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Psychological capital and entrepreneurial success: the mediating role of entrepreneurial bricolage among Ugandan microentrepreneurs

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the mediating role of entrepreneurial bricolage in the relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success among microentrepreneurs in Kampala, Uganda. A cross-sectional survey design and quantitative approach were employed to collect data from 353 and analyzed through SPSS 23 and AMOS. The findings indicate that entrepreneurial bricolage plays a partial mediating role in the relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success. In other words, entrepreneurial bricolage is a conduit through which psychological capital connects to entrepreneurial success. The study specifically focused on Kampala district, as it has the largest concentration of microentrepreneurs, meaning the results may not be generalized to the entire country. The study highlights that microentrepreneurs who cultivate and refine their mental skills, while strategically harnessing both internal resources, such as personal experiences, and external resources, like networks, are more likely to attain business success. This research contributes to entrepreneurship literature by highlighting the dual role of psychological capital and resourcefulness in promoting microenterprise success in resource-constrained environments. Additionally, the study emphasizes the role of psychological capital in shaping microentrepreneurs' decisions on how to creatively combine limited resources to achieve both business and personal goals, drawing on the principles of Entrepreneurial Bricolage theory.

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Economics; Environmental
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1. Introduction

Microenterprise success has emerged as a critical driver of economic growth and social development in developing countries. The microenterprises not only provide employment opportunities but also serve as catalysts for poverty alleviation and community empowerment (Endris & Kassegn, 2022). Microenterprise success is understood as achieving financial profitability, sustaining growth, ensuring customer satisfaction, maintaining operational sustainability, and effectively balancing personal and business objectives, all within the constraints of limited resources and a small-scale business environment (Elsafty et al., 2020; European Commission, 2020). Microenterprises represent between 50 and 60 percent of all businesses worldwide (Horne et al., 2015). In Sub-Saharan Africa, microenterprises account for 80 percent of the workforce (Seitz, 2017) and about 90 percent of all businesses in East Africa are microenterprises (Mramba et al., 2016). While the role of microenterprises in generating jobs is well established, there is an ongoing debate about their actual performance and potential for growth (Jayachandran, 2020). In developing countries, microenterprises have not enhanced their full potential due to informality, limited access to capital, lack of support for business development and skill enhancement (Reeg, 2015).

Globally, 50 percent of microenterprises fail within the first year of operation, with five out of seven businesses experiencing failure in this early period (Ayalu et al., 2022). In East Africa, the situation is even

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more critical, with 70 percent of micro-enterprises collapsing within two years (Afunadula, 2018; Ojiambo, 2016). Micro-enterprises in developing nations face numerous challenges, with their high failure rates often linked to equally high start-up rates because of necessity (Alemayehu et al., 2017). In Uganda, 30 percent of micro-enterprises do not survive beyond their third anniversary (Nassuna et al., 2023). Several personal factors contribute to this high failure rate, including a lack of business education, poor management skills, reliance on unprofessional family labor, and limited access to financial resources due to insufficient collateral and barriers to loan access (Nakku et al., 2020; Kelley et al., 2017). Moreover, external factors such as high operating costs, high taxes, declining sales, low profit margins, and limited opportunities for growth and expansion exacerbate the challenges faced by these businesses (Hamiza et al., 2020).

In Uganda, microenterprises are independently owned and operated businesses with annual sales of less than five million Uganda shillings (US\$1,365) and typically employ one to five individuals (UBOS, 2021). These enterprises play a crucial role in the economic development of many nations by creating jobs and contributing to economic growth (Matthew et al., 2020). They represent 90% of businesses and account for over 50 percent of jobs, serving as a significant source of innovation and entrepreneurial skills (Jorge, 2021). However, macroeconomic challenges such as complex and costly legal and regulatory frameworks, along with substantial barriers like limited market access, low productivity, and restricted access to capital, hinder the growth of micro-enterprises and, in turn, their potential to alleviate poverty (Mramba et al., 2016; Mwanaidi, 2019).

Theoretically, previous research on entrepreneurial success has used Innovation Theory (Schumpeter, 1934; Freeman, 1982), which emphasizes the role of innovation in entrepreneurial success, Psychological Trait Theory (Brockhaus, 1980; McClelland, 1961) to explain how certain psychological traits predispose individuals to become successful entrepreneurs. Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964; Unger et al., 2011) emphasizes the importance of knowledge, skills, and experience, Push and Pull Theory (Gilad, 1984; Hisrich & Brush, 1984) to explain how entrepreneurs are 'pushed' into entrepreneurship, Institutional Theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2014) emphasized institutional environments, Resource-Based Theory (Wernerfelt, 1984; Barney, 1991) which emphasized the importance of acquiring and leveraging key resources, Social Network Theory (Granovetter, 1985; Burt, 1992) which recognized the importance of social networks, Opportunity Recognition Theory (Ardichvili et al., 2003; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000) which explained entrepreneurs ability to recognize and capitalize on new business opportunities, Effectuation Theory (Sarasvathy, 2001) to explain how entrepreneurs often start with what they have, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Theory (Isenberg, 2010; Stam, 2015) to explain how entrepreneurship thrive in volatile environments, Entrepreneurial Success Components Theory (Gibb & Ritchie, 1982) which emphasized the interplay of several factors leading to entrepreneurial success, resource dependence theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, 2003) emphasizing how external resources are needed in the survival of an organization, Social-Cognitive Career Theory (Bandura, 2001; Lent et al., 1994) emphasizing the interplay between social personal and environmental factors, Planned Behavior Theory (Ajzen, 1991) which explains entrepreneurial success as a result of planned actions and network theory (Castells, 2011) to explain the role of social networks and relationships in explaining entrepreneurial success. Upon careful examination, these theories do not highlight the role of psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage in influencing entrepreneurial success. Thus, entrepreneurial bricolage theory is proposed to explain how micro entrepreneurs exploit, mix, and utilize their psychological capital resources to achieve success in a complex environment.

Scholars have examined entrepreneurial success from various perspectives. Rauch and Frese (2007) linked psychological traits like proactivity and risk-taking to better performance. Mueller and Thomas (2001) found that entrepreneurial orientation, including innovation and risk-taking, positively impacts firm performance. Davidsson and Honig (2003) showed that business planning enhances decision-making and survival rates, even if it doesn't directly predict success. Stenholm et al. (2016) emphasized the role of external resources, such as networks and capital. Baum et al. (2001) highlighted the importance of self-efficacy and leadership. Other studies focused on different factors. Baluku et al. (2016) and Tang (2020) explored psychological capital's direct effect, while Mwanaidi (2019) emphasized access to finance for micro-enterprises. Nakku et al. (2020) stressed entrepreneurial skills and education, and Mramba et al. (2016) explored government policies. Kelley et al. (2017) investigated social and family networks, while

Jorge (2021) examined technology and innovation. Additionally, Gupta et al. (2024), Hu et al. (2022), Ardelean (2021), and Baluku et al. (2018) explored how psychological capital mediates entrepreneurial success. Simba et al. (2023) looked at how marginalized groups can access finance despite the challenges in the traditional banking system. Olutuase et al. (2023) explored the relationship between education, skill development, and entrepreneurial outcomes in the developing world. Ogundana et al. (2023) investigated the effectiveness of support structures, such as business incubators and mentorship programs, in challenging environments. Liguori et al. (2024) and Ibidunni et al. (2021) investigated the role of technology in shaping entrepreneurial landscapes in developing economies. These findings show that success stems from a mix of psychological traits, strategy, resources, skills, and external factors.

