al.*, 2023) also feature prominently, reflecting their unique business environments.



**Figure 3: Geographical Distribution of Business Development Articles (Continents)**

Source: Author’s Computation 2024)

The review's geographical analysis highlights Asia as the dominant continent with 36 articles (62.07%), followed by Europe with 13 articles (22.41%). Africa contributes 7 articles (12.07%), illustrating an emerging focus on local entrepreneurship. Notably, both North America and South America have

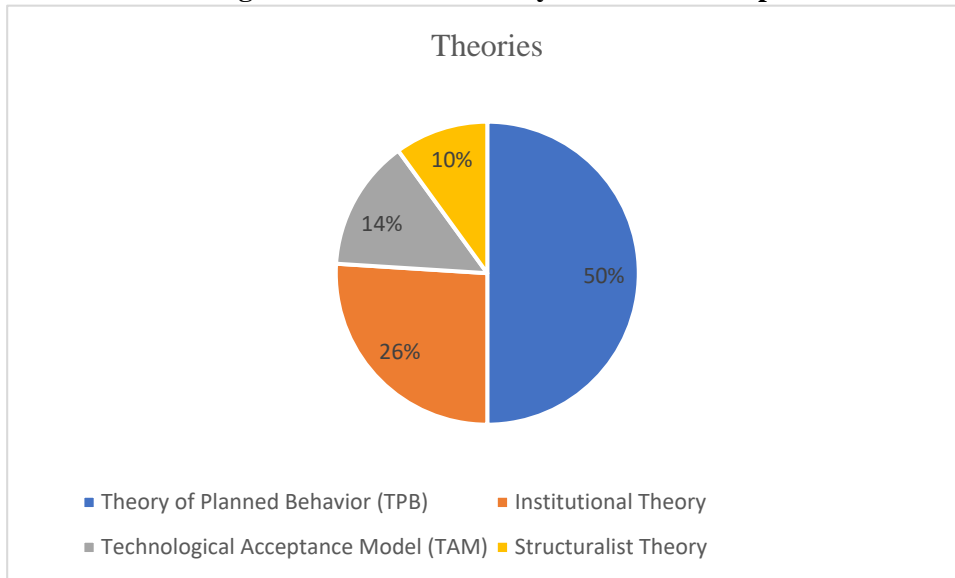


limited representation, suggesting a need for enhanced research engagement in these regions. Overall, the findings underscore the diverse and evolving landscape of business development research globally.

### 3.3 Theories used by Business development Articles

this heading presents the theories used by extant business development articles. Figure 4 presents the result as thus'

**Figure 4: Theories Used by Business Development Articles**

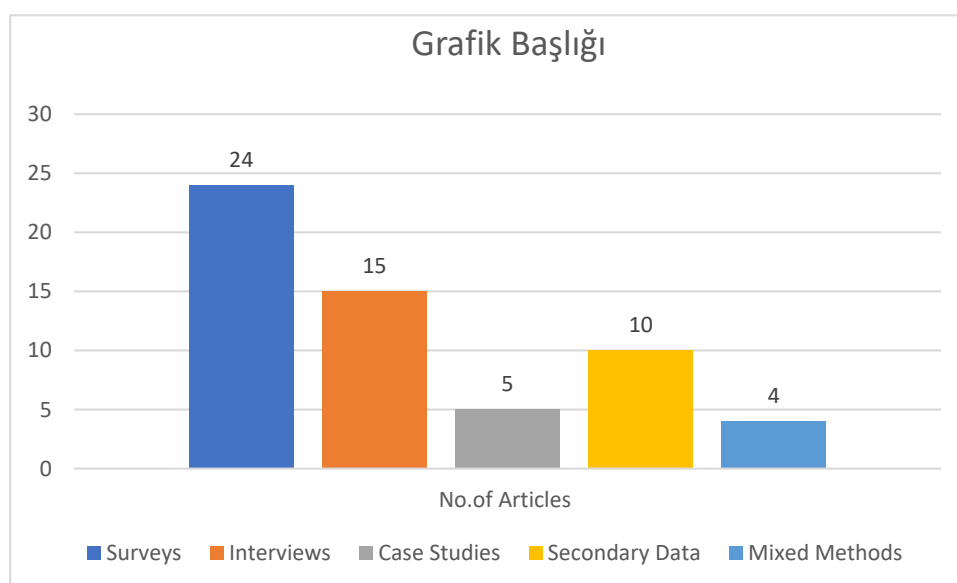


Source: Author's Computation 2024)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is the most prevalent theory, appearing in half of the articles, reflecting its strong relevance in understanding business development behaviors. Institutional Theory follows, making up a significant portion as well, highlighting the importance of institutional contexts in shaping business practices. Technological Acceptance Model (TAM) and Structuralist Theory are less common but still contribute meaningfully to the discourse on business development.

