

# Influence of Socio-Demographic Factors on the Performance of Youth-Owned Enterprises in Nakuru Municipality

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**ABSTRACT:** Kenya, like many other countries, is experiencing a surge in Youth-Owned Enterprises (YOE) as young entrepreneurs embark on innovative ventures. While these enterprises contribute significantly to economic development and job creation, they face a myriad of performance issues that challenge their growth and sustainability therefore the study sought to assess the influence of socio-demographic factors on the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality. The study was guided by the Neoclassical Analysis Theory. The study adopted a predictive correlational research design. The design was suitable since the study sought to identify the predictive relationship between independent variables (socio-demographic factors, sources of business capital, type of training, and type of market research) and dependent variables (performance of youth-owned enterprises). The target population was 8312, and the accessible population was 2076 youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality. The sample size of 145 participants was selected using stratified sampling based on the population of youth-owned enterprises in the five estates (Ronda, CBD, Kaptembwo, Lanet and Shabab) in Nakuru Municipality. Data was collected using a questionnaire piloted at Njoro Town to ascertain its reliability. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the data collection instrument was found to be 0.769, which was above the threshold value of 0.7. Data were analyzed using inferential statistics, particularly multiple regression analysis. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 26) aided data analysis. The study established that the socio-demographic factors were significant predictors of the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality.

**KeyWords:** *Socio-demographic factors, Performance of Youth-Owned Enterprises*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Socio-demographic factors refer to the social and demographic characteristics of a population or a group of individuals (Cutler, Lleras-Muney & Vogl, 2018). These factors provide information about the composition, structure, and characteristics of a society or a specific population. They are crucial for understanding the dynamics of human populations and are often used in social research, policy-making, and public health. Socio-demographic factors such as income, parental education, and geographic location can impact access to quality education. Individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds may face barriers to educational resources and opportunities, affecting academic performance. Cultural factors, including language and cultural norms, can influence how students engage with the education system, impacting their academic success (Bradley & Corwyn, 2022).

Socio-demographic factors such as education level and field of study significantly influence occupational performance (Ahangar et al., 2018). Higher levels of education often correlate with increased job opportunities and better job performance. Gender and racial disparities can affect career opportunities and advancement. For example, women and individuals from certain racial or ethnic backgrounds may face challenges in breaking through glass ceilings or achieving equal representation in leadership roles. Socio-

demographic factors, including income and geographic location, can impact access to healthcare services. Limited access may lead to disparities in health outcomes, affecting overall physical and mental well-being. Social determinants of health, such as education, employment, and socioeconomic status, influence health behaviors and outcomes. For example, individuals with higher education levels tend to adopt healthier lifestyles (Koepl, 2019).

Socio-demographic factors such as income and socioeconomic status play a crucial role in economic performance (Muturi, 2020). Individuals from lower-income backgrounds may face challenges in building wealth and accessing economic opportunities. Gender, race, and ethnicity contribute to occupational segregation, influencing income disparities. This segregation affects economic performance at both individual and societal levels. Socio-demographic factors, including family structure and social support networks, impact psychological well-being. Strong support systems can positively influence mental health and performance (Tallaki and Bracci, 2021). Experiences of discrimination based on socio-demographic factors, such as race or gender, can negatively impact mental health and psychological well-being, affecting overall performance.

Youth-Owned Enterprises are businesses owned and operated by individuals typically between the ages of 18 and 35. These enterprises span various industries, ranging from technology startups to traditional small businesses, and are often characterized by the enthusiasm, creativity, and dynamism of young entrepreneurs (Obiora & Nwokorie, 2018). The performance of Youth-Owned Enterprises is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various aspects of business success and sustainability. It goes beyond mere financial indicators and extends to factors such as social impact, innovation, and long-term viability. The success of youth-owned businesses is essential not only for the individual entrepreneurs but also for the broader community and economy (Dumbuya, 2019).

One of the primary measures of the performance of Youth-Owned Enterprises is their financial viability and sustainability. Profitability, revenue growth, and financial stability are crucial indicators that reflect the economic health of these enterprises. Youth entrepreneurs often face unique challenges, including limited access to capital and resources. Therefore, their ability to generate profits and sustain operations over the long term becomes a critical factor in assessing their overall performance (Sun, 2020). Financial performance is not only a measure of success for individual enterprises but also an important factor in attracting investment and facilitating future growth.