Despite extensive research on entrepreneurial success, no scholarly work has specifically explored the mediating role of entrepreneurial bricolage in the relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success among micro-entrepreneurs in developing economies. Psychological capital, which encompasses traits like resilience, hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and trust, is crucial for micro-entrepreneurs, helping them navigate challenges and maintain motivation, even under resource constraints (Yousaf et al., 2015; Zou et al., 2015). Micro-entrepreneurs with high psychological capital are more likely to take risks, overcome setbacks, and adapt to changing environments, increasing their chances of success (Kariri & Radwan, 2023; Liao et al., 2017; Luthans et al., 2007). It enables them to create supportive, productive business environments, crucial for growth and sustainability, and enhances their decision-making and perseverance (Lanchimba et al., 2024). Entrepreneurial bricolage, the process of 'making do' by creatively using available resources to address challenges (Baker & Nelson, 2005), plays a key role in micro-enterprises. Micro-entrepreneurs often combine internal resources (e.g. personal experiences, knowledge) with external ones (e.g. market insights, networks) to overcome constraints and drive business success (Senyard et al., 2009; Vanevenhoven et al., 2011). Entrepreneurial bricolage fosters value creation, innovation, and opportunity recognition, driving business growth and sustainability, especially when resources are limited (Alva et al., 2023; Han & Xie, 2023; Iqbal et al., 2021; Steffens et al., 2023;). Thus, entrepreneurial bricolage acts as a mediator, enabling psychological capital to positively influence entrepreneurial success. This research, therefore, contributes to the existing body of knowledge by examining how both psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage together predict entrepreneurial success in the context of micro-entrepreneurs in a developing country. This study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How does psychological capital relate to entrepreneurial success?

RQ2: How does psychological capital relate to entrepreneurial bricolage?

RQ3: How does entrepreneurial bricolage relate to entrepreneurial success?

RQ4: Does entrepreneurial bricolage mediate the relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success in a developing country context?

This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on entrepreneurial success by exploring the effect of psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage on entrepreneurial success, with a specific focus on micro-entrepreneurs in a developing economy like Uganda, using Entrepreneurial Bricolage Theory. We begin by reviewing the existing literature to develop our hypotheses, followed by a presentation of the study's methodology and findings, which form the basis for further discussion. Based on these findings, we draw inferences and provide theoretical, practical, and policy implications. Finally, we address the limitations of the study and suggest potential avenues for future research.

2. Literature review

2.1. Theoretical underpinnings

This study investigates the relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success through the lens of Entrepreneurial Bricolage Theory. Proposed by Baker and Nelson (2005), this theory offers a powerful framework for understanding how entrepreneurs leverage available resources to overcome challenges and achieve success. It suggests that individuals in resource-constrained environments can create value by applying existing resources to new problems and opportunities (Davidsson et al.,

2017; Tindiwensi et al., 2021). Entrepreneurial bricolage emphasizes the ability of entrepreneurs to generate, develop, and exploit opportunities by making the most of the resources they have at hand. Instead of accepting institutional limitations, entrepreneurs innovate, adapt, and leverage creativity, social skills, and networks to uncover and utilize new opportunities (McKague & Oliver, 2016; Tindiwensi et al., 2020). This theory highlights how micro-entrepreneurs can transform available resources into profitable ventures, enabling them to navigate challenges and achieve entrepreneurial success. Thus, by exploiting new opportunities and improvising with limited resources, entrepreneurs can turn constraints into opportunities for growth and business success.

2.2. Literature review and hypothesis development

2.2.1. Psychological capital and entrepreneurial success

Psychological capital is a mental resource that lends individuals the capacity to apply themselves to a task and overcome the challenges that may arise (Hobfoll, 2002). Psychological capital is a concept that has demonstrated to guide sustainable businesses (Yousaf et al., 2015). Most often, psychological capital is thought of as a tool for micro-entrepreneurs to deal with challenging circumstances (Zou et al., 2015). Entrepreneurial success is an intricate phenomenon that includes both objective and subjective measures. Objective measures describe the business in financial and economic terms such as profits, sales, and number of assets (Elsafty et al., 2020). Subjective components that represent the views of entrepreneurs on what success means to them, such as independence, personal fulfillment, work-life balance, social and personal relationships, goal achievement, and personal satisfaction (Elsafty et al., 2020; Fisher et al., 2014; Wach et al., 2018).

Psychological capital dimensions have a direct positive correlation with entrepreneurial success (Arzu, 2024; Baluku et al. (2018; Ephrem et al., 2021) This is so because as the business develops, these aspects of psychological capital enable the entrepreneur to overcome any obstacle (Baluku et al., 2016). In essence, psychological capital can improve entrepreneurial success metrics that are objective and subjective according to a study conducted among 502 small and medium service enterprises in Malaysia. (Juhdi et al., 2015). This is because entrepreneurs' mental faculties are strengthened by psychological capital, which enables them to endure even in challenging situations as exemplified in a study conducted among a new generation of migrant workers in China (Ma et al., 2018). Wiklund et al. (2019), using datasets from the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and rural Bangladesh, suggest that microentrepreneurs with psychological capital are aware of opportunities because they consistently have a favorable opinion of the business environment. This is exemplified by Tang (2020) who points out from a review of various literature that psychological capital helps people to access creativity and innovation, which improves performance, creating a continuous competitive advantage that is hard for rivals to match.

A different body of research by Fatoki (2018) among Small and Medium Enterprises in South Africa supports the idea that psychological capital improves financial performance. Still to note, Positive psychological capital was found to give new generation entrepreneurs in China a major psychological edge when setting goals, investigating opportunities, overcoming obstacles, and igniting the business's entrepreneurial potential, all of which contributed to their increased success as entrepreneurs (Wang et al., 2022). Psychological Capital was found to impact entrepreneurial success among Ecuadorian entrepreneurs, as it equipped them with the insights required to optimize their human resources and cultivate a business environment that fosters productivity (Lanchimba et al. 2024). Eventhough psychological capital and entrepreneurial success are positively correlated, some academics have expressed concern about the potential drawbacks of having too much psychological capital. Fu et al. (2023) in their study among entrepreneurial teams in China warn that microentrepreneurs who apply psychological capital excessively may continue in unsuccessful endeavors for longer than is necessary, wasting resources and passing up possibilities. While the studies mentioned focus largely on micro and small enterprises (MSEs), the present study specifically examines how micro-entrepreneurs understand and relate to success through the lens of psychological capital in a developing country. Based on the above synthesis of empirical evidence, this study proposes that:

H₁: There is a positive and significant relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success.