### 3.4 Data Collection

This section presents the various data collection methods used by the business development articles



**Figure 5: Method of Data Collection by Business Development Articles**

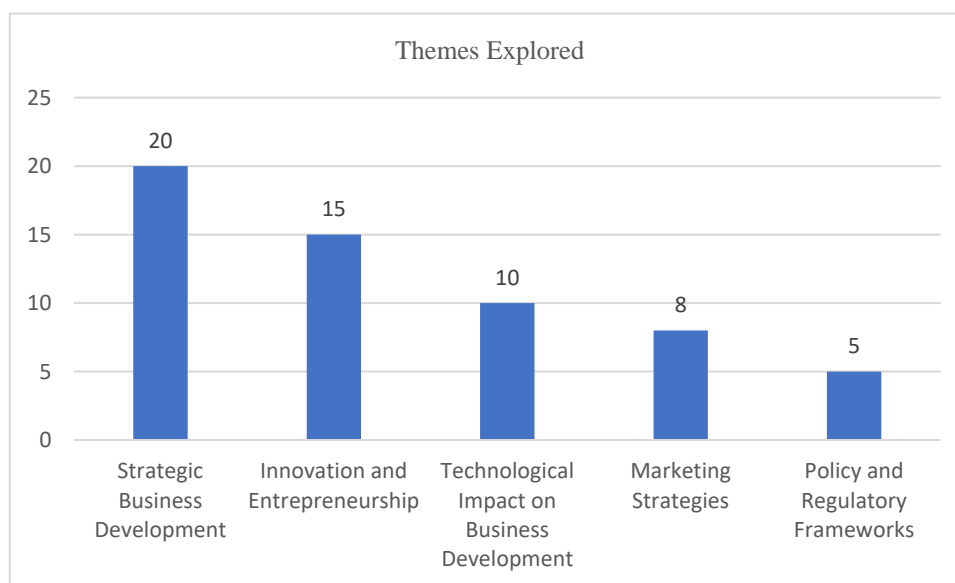
Source: Author's Computation 2024)



Surveys remain the predominant method of data collection, utilized in 43% of the articles, showcasing a preference for quantitative research in business development studies. Interviews represent 27%, allowing researchers to gather qualitative insights from participants, while case studies account for 9%, providing in-depth analysis of specific instances. Secondary data and mixed methods are also employed, indicating a balanced approach to data collection across various studies.

### 3.5 Theme

In terms of themes, this section presents the various themes explored by the extant business development articles.