Beyond financial metrics, the social impact and innovation introduced by Youth-Owned Enterprises are integral components of their performance. These enterprises often bring fresh perspectives, creative solutions, and innovative business models to the market. The ability of youth entrepreneurs to address social challenges, promote inclusivity, and contribute to sustainable development reflects positively on their overall performance. Measures such as job creation, community engagement, and environmental sustainability are essential in evaluating the broader impact of Youth-Owned Enterprises on society (Khalid, 2019).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Kenya, like many other countries, is experiencing a surge in Youth-Owned Enterprises (YOE) as young entrepreneurs embark on innovative ventures. While these enterprises contribute significantly to economic development and job creation, they face a myriad of performance issues that challenge their growth and sustainability. The youth entrepreneurial landscape in Kenya often lacks the necessary business skills and experience needed to run enterprises successfully. Many young entrepreneurs may have innovative ideas but lack the practical knowledge of business management, financial planning, and marketing strategies. This skills gap can result in poor decision-making, ineffective resource allocation, and overall business inefficiency, hindering the optimal performance of youth-owned ventures therefore the study sought to assess the influence of socio-demographic factors on the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Socio-demographic Characteristics and Performance of Youth-owned Enterprises**

According to Andaregie et al. (2022), various enterprise characteristics, which include age, experience, gender and the level of education of the entrepreneur, influence the growth of small and micro-enterprises. Female entrepreneurs exhibit specific behavioural characteristics, including risk aversion, creativity, persistence and higher opportunities search. On the other hand, men have a higher level of confidence and persuasion and can evaluate the risk for profit. World Bank (World Bank, 2013) report shows that woman's enterprises; contribute to household income and national revenue. Ewoh (2014) indicated that priorities that motivate men and women differ in that men engage in entrepreneurship with the remote end of economic development while women are driven by the desire to achieve household needs. Against these varying views, the current study anticipates understanding how gender disparity influences the performance of the male and female youths-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality, Kenya.

Age in entrepreneurship has been regarded as a factor since it affects the quantity of human and financial capital for starting and running a business (Zhao et al., 2021). Older people are known to have higher social and business networks as well as greater access to capital that ease business ventures. Age is a determinant for the amount of financial, social and human capital, thus increasing the possibility of becoming an entrepreneur for older people. However, older people are less willing to venture into self-employment. In this regard, people in the middle of their careers and youths are more likely to engage in business activities (Bandiera et al., 2022). Based on these disagreeing findings, the current study aims at exploring the influence of age on the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality. A low level of education has been cited as one of the reasons for youth unemployment in Kenya (Youth Agenda, 2013). The empirical finding in a study by Kemunto (2014) found that attaining tertiary education enhanced the skills and success of youth entrepreneurs.

The research findings by Wube (2010) established that the businesses of young entrepreneurs who had secondary school education performed much well than those who did not attain that level of education. In addition, this study by Wube (2010) shows some worries that educated entrepreneurs were likely to endanger the success of their enterprises if another lucrative enterprise emerged and was ready to accept to divert the attention to them. Olugbola (2017) further postulated that when the youth reach secondary school, they should be exposed to entrepreneurship to enhance successful entrepreneurship among future youth. While access to primary education in Kenya is free, Ochola (2012) disclosed that several pupils have limited access to secondary education in Kibra and other parts of Kenya, which calls for the inclusion of life skills training in the education Curriculum, even in Primary education.

Oketch (2023) asserted that the intention of most youths, especially those who have attended middle-level colleges and the university, is formal employment. The more educated individuals in developing countries prefer formal paid employment instead of self-employment (Gindling & Newhouse, 2014). Generally, educated persons can identify business opportunities, understand market trends, and carry out entrepreneurial activity more effectively and efficiently; thus, a higher formal education positively affects entrepreneurship (Johansson, 2000).