2.2.2. Psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage

Entrepreneurial bricolage is explained as 'making do by applying combinations of the resources at hand to new problems and opportunities' (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Vanevenhoven et al. (2011) differentiate between internal bricolage, specific internal resources are related to the individuals' knowledge, skills, experience, and materials, and external bricolage, external resources that can be obtained from the environment such as social networks, materials, and financial resources. Entrepreneurs can creatively and resourcefully leverage available resources to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities, particularly in environments marked by uncertainty and resource constraints; Thereby making do with what is at hand, rather than relying on formal, pre-existing resources or structures (Ciambotti et al., 2023; Levi-Strauss 1967). Vanevenhoven et al. (2011) posit that entrepreneurs employ the techniques of internal and external bricolage to parse, re-conceptualize, appropriate, assemble, and rework resources, as well as to present narratives about the entrepreneurial process. This is done as a way to solicit additional contributions of resources that can sustain and/or advance the venture to succeed. Entrepreneurial Bricolage helps an entrepreneur 'make do' with available resources and apply the combinations of the resources at hand to solve problems and take advantage of new opportunities (Baker & Nelson, 2005).

Psychological capital dimensions have a direct positive correlation with entrepreneurial bricolage (Digan et al., 2019). To manage daily business operations in socially and institutionally limited situations and to overcome complex social, market, and institutional obstacles, a substantial amount of psychological capital is necessary, based on studies among the public and private sectors in Saudi Arabia (Kariri & Radwan, 2023). Data from founders of German entrepreneurial ventures indicated that entrepreneurial bricolage might help an entrepreneur to have a positive feeling, happiness, and satisfaction about life (Lucas et al., 2022). Busch and Barkema (2021) in their study on organizations in sub-Saharan Africa under resource-constrained environments suggest that entrepreneurial bricolage provides material flexibility in managing resource constraints in which psychological capital provides psychological flexibility in managing a variety of internal and external constraints. This is supported by Digan et al. (2019) drawing on a sample of 369 women entrepreneurs from small and medium enterprises (SMEs) located in India, who suggest that entrepreneurs must be able to adapt by making do with limited resources and maintain self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism in the face of social, market, and institutional hurdles. Xiaoyu and Xinchun (2021), using data from 207 new ventures in China, indicated that the successful application of entrepreneurial bricolage behavior by microentrepreneurs requires them to have psychological capital to better handle market uncertainties, survival challenges, and even grow despite resource constraints. Although entrepreneurial bricolage in social enterprises has been extensively studied, especially in developed economies. his study aims to add to the body of literature by investigating the relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage in the context of micro-entrepreneurs in a developing economy. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H₂. There is a positive and significant relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage.

2.2.3. Entrepreneurial bricolage and entrepreneurial success

Entrepreneurial bricolage is positively and significantly related to entrepreneurial success (Iga et al, 2025; Hashim et al., 2023; Rahman et al., 2020). Incorporating bricolage behavior into entrepreneurial operations is crucial due to limited and restricted resources (Steffens et al., 2023). According to a study conducted among Lebanese Small and Medium enterprises, microentrepreneurs must make use of both material and immaterial resources, such as financial capital, human capital, knowledge, information, and specialized skills to improve performance and increase their viability (El Nemar et al., 2022). Alva et al. (2023) through their study on female entrepreneurs in developing countries (Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Mexico) argued that microentrepreneurs are more likely to succeed when they carefully negotiate resource constraints and take advantage of opportunities through efficient resource use. This is further supported by Muneeb et al. (2023) using a sample of 349 faculty members of higher education institutions (HEIs) from seven states in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) who suggest that to give entrepreneurs a competitive edge, resources must be acquired, bundled, and used efficiently. Simba et al. (2021) in their study about entrepreneurial bricolage among Small and Medium Enterprises in emerging economies also argue that value creation and entrepreneurial activities are improved by entrepreneurial bricolage due to the limited latitude in the way

microentrepreneurs mobilize their often-depleted resources due to constraints inherent in their environment which helps them to create and take advantage of opportunities.

Bede et al. (2021) in their study among female entrepreneurs in two resource-constrained West African countries of Ghana and Ivory Coast further suggest that entrepreneurial bricolage increases originality and inventiveness by providing the resources needed for their success. An et al. (2018) using data from 248 incumbent firms in China found that entrepreneurial bricolage positively influences opportunity identification, product innovation, venturing, and strategic renewal hence entrepreneurial success. According to a study conducted by Sakher. (2022) among online stores argue that new opportunities are explored by leveraging existing resources to offer solutions to the problem of acquiring resources due to their liability of newness and smallness. Previous studies studied entrepreneurial success with psychological capital, emotional intelligence among others, this study suggests that entrepreneurial bricolage is an essential factor of success, especially for micro-entrepreneurs operating in developing economies., thus this study investigates the connection between Ugandan microentrepreneurs' success and entrepreneurial bricolage. It is, therefore, hypothesized that:

H₃: There is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial bricolage and entrepreneurial success.

2.2.4. Psychological capital, entrepreneurial bricolage and entrepreneurial success

The micro entrepreneur's ability to run a business with very limited resources is a true indicator of psychological capital (Digan et al., 2019). Gao et al. (2020) in their study of 536 entrepreneurs from 517 Chinese enterprises in the Anhui region-China suggest that psychological capital offers necessary psychological resources for pursuing new opportunities in the absence of significant resources and skills constraints. Further, the entrepreneurs' social and communication abilities are enhanced by psychological capital, which boosts their chances of success as observed from 250 entrepreneurs in South Africa (Dzomonda, 2021), and self-employed individuals in Germany and Uganda (Baluku et al., 2018). These Psychological resources were beneficial for self-promotion, personal improvement, and the expansion of business performance using data collected from 409 individuals comprising 89 entrepreneurial teams in the United States (Gray et al., 2020).

Without considering the entrepreneurial bricolage that aids in combining and reusing the existing resources, spotting a business opportunity and seeing it through to success is insufficient (An et al., 2018; Rahman et al., 2020). Sendawula et al. (2023); Mayanja et al. (2019) in their study of small and medium enterprises in Kampala, Uganda also suggest that entrepreneurial networking gives entrepreneurs; practical resources, social support, and helpful knowledge to help them reach their objectives and become more competitive and successful. This is exemplified by Goncalves et al. (2024) who used a sample of Lebanese women entrepreneurs to confirm that entrepreneurs who strategically utilize their robust and extensive social networks and, innovate within their means to navigate and prosper in the challenging entrepreneurial landscape. Chen et al. (2024) in their study of 346 entrepreneurs in the Anhui Province in China also found that entrepreneurs can fully utilize their online social network relationships and psychological capital to achieve entrepreneurial success. While previous research (Digan et al., 2019; Goncalves et al., 2024; Juhdi et al., 2015) has predominantly examined psychological capital, entrepreneurial bricolage, and entrepreneurial success within Medium and Small Enterprises (MSEs) in developed economies, this study seeks to extend these findings by investigating how psychological capital and entrepreneurial success among micro-entrepreneurs in developing economies are mediated by entrepreneurial bricolage. It is therefore hypothesized that;

H₄: Entrepreneurial bricolage mediates the relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success.