**Figure 6: Themes of Business Development Articles**

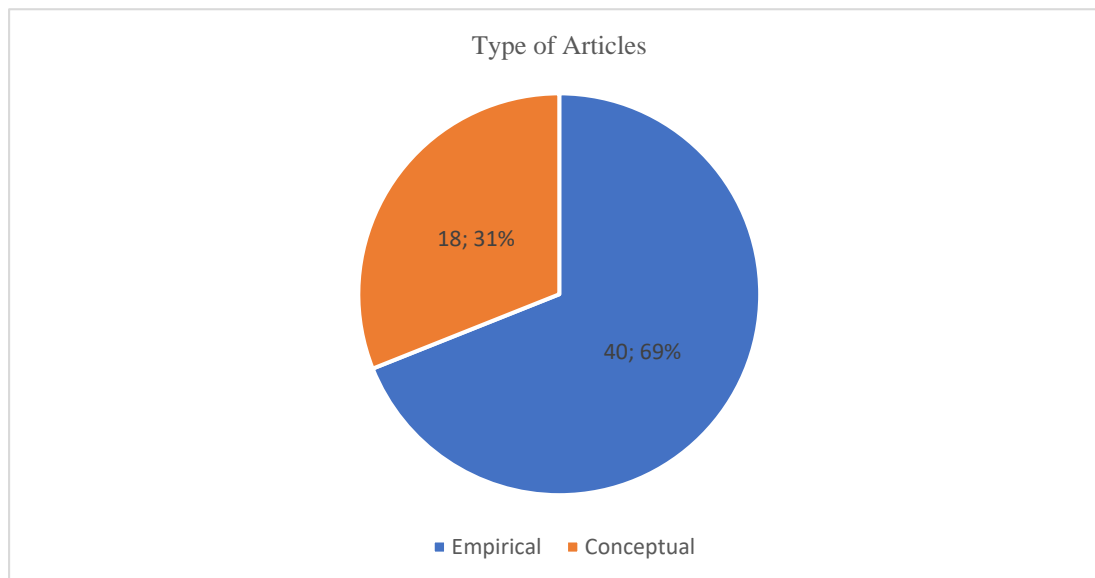
**Source; Author's Computation**

This analysis distills the dimensions or themes of business development into five essential categories, with strategic business development leading at 34.5%, reflecting its central role in fostering growth and sustainability. The emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship showcases a commitment to cultivating new ideas. Technological impact remains significant, while marketing strategies and policy frameworks underscore the importance of both outreach and regulatory compliance in the business development landscape.



### 3.6 Type of business development article

This heading presents the clear classification of the considered articles base on empirical and conceptual classification



**Figure 7: Types of Business development Articles**

Source: Author’s Computation, 2024.

The analysis reveals a predominance of empirical articles, comprising 69% of the total, indicating a strong focus on practical research and data-driven insights in the field of business development. Conceptual articles, while fewer at 31%, contribute valuable theoretical frameworks and discussions that enhance the understanding of business development processes and challenges.

Dimension	Key Findings	Implication
<b>Time Distribution of Articles</b>	Articles on business development strategies were published annually within the review period, with a significant increase in the last five years.	The growing trend highlights the increasing importance and recognition of business development strategies in recent years.
<b>Geographic Distribution of Articles</b>	Articles were concentrated in Asia (36 articles), followed by Africa (7), Europe (3), and North America (2).	There is a need for more research in underrepresented regions such as Europe and North America to ensure a global understanding of business development strategies.
<b>Article Type</b>	40 of the reviewed articles were empirical, while 18 were conceptual in nature.	Encouraging the publication of more empirical articles will enhance comparison and validation of findings in this field.
<b>Data Collection Method</b>	Surveys (43%) were the most commonly used method, followed by interviews (27%), with mixed methods and case studies being underutilized.	Future research should explore mixed methods and case studies to provide a more comprehensive understanding of business development strategies.
<b>Research Themes</b>	Five major themes were explored: Strategic Business Development (34.5%), Innovation and Entrepreneurship (25.9%), Technological Impact (17.2%), Marketing	All themes are critical, but future studies should explore the integration of these themes to address gaps and provide a holistic view of business development.



Strategies (13.8%), and Policy Frameworks (8.6%).

## Figure 7: Types of Business development Articles

Source: Author's Computation, 2024.

### Conclusion and recommendation

The importance of business development strategies in fostering enterprise growth cannot be overstated. This systematic review indicates that while research on business development strategies is gaining momentum globally, most studies are concentrated in developing regions, possibly due to the challenges these regions face in achieving sustainable business growth. Factors such as limited financial resources, insufficient innovation capacity, and lack of strategic alignment contribute to these challenges. This review highlights actionable insights to address these barriers and enhance the effectiveness of business strategies.

**Investment in Digital Technologies:** Develop and implement digital tools such as e-marketing platforms, digital supply chain solutions, and innovation management systems to enhance efficiency and scalability.

**Strengthen Policy Frameworks:** Introduce policies that promote ease of doing business, reduce bureaucratic hurdles, and provide tax incentives to encourage entrepreneurial growth.

**Foster Collaboration and Networking:** Encourage partnerships between businesses, government agencies, and academic institutions to promote knowledge sharing, innovation, and access to funding opportunities.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** Conduct regular assessments of business development strategies to identify gaps and improve implementation effectiveness.