### **Theoretical Review**

This study was guided by Neoclassical Analysis Theory by Adam Smith. The theory focuses on the conditions necessary to sustain an equilibrium, a benchmark for enterprise profitability and success. The neoclassical analysis focuses on the requirements for maintaining equilibrium, echoed by Schumpeter, which uses the innovator's destructive creation to explain the progress in the capitalistic system. Kirzner identifies disequilibrium that can be corrected by alerting entrepreneurs to produce and exchange to attain equilibrium. Kirzner postulates that entrepreneurial progress depends on many great men who are players in the business arena. The profit in a business venture may be negative until the break-even point is established. Due to uncertainties in the business environment, the profit has to be a speculative affair

entrepreneur, and thus entrepreneurship can be seen as risk-taking (Vaughn, 1992). One must see a risk and do extraordinary things to achieve business success. Therefore, the performance of youth-owned enterprises depends on the existence of equilibrium and disequilibrium generated by forces of demand and supply in the market, which contribute to uncertainties in the business environment enhanced by socio-demographic factors, enterprise training, sources of business capital and type of market research, among others.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a predictive correlational research design. The study was conducted in Nakuru Municipality of Nakuru County, Kenya. The target population of this study was all the youth enterprises in 29 estates of Nakuru Municipality. The target population was 8312 youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality registered with the County Council of Nakuru. Five estates within the municipality were purposively selected based on the accessibility and proximity to the Central Business District. To ensure each youth enterprise had an equal chance of being selected, the researcher randomly selected one youth enterprise from a group of youth enterprises within an area factoring in the type of business. One hundred forty-five youth-owned enterprises were selected proportionately from the estates as the sample size. This sample size of 145 participants from the 2,076 youth enterprises was arrived at using the formula by Creswell (2007).

Data was collected using open and closed-ended questionnaires. The researcher developed the questionnaire in line with the study's objectives and the assistance from the supervisors and research experts to help improve the instrument's content validity. The instrument's reliability was done through a pilot study in preparation for major research. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability was used to establish the degree of consistency and accuracy of items in the questionnaire. The researcher requested the respondents to complete the questionnaire within one day, then the filled questionnaire was collected upon completion the following day at their business premises. After data collection, the data were coded, entered into a computer, and analyzed using a statistical package for social science (SPSS version 28 and STATA version 17). This was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, frequencies, means, percentages and standard deviation (SD) were generated. The continuous data for the independent variables fitted into the regression model were obtained through the mean score of the responses per variable.

### **IV. RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Questionnaire Return Rate**

The study targeted one hundred and forty-five respondents in five estates (Ronda, CBD, Kaptembwo, Lanet and Shabab) of Nakuru Municipality. The response rate was 100%. There was a 100% questionnaire return rate.

#### **4.2 Social-demographic Factors of Study Respondents**

The study analyzed the respondents' social-demographic factors, including age, gender, number of years of schooling, number of businesses owned, business-related training and type of training. The majority (55.9%) of the youth entrepreneurs in Nakuru municipality were male, compared to 44.1% who were female. The results imply that most businesses are male-owned in the Nakuru municipality. These findings further indicate that men were actively involved in entrepreneurship, compared to their female counterparts in Nakuru municipality, specifically Ronda, CBD, Kaptembwo, Lanet, and Shabab estate.

##### **4.2.1 Distribution of Youth Entrepreneurs by Age**

The study sought to determine the distribution of youth entrepreneurs based on their age. The aim was to gain a comprehensive understanding of how youth entrepreneurs were distributed across different age groups and to uncover patterns and trends that shed light on the varying levels of participation and

engagement in entrepreneurship within specific age brackets. The result presented in Table 1 was examined to facilitate this analysis.

**Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Youth Entrepreneurs by Age**

Age	Frequency	Percent
24-26 years	1	0.7
27-29 years	25	17.2
30-32 years	56	38.6
33-35 years	63	43.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study's results in Table 1 indicate that 43.4% of youth entrepreneurs in Nakuru municipality were aged between 33 to 35 years. 38.6% were between 30 and 32 years, 17.2% were between 27 and 29 years, and 0.7% were between 24 and 26 years. The results revealed that majority (82%) of youth entrepreneurs owning a business in Nakuru municipality were aged between 30 to 35 years. These findings highlight the age distribution of youth entrepreneurs in Nakuru County, shedding light on the different age brackets that are actively engaged in entrepreneurial activities.

#### **4.2.2 Distribution of Respondents by the Number of Years of Schooling**

In this section, the distribution of respondents based on the number of years of schooling was analyzed to gain insights into their educational backgrounds.