The study was developed based on the conceptual model presented in [Figure 1](#) below.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Research design

This study employed a cross-sectional survey, descriptive, and a quantitative research approach, allowing for the efficient collection of a large volume of data within a relatively short timeframe. This method enables a comprehensive analysis of the variables of interest, providing valuable insights into the

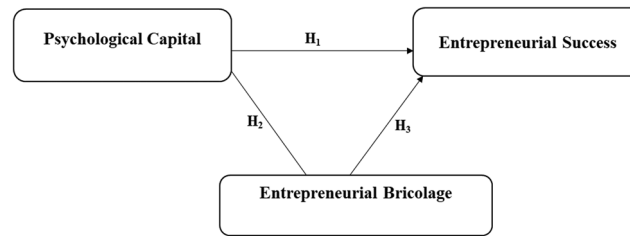


Figure 1. Conceptual model for psychological capital, entrepreneurial bricolage, and entrepreneurial success.

relationships among them while ensuring that the data collection process remains time-effective and manageable.

3.2. Population and sample size determination

The targeted study population comprised 75,935 registered microenterprises located in the five administrative divisions of Kampala District, Uganda, as reported by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2021). These microenterprises met the criteria of having been in operation for at least one year, employing between one to four employees, and generating annual revenues of less than UGX 5 million (approximately USD 1,365). The study focused on three key sectors: trade, services, and manufacturing, which collectively contribute 22.5 percent to Uganda's national GDP of USD 27.75 billion (UBOS, 2021), underscoring their economic significance.

In this study, the microenterprise was the unit of analysis, while the micro-entrepreneur served as the unit of inquiry. A sample size of 382 micro-entrepreneurs was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table, which is appropriate for known population sizes. Of these, 353 valid responses were obtained, representing a response rate of 92.4 percent. The high response rate is attributed to several factors: the use of physical distribution methods for the research instruments, the researcher's prior field experience, and the strong data collection competencies of trained research assistants. These factors helped mitigate challenges associated with a generally low information-sharing culture in Uganda, as noted in prior studies (Sendawula et al., 2023; Kaawaase et al., 2019).

The descriptive statistics revealed that 353 microentrepreneurs responded to the questionnaires. 184 (52.1%) were male and 169 (47.9%) were female in Table 1 below. The trade sector accounted for 204 (57.8%) of all businesses, followed by services 122 (34.6%) and manufacturing 27 (7.6%). One reason for this would be that trading in goods and services, which call for highly skilled labor, is easier than manufacturing and providing services. The findings also showed that the majority of micro entrepreneurs were between the ages of 26 and 30 (20.7%) and 31 and 35 (25.2%). This may be partially explained by the fact that, although they are of working age, they were unable to obtain formal employment; others have saved money and gained experience from prior employment; and still others chose to become micro-entrepreneurs because their expectations from their prior employment were not met in order to fulfill their obligations to their families. 18.1% of the population was between the ages of 18 and 25, primarily due to necessity. The majority of micro entrepreneurs (228) had fewer than three employees, accounting for 64.4% of the total, since micro enterprises of this kind are typically run by the micro entrepreneur as the owner and manager with the help of a close relative when they are not present. The micro entrepreneurs' greatest level of education was a university degree, which made up 27.2% of their total, followed by an advanced level certificate, which made up 22.7%. The foundational skills in trade and numeracy acquired by these graduates play a key role in enabling them to launch successful microbusinesses. This indicates that the respondents possess a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing entrepreneurial success among Ugandan micro entrepreneurs, including entrepreneurial bricolage and psychological capital. For further details, please refer to Table 1.

3.3. Sampling design and sampling procedures

Stratified sampling was used in studying microenterprises to ensure a representative and diverse sample. It involved categorizing microenterprises into different strata (trade, manufacturing and services).

Table 1. Descriptive characteristics, total N=353 micro entrepreneurs.

Gender	Count	Percent	Cumulative percent
Male	184	52.1	52.1
Female	169	47.9	100.0
Age bracket	Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
18–25	64	18.1	18.1
26–30	73	20.7	38.8
31–35	89	25.2	64.0
36–40	57	16.1	80.1
41–45	32	9.1	89.2
46–50	17	4.8	94
Above 51	21	6.0	100.0
Highest level of education	Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
None	4	1.1	1.1
Primary	9	2.6	3.7
O'Level	50	14.2	17.9
A'Level	80	22.7	40.6
Tertiary Certificate	43	12.2	52.8
Tertiary Diploma	64	18.1	70.9
Degree	96	27.2	98.1
Masters	5	1.4	99.5
PhD	2	0.6	100.0
Nature of business/sector	Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Trade	204	57.8	57.8
Service	122	34.6	92.4
Manufacturing	27	7.6	100
Numbers of employees	Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 3	228	64.6	64.6
3-5	92	26.1	90.7
6-8	33	9.3	100.0

Source(s): Primary data.

A sample was selected from each stratum proportionally, ensuring that all segments of the microenterprises' population were adequately represented. Snowball sampling technique was used to select businesses from each category per division. This approach was preferred because there was no easily available data like demographic information about microenterprises. Micro entrepreneurs recommended the next micro entrepreneur with the required characteristics to be part of the study until we go the adequate study sample. Gender inclusion was considered to include women-micro entrepreneurs.

3.4. Data collection

Data from micro entrepreneurs were gathered using a closed-end scale-items on the questionnaire. This is so because closed ended questionnaires provide convenient and inexpensive data collected from a large, diverse, and representative sample (Saunders & Kulchitsky, 2021). For that reason, in this study, closed-end questionnaires were given to micro entrepreneurs in Kampala district for self-self-administering. It should be noted that micro entrepreneurs in Uganda are highly informal and semi-illiterate (Sendawula et al., 2024). Therefore closed-end questionnaire designed using a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree was also administered with the help of research assistants. The scale was preferred to avoid a middle point, keep items simple, restrict replies to one best response about the study variables, and increase reliability and validity. (Muhwezi et al., 2023; Taherdoost, 2019).

3.5. Measurement and operationalization of variables

Entrepreneurial success was measured using two indicators; objective measures and subjective measures with 25 items. The *Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ)* self-rated version by Luthans et al. (2007) was adapted to measure four of the dimensions of psychological capital consisting of 25 sample items. To measure the fifth dimension, trust, 11 sample items from Paine (2003) trust questionnaire was adapted. *Entrepreneurial bricolage* was evaluated using two indicators; internal resources and external resources with 18 items. The sample items are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary operationalization of study variables.