**Capacity Building:** Organize training and mentorship programs to enhance the managerial and operational capabilities of entrepreneurs and small business owners.

### References

Alam, M. M., Awawdeh, A. E., & Muhamad, A. I. B. (2021). Using e-wallet for business process development: challenges and prospects in Malaysia. *Business Process Management Journal*, 27(4), 1142-1162.

Alimukhamedova, N. (2021). Determinants of Business Development: Importance of Microfinance for Startups. In *International Conference on Business and Technology* (pp. 1013-1026). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Bishop, B. W., Mehra, B., & Partee, R. P. (2016). The role of rural public libraries in small business development. *Public Library Quarterly*, 35(1), 37-48.

Chawala, M. (2022). Investigating the Relationship Amongst Business Development Services, Entrepreneurial Orientation and Commercialisation Intention of Smallholder Farmers of Indigenous Chickens—A Theory of Planned Behaviour Approach. *Copperbelt University*.

Dawra, A., Ramachandran, K. K., Mohanty, D., Gowrabhathini, J., Goswami, B., Ross, D. S., & Mahabub Basha, S. (2024). Enhancing Business Development, Ethics, and Governance with the Adoption of Distributed Systems. *Meta Heuristic Algorithms for Advanced Distributed Systems*, 193-209.

Delaney, P. G., Harrington, K., & Toker, E. (2019). Undergraduate student-run business development services firms: A new educational opportunity and growth alternative for small and medium enterprises. *Entrepreneurship Education and Pedagogy*, 2(2), 171-187.

Ermolina, L. V., Shiryayev, A. N., Alekina, E. V., & Kogut, O. Y. (2024). Networking as a Modern Approach to Managing Business Development in the Digital Era. In *International Scientific Conference "Digital Transformation of the Economy: Challenges, Trends, New Opportunities"* 191-198.



- Lu, F., Zhu, Z., & He, X. (2021). Aspirations of Chinese families-in-business: Development of a reliable measurement instrument. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 12(4), 100441.
- Mierin, L. A., Korostyshevskaya, E. M., & Ragimova, N. S. (2019). The Impact of Monopolies on Small Business Development in Russia. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 78(5), 1201-1228.
- Nozari, H. (2024). Investigating Key Dimensions and Key Indicators of AIoT-Based Supply Chain in Sustainable Business Development. In *Artificial Intelligence of Things for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals* (pp. 293-310). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Piispanen, V. V., & Paloniemi, K. J. (2015). Actions of two entrepreneurs in growth-oriented business development. *South Asian Journal of Business and Management Cases*, 4(2), 192-201.
- Rambe, P., & Mosweunyane, L. (2017). A poverty-reduction oriented perspective to small business development in South Africa: A human capabilities approach. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, 9(3), 289-302.
- Roth, M. G., & Morris, R. (2020). Here I come to save the day? Reassessing the efficacy of small business development centers in the Internet Era. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*, 9(3), 319-328.
- Smyth, H., Duryan, M., & Kusuma, I. (2019). Service design for marketing in construction: Tactical implementation in the “business development management”. *Built Environment Project and Asset Management*, 9(1), 87-99.
- Stormi, K., Lindholm, A., Laine, T., & Korhonen, T. (2020). RFM customer analysis for product-oriented services and service business development: an interventionist case study of two machinery manufacturers. *Journal of Management and Governance*, 24(3), 623-653.
- Ulanov, V. L. (2019). Business development in emerging economies on the basis of limits and conditions of national strategies. *Global Journal of Emerging Market Economies*, 11(1-2), 37-47.
- Ungureanu, M., Pop, N., & Ungureanu, N. (2016). Innovation and technology transfer for business development. *Procedia Engineering*, 149, 495-500.
- Zhao, J., Xue, F., Khan, S., & Khatib, S. F. (2021). WITHDRAWN: Consumer behaviour analysis for business development.
- Cao, Q., Zhu, T., Yu, W., & Tan, H. (2023). Off-balance sheet business development and bank efficiency: A financial innovation matching perspective. *Heliyon*, 9(6).
- McWatters, C. S., Chen, Q., Ding, S., Hou, W., & Wu, Z. (2016). Family business development in mainland China from 1872 to 1949. *Business history*, 58(3), 408-432.