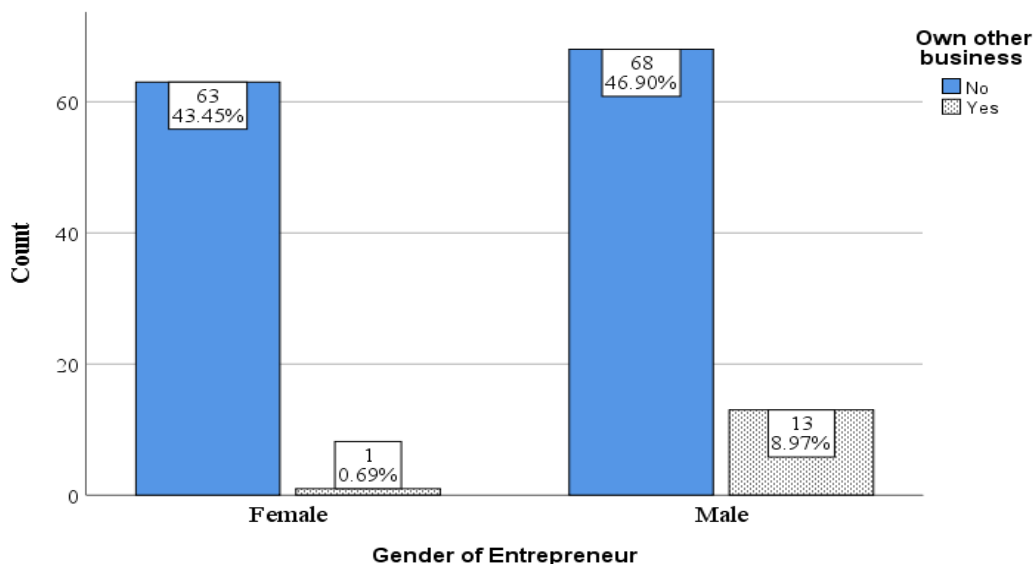
**Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by the Number of Years of Schooling**

Number of years of schooling	Frequency	Percent
6-10 years	12	8.3
11-15 years	109	75.2
16-21 years	24	16.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From the findings majority (75.2%) of youth entrepreneurs owning enterprises in Nakuru Municipality had schooled for 11-15 years, 16.6% had schooled for 16-21 years and 8.3% had school for 6-10 years. The results in Table 2 indicate that most youth entrepreneurs owning enterprises in Nakuru Municipality attained the Kenya Certificate for Secondary Education, which takes approximately 12 years of schooling.

**4.2.3 Gender by Ownership of More Than One Business Enterprise**

In this section, the distribution of gender in relation to the ownership of multiple business enterprises was analyzed. The analysis focused on the findings presented in Figure 4.1, which provided insights into the distribution of gender among individuals who owned more than one business. The aim was to understand the representation and participation of different genders in multiple business ownership, as observed in the past. By exploring this distribution, past trends and patterns were identified, providing valuable information for understanding gender dynamics and entrepreneurial activities in relation to multiple business ownership.



**Figure 1: Gender by Ownership of More Than One Business Enterprise**

Regarding the percentage distribution of any other business owned and the gender of the youth entrepreneur, the study's outcome in figure 1 shows that only 43.45% of female youth entrepreneurs did not own any other business. In comparison, 0.69% owned more than one business. 46.9% of male youth entrepreneurs owned one business enterprise, while 8.97% of male youth entrepreneurs owned more than one business enterprise in Nakuru Municipality. This implies that the majority (90.35%) of youth entrepreneurs in Nakuru Municipality operated one business enterprise compared to 9.655 who owned more than one business in Nakuru municipality.



#### 4.2.4 Chi-Square Test Results on Gender by Ownership of Any Other Business

Table 3 presents the results of the Chi-Square test conducted to analyze the relationship between gender and ownership of any other business. The test aimed to determine if there was a significant association between these variables. These results provide important insights into the relationship between gender and the ownership of other businesses.