Global variable	Dimensions	Source	Sample item scale
Psychological capital	Self-efficacy	Luthans et al. (2007); Baluku et al. (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel confident analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution. • I am able to define goals for my business.
	Hope	Luthans et al. (2007); Baluku et al. (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If I were in a difficult situation in my business, I could think of many ways to get out of it.
	Resilience	Luthans et al. (2007); Baluku et al. (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nowadays, I try to achieve my goals with great energy • I can overcome the difficult times in my business, because I already came through difficulties in the past. • In one way or another, in general I can manage my business and its difficulties.
	Optimism	Luthans et al. (2007); Baluku et al. (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When things are uncertain for me in my business, I usually expect the best.
	Trust	Paine (2003); Baluku et al. (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my business, I always look on the positive side of things. • In this business, I can be relied on to keep its promises. • In this business, I satisfy the needs of the customers.
Entrepreneurial bricolage	Internal resources	(Senyard et al. (2009); Davidsson et al. (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I usually find workable solutions to new challenges by using our existing internal resources. • I use any existing internal resource that seems useful to responding to a new problem or opportunity.
	External resources	(Senyard et al. (2009); Davidsson et al. (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I combine external resources to accomplish new challenges that these resources weren't originally intended to accomplish. • To deal with new challenges I access external resources at low or no cost and combine them with what we already have.
Entrepreneurial success	Objective Success	Wach et al. (2016, 2018); Angel et al. (2018); Fisher et al. (2014); Kirkwood (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My business made more profits than its average competitors over the previous 12 months. • The sales from my business products/services have raised considerably than its average competitors over the last 12 months.
	Subjective Success:	Wach et al. (2016, 2018); Angel et al. (2018); Fisher et al. (2014); Kirkwood. (2016); Razmus., and Laguna. (2018); Gorgieevski et al. (2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal fulfillment; (i) I find time that I can spend with my family and friends besides running my business. (ii) I feel totally independent in my business because I can run it as I may decide. • Personal financial rewards; (i) I have realized growth in personal income as a result of operating my business. (ii) With my business, I am able to meet the basic necessities of life like food and shelter. • Business survival; (i) The continuity of my business is guaranteed for the next three years. (ii) I often do research about the products and services that I need to identify the best possible ways of growing my customer base.

3.6. Common method bias and non-response bias

3.6.1. Common method bias

Type I and type II errors may result from common method bias (CMB) in these cross-sectional studies, hence jeopardizing the reliability of study findings (Hair et al., 2021). We adhered to the recommendations of Jordan and Troth (2020); Hair et al. (2017) purposely to lower CMB in this study. Procedural-wise, First, the survey instruments were designed to be simple, concise, and unambiguous, removing complex and complicated questions. Second, the research purpose and instructions were given to the respondents to enable them to provide more accurate responses. Statistical-wise, the questionnaire's design remained clear purposely to minimize respondents' misunderstandings and confusion. SMART PLS 4.00 was used to test the 'inner variance inflation factor (VIF) values'. Since every recorded inner VIF values were below the 3.300 threshold, there was no CMB in the data as recommended by Memon et al. (2023); Hair et al. (2021); Jordan and Troth (2020). The results are provided in Table 3.

3.6.2. Addressing nonresponse bias

In survey-based research, nonresponse bias is a critical issue since it could compromise the representativeness of the sample (Hair et al., 2017). In this research on Ugandan micro entrepreneurs, we carried out the following procedures with the intent to mitigate and lessen nonresponse bias: First, to assess the extent of nonresponse bias, we compared the attributes of responders and non-respondents using the institutional and demographic data that was available. It was simpler to identify any significant

Table 3. Inner variance inflation factor (VIF) values.

	Psychological capital	Entrepreneurial bricolage	Entrepreneurial success
Psychological capital		1.000	1.907
Entrepreneurial Bricolage			1.907
Entrepreneurial success			

Table 4. Reliability and validity.

Attributes	Cronbach alpha	CR	AVE	VIF	CVI
<i>Psychological capital</i>					
Hope	0.767	0.845	0.525	1.684	0.833
Optimism	0.791	0.864	0.615	1.695	0.833
Resilience	0.731	0.830	0.553	1.484	0.750
Self-efficacy	0.824	0.873	0.536	1.852	0.857
Trust	0.782	0.852	0.536	1.648	0.727
<i>Entrepreneurial bricolage</i>					
Internal Resources	0.790	0.857	0.547	1.783	0.889
External Resources	0.779	0.851	0.536	1.739	0.778
<i>Entrepreneurial success</i>					
Objective measures	0.778	0.851	0.538	1.792	0.833
Subjective measures	0.783	0.852	0.536	1.699	0.737

Source(s):Primary data.

** $p < 0.001$, bootstrap with 5000 samples (2-tailed test at 5% level of sig) CR:composite reliability; AVE:average variance extracted; VIF:variance inflation factor; CVI: content validity index.

differences that would indicate bias thanks to this comparison. Secondly, we implemented measures to decrease nonresponse while keeping secrecy. Throughout the questionnaire's deployment, respondent confidentiality was strictly maintained for the purpose of encouraging honest and thorough responses. Thirdly, the survey process was simplified to make it less burdensome for responders thus more responses. We acknowledge that nonresponse limitations may have an impact on the study's findings.

3.7. Validity and reliability

The questionnaire was first put through a pilot test to eliminate scale items that were unclear, poorly phrased, and complicated. The pilot findings showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficients were reliable and valid for psychological capital indicators; hope at 0.767, optimism at 0.791, resilience at 0.731, self-efficacy at 0.824 and trust at 0.782 entrepreneurial bricolage indicators; external resources at 0.779 and internal resources at 0.790, and entrepreneurial success indicators; objective measures at 0.778 and subjective measure at 0.783. According to these findings, the instrument was able to gather precise data on the constructs, which increased the possibility that the relationships and patterns found in the data were not the result of measurement errors. This, in turn, increased the possibility that the findings could be applied to a larger population phenomenon. Instrument validity was measured with content validity index (CVI). For explanatory studies like this one, $CVI = \geq 0.5$ was usable for data collection. Each variable showed excellent levels of validity and reliability, as shown by the statistical results in Table 1 below.

All constructs of psychological capital, entrepreneurial bricolage and entrepreneurial success demonstrated high levels of internal consistency and reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.731 and higher and composite reliability scores exceeding 0.830. All of the AVE values were over 0.5, the VIFs were below 3, and the robust CVI was above 0.5, indicating strong discriminant and convergent validity free from multicollinearity issues.

These results meant that the scale items in the instrument were both reliable and valid for data collection using the instrument, as indicated in Table 4.

3.8. Data management and analysis

Analysis and management of data done through screening to check for instrument usability, after which data were entered in SPSS 23 and AMOS for analysis. In this instance, we used descriptive statistical analysis to assess for the degree and pattern of missingness (Hair et al., 2017). The research looked at the missingness pattern to see if the data were absent entirely and at random. The statistical results of

Table 5. Pearson (r) correlations.

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3
Psychological Capital-1	5.029	0.493	1.000		
Entrepreneurial Bricolage-2	5.006	0.595	0.692**	1.000	
Entrepreneurial Success-3	4.923	0.551	0.624**	0.695**	1.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
M:mean; SD:standard deviations.

Source(s): *Primary data*

the Little MCAR test are as follows: $\chi^2=18063.886$, $df = 15,152$, $Sig.=0.062$. The MCAR test significance value fell below the permissible range for corrective action because it was less than $p < 0.05$. They were replaced using imputation methods including; series means, regression and expectation maximization as recommended by Hair et al. (2021). Additionally, we verified that the data met the requirements for the parametric tests of data independence, homogeneity of variance, linearity, and normality (Hair et al., 2021).

3.9. Pearson (r) correlations

The following were the study variables' means (M) and standard deviations (SD): psychological capital (M=5.098, SD =0.700); entrepreneurial bricolage (M=5.006, SD = 0.595); entrepreneurial success (M=4.923, SD = 0.551).

To determine whether there are correlations between the study variables at the 0.01 level, as suggested by the literature review, the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed in the post-pilot research. The correlation results (Table 5 below) indicate a significant positive relationship between Psychological Capital and Entrepreneurial Success ($r = 0.624^{**}$). This implies that, a positive change in psychological capital leads to a positive change in entrepreneurial success among the micro entrepreneurs, the results also indicate a significant positive relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage ($r = 0.692^{**}$). This implies that, a positive change in psychological capital leads to a positive change in entrepreneurial bricolage among the micro entrepreneurs. Finally, the findings indicate a strong positive correlation between entrepreneurial bricolage and entrepreneurial success ($r = 0.695^{**}$). This suggests that a favorable shift in entrepreneurial bricolage causes microentrepreneurs' entrepreneurial success to improve as well.

4. Results

The results of this study present a comprehensive picture of the role psychological capital plays in entrepreneurial outcomes, both directly and indirectly. Psychological capital, encompassing self-efficacy, optimism, hope, resilience, and trust, emerged as a crucial psychological resource for micro entrepreneurs. The significant positive relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success ($\beta = 0.211$, $t=3.035$, $p < 0.05$) underscores its direct contribution to achieving business goals and sustaining ventures among microentrepreneurs in Uganda.

More strikingly, psychological capital was found to be a powerful predictor of entrepreneurial bricolage ($\beta = 0.690$, $t=24.190$, $p < 0.05$), a process through which micro entrepreneurs creatively recombine limited internal and external resources to address challenges and seize opportunities. This suggests that psychologically resourceful microentrepreneurs are not only more resilient and goal-driven but also more adept at improvisation and innovation among microentrepreneurs in Uganda.

In turn, entrepreneurial bricolage significantly contributed to entrepreneurial success ($\beta = 0.535$, $t=8.884$, $p < 0.05$), reinforcing the idea that the ability to creatively leverage internal and external resources is a key driver of business performance among microentrepreneurs in Uganda.

Importantly, the study confirmed a mediating role of entrepreneurial bricolage in the relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success ($\beta = 0.369$, $t=8.298$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that part of the influence of psychological capital on success is channeled through enhancing capacity for resourcefulness and innovation among micro entrepreneurs in Uganda.

Table 6. Results of the structural equations model.

<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Direct effects</i>	β	STDEV	T statistics	<i>p values</i>	95% bias corrected CI
H ₁	PC → ES	0.221	0.067	3.313	0.001	0.091, 0.351
H ₂	PC → EB	0.690	0.029	24.191	0.000	0.624, 0.737
H ₃	EB → ES	0.544	0.059	9.234	0.000	0.420, 0.650
	Indirect Effects					
H ₄	PC → EB → ES	0.375	0.044	8.619	0.000	0.278, 0.457
	Direct Effects					
H ₁	PC → ES	0.596	0.040	15.021	0.000	0.509, 0.666
H ₂	PC → EB	0.690	0.029	24.191	0.000	0.624, 0.737
H ₃	EB → ES	0.544	0.059	9.234	0.000	0.420, 0.650

Source(s): Primary data.

Abbreviations: ES: entrepreneurial success; EB: entrepreneurial bricolage; PC: psychological capital.

Together, these findings support all proposed hypotheses (H1 through H4), offering a nuanced understanding of how psychological strengths translate into entrepreneurial success. They highlight not only the direct impact of psychological capital but also the mechanisms, like entrepreneurial bricolage, through which this influence unfolds. This insight can inform both entrepreneurial training programs and psychological interventions aimed at fostering more adaptive and resourceful micro entrepreneurs in Uganda. This is illustrated in Table 6 below.

After the measurement model had been developed, the suggested links between the constructs were illustrated using structural equation modeling (SEM). A complete bootstrapping method with 353 samples, a significance threshold set at 5% ($\beta=0.05$) and a two-tailed test were employed to assess the significance level through t-statistics for all paths and indirect impacts within the SEM framework (Hair et al., 2021). To understand the variation across all variables, the R² values for endogenous latent components were calculated. according to Hair et al. (2021), depending on the research context, R² values of 0.26, 0.13, and 0.09 indicate significant, moderate, and low variability, respectively. The direct effect of the model in the present study indicated that entrepreneurial bricolage had R² value of .476, implying that 47.6% of the change in entrepreneurial bricolage was explained by psychological capital dimensions. Similarly, entrepreneurial success had R² value of .510, implying that 51.0% of the change in entrepreneurial success was explained by psychological capital dimensions. Therefore, we can suggest that the model exhibited high predictive accuracy, as illustrated in Figure 2.

5. Discussion

The findings indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success ($\beta = 0.221$, $t=3.313$, $p < 0.05$). Psychological capital, which includes self-efficacy, optimism, hope, trust and resilience, plays a critical role in enabling microentrepreneurs to succeed in Uganda's often challenging business environment. These psychological strengths are likely to help entrepreneurs pursue their business goals with persistence and confidence, despite facing widespread obstacles such as limited access to finance, fluctuating customer demand, and poor infrastructure. For example, hope, which reflects a person's ability to set meaningful goals and develop pathways to achieve them, enables microentrepreneurs to plan for business growth even in uncertain conditions. A tailor in Kampala's local market, for instance, may not have formal business training or stable access to capital, but her hope allows her to envision expanding her customer base and take steps toward acquiring a second sewing machine.

Self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to accomplish tasks, gives microentrepreneurs the confidence to try new approaches and persist in problem-solving. A mechanic running a roadside garage in Kawempe might learn how to market services on WhatsApp or invest in basic diagnostic tools, trusting his ability to master new skills and improve service delivery.

Conversely, optimism, the general expectation that positive outcomes can occur, empowers microentrepreneurs to take calculated risks. A food vendor in Nakawa may continue investing in her mobile kitchen cart, believing that increased foot traffic and word-of-mouth will eventually lead to higher sales, even after a temporary downturn in business.