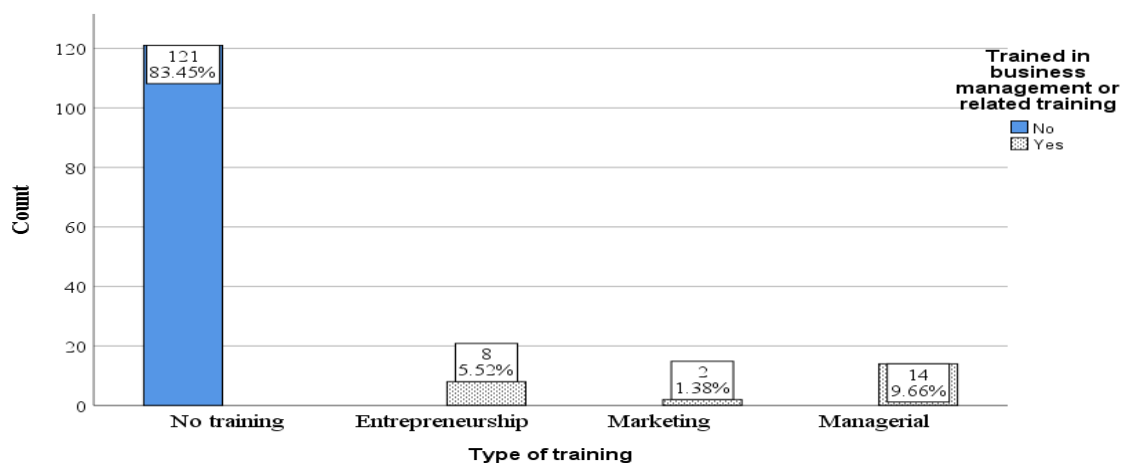
**Table 3: Chi-Square Test Results on Gender by Ownership of Any Other Business**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.602	1	0.003
N of Valid Cases	145		

Grounded on the results in table 3, it shows that ownership of more than one business among youth entrepreneurs significantly varied among different gender, where the male was more likely to own more businesses than the female in Nakuru municipality ( $X^2 (df=1, N = 145) = 8.602, p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, gender among youth entrepreneurs significantly influences the ownership of more than one business enterprise in Nakuru municipality. This is consistent with the findings of Mwangi (2020), who did a study on “Credit, Entrepreneurship Training and Performance of Micro and Small Enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya” and found there was a significant link between gender and access to credit which significantly influence the performance of Micro and Small Enterprises.

#### 4.2.5 Business-related Training by Type of Training

In this section, the relationship between business-related training and the type of training received by youth entrepreneurs was examined. The analysis focused on the findings presented in Figure 2, which depicted the distribution of business-related training based on the type of training received in the past. The aim was to understand the association between different types of training and the specific business-related skills acquired by youth entrepreneurs. By exploring this relationship, it provided insights into the effectiveness and relevance of various types of training in developing entrepreneurial competencies among the youth. Figure 4.2 indicates the relationship between business-related training and the type of Training the youth entrepreneur received.



**Figure 2: Business-Related Training by Type of Training**

The study's outcome indicates that 83.45% of the youth entrepreneurs had not been trained in business management or business-related training. In contrast, 5.52%, 1.38%, and 9.66% had been trained in entrepreneurship, marketing and managerial, respectively (Figure 4.2). This implies that two in ten youth

entrepreneurs owning business enterprises in Nakuru municipality had been trained on a business-related topic. This could have contributed to the closure of several youth-owned enterprises.

### 4.3 Results of Chi-Square Tests for Business-Related Training by Training Type

Table 4 presents the results of the Chi-Square test conducted to analyze the relationship between business-related training and the type of training received. The Chi-Square test aimed to determine if there was a significant association between these variables. The results of the Chi-Square test on business-related training by type of training are presented in table 4.

**Table 4. Results of Chi-Square Tests for Business-Related Training by Training Type**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	145.000	3	0.000
N of Valid Cases	145		

The results show that the training of youth entrepreneurs in business management significantly varied from the training the youth entrepreneurs received in Nakuru municipality ( $X^2$  (df = 3,  $N$  = 145) = 145.000,  $p$  < 0.05). Therefore, the training of youth entrepreneurs was significant with the type of training the youth entrepreneurs received.

### 4.4 Test for Linearity

This section focuses on investigating the relationship between socio-demographic factors and the performance outcomes of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality. To explore this influence of socio-demographic factors on the performance of youth-owned enterprises, a multiple linear regression model was utilized. The model aimed to examine how various socio-demographic factors influenced the performance of youth-owned enterprises. The coefficients and robust standard errors presented in Table 4.18 provide insights into the magnitude and significance of influence. The socio-demographic factors considered in the analysis included age, gender, number of years of schooling, and background training in business related course. Table 4.5 present the results of multiple regression model.