Resilience, the capacity to recover from adversity, is especially vital in Uganda's informal economy, where income shocks and external disruptions are common. A small-scale soap producer in Makindye

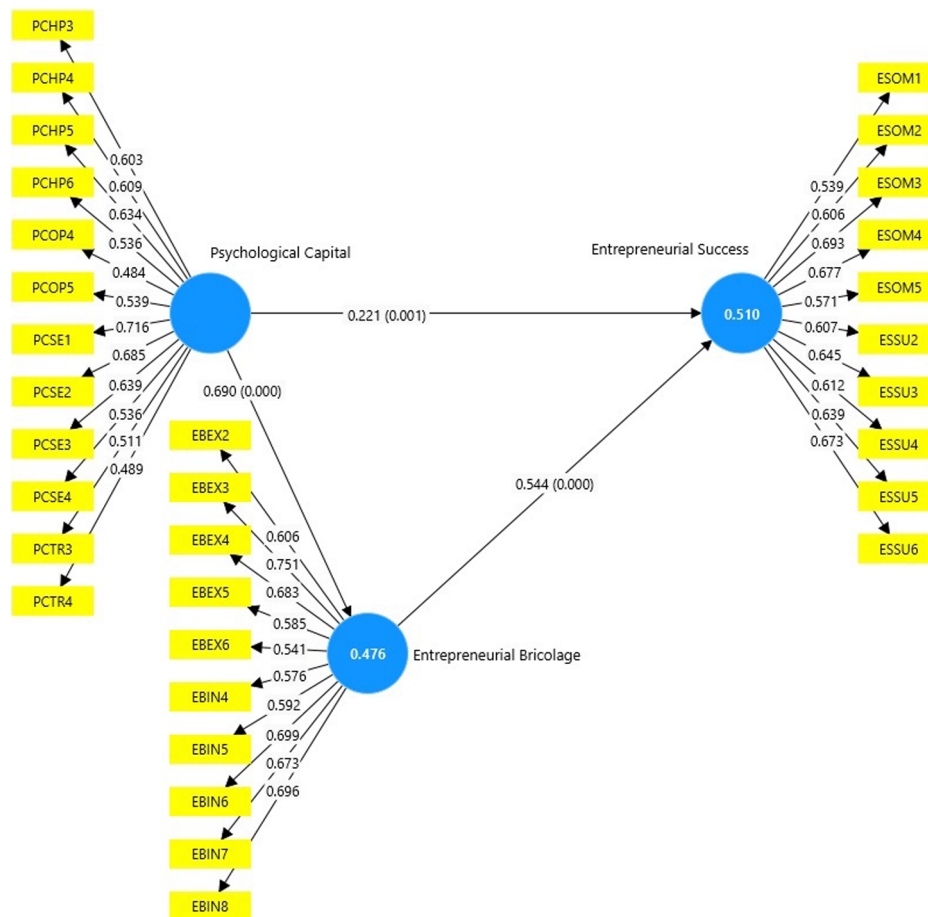


Figure 2. Path analysis diagram for psychological capital, entrepreneurial bricolage, and entrepreneurial success.

who loses a major customer due to market closure may quickly shift to door-to-door sales or form partnerships with local kiosks, showing her ability to bounce back and remain operational.

Collectively, these elements of psychological capital enhance microentrepreneur's ability to navigate setbacks, pursue opportunities, and achieve measurable business success, such as increased profits, product diversification, and expanded customer reach. In Uganda, where many microenterprises support not only the entrepreneur but also extended families, psychological capital is not only a personal asset; it is a driver of economic stability and community development.

Empirical studies support the findings. Ephrem et al. (2021); Baluku et al. (2018) revealed that psychological capital dimensions have a direct positive correlation with entrepreneurial success. As the business develops, these aspects of psychological capital enable the entrepreneur to overcome any obstacle. Psychological capital can improve metrics of entrepreneurial success that

In addition, results indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage ($\beta = 0.690$, $t = 24.191$, $p < 0.05$), underscoring the important role of internal strengths and mindset in enhancing entrepreneurial adaptability and innovation. Microentrepreneurs who are mentally strong, confident in their ability to solve problems, and able to stay focused on their goals are more likely to adapt creatively when faced with limited resources or difficult circumstances.

In Uganda's often challenging business environment marked by limited access to capital, formal education, and infrastructure such internal strengths help microentrepreneurs make the most of what they have. This ability to 'make do' by using existing resources in new and practical ways is known as entrepreneurial bricolage. For example, a business owner in Katwe slum, Kampala may collect discarded electronic parts to repair and build low-cost devices, showing determination and problem-solving skills even without external support.

A local baker who lacks access to modern baking equipment might modify household tools and rely on firewood, staying motivated by the belief that customer satisfaction and product quality will help the business grow. Others may depend on strong community ties, using informal arrangements to access ingredients, tools, or labor through mutual support and shared trust. In such contexts, entrepreneurs who believe in their ability to overcome obstacles and act resourcefully are more likely to keep going despite setbacks like market disruptions or unreliable suppliers. Their mindset allows them to keep innovating, find creative solutions, and build successful businesses even when formal help is unavailable. This shows that psychological strength is a key driver of creative problem-solving and long-term business success among microentrepreneurs in Uganda.

In this study, Kariri and Radwan (2023); Digan et al. (2019) support that successful micro entrepreneurs must be able to adapt by making do with limited resources and maintain self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism in the face of social, market, and institutional hurdles. The successful application of entrepreneurial bricolage behavior by micro entrepreneurs allows them to have psychological capital to better handle market uncertainties, survival challenges and even grow despite of resource constraints (Xiaoyu & Xinchun, 2021).

Furthermore, results reveal a positive and statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurial bricolage and entrepreneurial success ($\beta = 0.544$, $t=9.234$, $p < 0.05$). This means that the micro entrepreneur's resourcefulness is important in driving business success. This finding suggests that micro-entrepreneurs who are adept at creatively mobilizing and utilizing both internal and external resources are more likely to achieve business success, particularly in resource-constrained environments such as those commonly found in Uganda.

In contexts where access to formal financing, infrastructure, and technical support are limited or inconsistent, entrepreneurial bricolage offers a practical and effective strategy. Micro-entrepreneurs who draw on their prior life experiences, technical knowledge, informal education, and even seemingly obsolete or low-cost tools are often able to generate innovative solutions that meet local market needs. Additionally, those who leverage external resources such as informal networks, customer feedback, local market insights, and small-scale financing are better positioned to adapt to emerging challenges and seize new opportunities.

This form of creative problem-solving often translates into measurable business growth, including expanding product and service offerings, increasing sales, acquiring new assets, boosting profits, and enhancing personal income. Such progress is frequently driven by a growing customer base, which serves both as an indicator of entrepreneurial success and a catalyst for continued development. For example, entrepreneurs who repurpose discarded materials to produce low-cost household goods, or those who refine their services based on customer feedback, tend to outperform peers who depend solely on traditional business practices or external interventions.

The results are in line with the works of (Sendawula et al., 2023; Mayanja et al., 2019) who suggest that social networks provide a number of critical resources, including financial resources, specialized skills, and knowledge that help microentrepreneurs to survive and succeed in a complex environment than their counterparts.

Furthermore, in the context of Ugandan microenterprises, the results indicate that entrepreneurial bricolage partially mediates the relationship between psychological capital and entrepreneurial success ($\beta = 0.375$, $t=8.619$, $p < 0.05$). This finding provides key insight into the mechanism through which internal psychological strengths are translated into tangible business outcomes. Specifically, it suggests that microentrepreneurs with high levels of psychological capital, marked by strong internal motivation, confidence, perseverance, and a future-oriented mindset are more inclined to engage in creative strategic utilization of internal and external resources, which subsequently enhances their business success.

Entrepreneurial bricolage serves as the linking process between mindset and outcome. Microentrepreneurs who blend their internal strengths with external inputs such as technical skills, lived experiences, and informal networks can more effectively navigate challenges and respond to market demands. For example, a self-driven entrepreneur in Kampala might recognize an unmet community need, creatively repurpose locally available materials, and consult with peers or mentors to shape a viable product or service. This practical application of both personal and external resources often leads to

expanded offerings, increased customer engagement, and improved financial performance, including higher sales, profits, and business asset growth.

Additionally, microentrepreneurs who set clear business goals and take initiative in aligning their actions with long-term strategies are more likely to realize personal and financial fulfillment through their enterprises. In Uganda's largely informal and uncertain business environment where formal planning structures are often absent this capacity to strategically act on internal motivation using available resources is a significant differentiator of success.

The partial mediation observed in the analysis confirms that psychological capital alone is not sufficient; it must be activated through entrepreneurial bricolage a process of mixing and utilizing both internal capabilities and external resources to generate innovative solutions. This highlights the importance of nurturing not only psychological readiness in micro entrepreneurs but also their ability to think strategically, adapt creatively, and maximize the utility of what is readily available. As such, entrepreneurship support programs in Uganda should integrate components that build both mindset and practical problem-solving skills, fostering a more dynamic and resilient microenterprise sector across urban and rural contexts alike.

The results are justified by Gao et al. (2020) who suggest that psychological capital offers necessary psychological resources to the microentrepreneur to pursue new opportunities in the absence of significant resource and skill constraints. Gray et al. (2020) argue that these psychological resources are beneficial for self-promotion, personal improvement, and the expansion of business performance. The micro entrepreneur's ability to run a business with very limited resources is a true indicator of psychological capital (Digan et al., 2019), creating a sense of optimism, hope, efficacy, trust, and resilience by the entrepreneur (Rahman et al., 2020).

6. Conclusion

The study confirms that both psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage are key drivers of entrepreneurial success among micro-entrepreneurs in Uganda. While psychological capital directly contributes to business success, entrepreneurial bricolage partially mediates this relationship by enhancing the entrepreneur's ability to creatively utilize available resources. This highlights the importance of building both internal psychological strengths and practical resourcefulness to overcome challenges and seize opportunities. As such, entrepreneurship support programs should focus on developing both mindset and strategic capabilities to promote the growth and sustainability of microenterprises.

7. Study implications

7.1. Theoretical implications

The results extend the application of Entrepreneurial Bricolage Theory (Baker & Nelson, 2005) to explain micro entrepreneurial success. The findings show how micro entrepreneurs can leverage limited resources, both internal and external, by combining them with psychological resources to exploit opportunities. Entrepreneurial Bricolage Theory was used to explore how psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage predict success among micro entrepreneurs in Uganda. The study found that both psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage are positively and significantly related to entrepreneurial success

7.2. Practical implications

Micro entrepreneurs should develop soft skills to effectively utilize both internal resources (such as personal experience, expertise, and unused tools) and external resources (like market knowledge, customer insights, networks, and financial support) to create an environment that enables them to seize business opportunities.

Given that children are the future micro entrepreneurs, parents should embrace the role of informal coaches, mentors, and counselors. By fostering self-discovery, parents can help children build psychological capital, enabling them to effectively combine internal resources (such as personal strengths, experiences, and skills) with external resources (like networks, knowledge, and support) to achieve both

business and personal goals. This guidance equips children with the mindset and tools needed for future entrepreneurial success.

7.3. Policy implications

Policy makers should consider implementing a tiered taxation system where micro entrepreneurs are taxed based on their resources and turnover, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. This would enable entrepreneurs with limited resources to focus more on innovation and resource utilization without the burden of complex tax regulations.

Government agencies should establish and promote effective initiatives, such as training programs, mentorship, and organizational support, to help microentrepreneurs develop psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage. By integrating these skills into business management practices, the government can enhance entrepreneurial success. These efforts are vital in creating a supportive ecosystem and fostering a positive entrepreneurial culture that drives long-term economic growth.

Governments should fund mentoring programs in schools, colleges, and workplaces to help micro-entrepreneurs develop psychological capital and entrepreneurial bricolage. These soft skills are vital for the success, survival, and growth of microenterprises.

8. Limitations

This study focused on microentrepreneurs in Kampala district in Uganda, a developing economy as we used cross-sectional survey where cause-and-effect linkages cannot be determined, and longitudinal changes in entrepreneurial success as a result of internal and external resources, psychological capital dimensions (hope, optimism, resilience, self-efficacy, trust) may yield different results due to cultural and regional differences. Consequently, care should be exercised while implementing the study's conclusions, especially when considering geographical contrasts.

9. Future research

The study's cross-sectional survey methodology has been criticized for its speculative claims regarding causality. To better understand how micro-entrepreneurs contribute to entrepreneurial bricolage in relation to psychological capital and entrepreneurial success, experimental and longitudinal methods are needed to assess these effects over time. Additionally, when comparing psychological capital to entrepreneurial bricolage and success, it is important to evaluate each component of psychological capital (hope, optimism, resilience, self-efficacy, trust) separately, rather than treating it as a general concept.

Ethical approval

This study, part of my PhD research on 'Entrepreneurial Success Among Micro Entrepreneurs in Uganda' for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Business Management at Ndejje University, received ethical approvals from the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST), Mengo Hospital Research Ethics Committee (MHREC), and the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), which facilitated data collection. Verbal informed consent was obtained from all participants after they were fully briefed on the study's purpose and objectives. To ensure accurate responses, the researcher designed the questionnaire in simplified English to avoid confusion or misinterpretation.

Author contributions

CRediT: **David. Iga:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing; **Samuel Ssekajja Mayanja:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Writing – review & editing; **Jotham M. Byarugaba:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Writing – review & editing.

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About the authors

This paper is part of my PhD work and the listed co-authors are my PhD supervisors.

Iga David contributed to the conceptualization, design, data collection, data analysis, and drafting of the paper.

Samuel Ssekajja Mayanja contributed to the conceptualization, design, data analysis, reviewing of this work, and final approval of the version for submission.

Jotham M. Byarugaba contributed to the conceptualization, design, data analysis, reviewing of this work, and final approval of the version for submission.

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Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, [Iga David], upon reasonable request.

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