**Table 4.54 : Multiple Regression Model Results for Influence of Socio-Demographic Factors on the Performance of Youth-Owned Enterprises**

Variables	Coefficient	Robust std. Err.
Age	0.02186**	0.00883
Gender	0.00711	0.01170
Number of years of Schooling	0.00626***	0.00217
Training	-0.04254***	0.01494
cons	0.42003***	0.04813

F (4, 140) = 6.19, Prob> F = 0.0001\*\*\*, R-squared = 0.1117, Root MSE = 0.07034

Note. The number of obs = 145.

\*  $p < .1$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ .

Socio-demographic factors (Age, gender, number of years schooling, and background training in business management or related training) accounted for 11.17% of the variance in performance of youth-owned



enterprises (R-squared = 0.1117). This shows that 88.3% of the variance in the performance of youth-owned enterprises was explained by factors not included in the multiple linear regression model of the study.

The individual unstandardized coefficients showed that age was significant at 0.05 significance level ( $\beta = 0.02186, p < 0.05$ ), the number of years Schooling was significant at 0.01 level of significance ( $\beta = 0.00626, p < 0.01$ ) significance level and background training on business management or related training was significant at 0.001 ( $\beta = -0.42003, p < 0.01$ ) significance level which implies the background training of the youth entrepreneurs was negatively associated with performance their enterprises. Gender was insignificant. This implies that age, the number of years of schooling, and training significantly influence the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality.

Further, the F statistic ( $F = 6.19, p < 0.05$ ) from ANOVA results indicates the fitness of the regression model, which implies that socio-demographic (Age, gender, number of years schooling, and background training in business management or business-related training) were significant predictors of performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality. Since the p-value is 0.0012, less than 0.05, socio-demographic factors significantly influenced the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality. Thus, Hypotheses one, which stated that 'Socio-demographic factors have no statistically significant influence on the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality, was rejected and the alternative premise accepted. These findings conform with the findings of Ochieng (2020) in "Determinants of Business Performance: A Case of Agriprenuers in Kenya," who established a significant association between socio-demographic factors and business performance in Kenya.

From the results in table 4.18, the following model is predicted:

$$Y = 0.42003 + 0.02186X_1 + 0.00711X_2 + 0.00626X_3 - 0.04254X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

y = Performance of youth-owned business

X<sub>1</sub> = Age of entrepreneur

X<sub>2</sub> = Gender of entrepreneur

X<sub>3</sub> = Number of years of Schooling

X<sub>4</sub> = Training

Thus, if all the study variables were to be held constant, the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru municipality would be at 0.42003 units. A unit change in the Age of entrepreneur holding other factors constant would result in 0.02186 units increase in the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru municipality. A unit change in the Gender of an entrepreneur when other factors are held constant would lead to 0.00711 units increase in the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru municipality. A unit change in the Number of years of Schooling when other factors are held constant would lead to a 0.00626 units increase in the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru municipality. A unit change in training decline holding other factors constant would lead to 0.04254 units decrease in youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru municipality.

The multiple regression model results in Table 4.18 provide insights into the influence of socio-demographic factors on the performance of youth-owned enterprises. Among the variables analyzed, the number of years of schooling emerges as the most significant factor. A higher number of years of schooling is associated with a substantial improvement in business performance. On the other hand, participation in training programs shows a statistically significant but negative impact on performance, indicating the need for more effective training strategies. Age and gender, while still having some influence, exhibit weaker significance compared

to education and training. These findings emphasize the importance of quality education and targeted training initiatives for enhancing the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality.

## V. DISCUSSIONS

The aim of the study was to establish the influence of socio-demographic factors (Age, gender, number of years schooling and background training in business management or related training) on the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality. The study established that socio-demographic (Age, gender, number of years schooling, and background training in business management or business-related training) was a significant predictor ( $F = 6.19, p < 0.05$ ) of the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study on socio-demographic factors such as age, gender, number of years of schooling, and background training in business management or related training had a significant influence on the performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality. The study recommended that the national and county government could come up with specific policies targeting unemployed youth with a background in gender-owned businesses to engage in entrepreneurship since the study established a significant association between background in business-related training and performance of youth-owned enterprises in Nakuru Municipality.

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