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## **Article**

Refining the definition and typologies of entrepreneurship in Africa: A systematic review

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Systematic Review

# Refining the Definition and Typologies of Entrepreneurship in Africa: A Systematic Review

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Abstract: This paper aims to describe a highly pervasive and under-reported context-specific phenomenon of entrepreneurship, specifically in light of the rise in different types of entrepreneurial activities in Africa. Explicably, this paper accepts that entrepreneurship typologies are different across the globe. Utilising the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA), a total of 1230 articles were discovered from Scopus, Web of Science, and ProQuest databases. Subsequently, a screening for suitability was conducted, resulting in the exclusion of 1200 articles based on criteria such as publication year, jurisdiction, and abstract review. Ultimately, 30 journal articles were imported into Zotero Reference Manager and Atlas for further examination. This study found that a state of entrepreneurship mishap exists in Africa. The utilisation of a uniform approach in supporting entrepreneurs is identified as another challenge. Lastly, this study introduces nine novel entrepreneur typologies: Lifepreneurs, Part-timers, Hobbypreneurs, Entremployees, Empreneurs, Techpreneurs, Carte-blanche, Profeneurs, and Smartpreneurs. These typologies serve as a conceptual framework for categorising various entrepreneurial initiatives based on a true reflection of the African entrepreneurial ecosystem, attributes, and key success factors. Theoretically, our paper fills a gap in the academic literature regarding the study of entrepreneurship in developing countries and its classifications. Practically, this paper could offer African policymakers a blueprint for supporting startups at a local level. Significantly, this work stands out for providing a classification system that captures the authentic nature of entrepreneurial undertakings within African economies.

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship; entrepreneurial typologies; systematic review; entrepreneurial classification; typology matrix



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## 1. Introduction

Contemporary trends and developments in African economic policies are increasingly emphasising entrepreneurial activities in a bid to redress the socio-economic gaps that were created by the colonial system. With shrinking job markets, the belief is that entrepreneurial activities will provide much-needed employment (Kuada 2022; Letuka and Lebambo 2022; Morris et al. 2015; Rogerson 2001). Despite extensive governmental initiatives aimed at fostering entrepreneurship in African countries, a noticeable disparity persists between the creation of policies and their actual execution (Kobia and Sikalieh 2010; Rogerson 2001, 2017). Particularly concerning is the absence of established criteria within the African context for defining, elucidating, and evaluating entrepreneurial activities, as such a variety of definitions of the term "entrepreneurship" have been proffered by modern authors (Audretsch and Thurik 2001; Diandra and Azmy 2020; Gutterman 2020; Prince et al. 2021; Tripathi 2023). As such, within most academic research pursuits, scholars in the field of entrepreneurship often delve into the exploration of subsequent inquiries, the definition and unique characteristics of entrepreneurship and the specific factors that differentiate

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entrepreneurship from other strategies utilised by various countries to enhance economic development.

Numerous authors have neglected to tackle these dual inquiries, with this study deeming them as the primary focal points of investigation. This paper also acknowledges background information on the definitions of the term "entrepreneurship" and a discussion of the perspectives of pioneers who dealt with this subject (Dollinger 2008; Moos 2014; Timmons et al. 2004). Common among the definitions is the aspect of creativity and innovation as evidenced in almost every definition offered in the literature (e.g., entrepreneurship may be viewed as what happens at the node of history and technology (Casson 2005). Such a history explains other perspectives on entrepreneurship that are reflected in some of the definitions. Some authors codify language and knowledge, which describes the standard of technical knowledge. Closely linked to creativity and innovation are all the untapped opportunities that entrepreneurs exploit. Therefore, as postulated in more recent literature, entrepreneurship constitutes several factors, which include investments in new information, an increase in the technology opportunity set, and the ability for prospective entrepreneurs to gaze into the future (Audretsch and Thurik 2001; Tripathi 2023).

An examination of various scholarly peer-reviewed articles, reports, and conference proceedings ranging from 2000 to June 2024 was conducted using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) framework (Kraus et al. 2022). PRISMA, a transparent and rigorous systematic review method, offered a structured framework for the current systematic review, ensuring a thorough exploration of African entrepreneurship studies (Athikarisamy and Patole 2021; Malhotra 2024). Drawing on evidence from Scopus, ProQuest, and Science Direct, this study highlights the absence of a universally accepted definition and the failure to characterise entrepreneurship as key gaps in the existing literature that necessitates further investigation. It is also important to understand that each business category in Africa is associated with distinct and predictable patterns of entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour. Nevertheless, a key challenge for entrepreneurial typologies in Africa lies in the objective assignment of entrepreneurial ventures into conceptually distinct categories. This paper, therefore, argues that the lack of a clear conceptualisation of entrepreneurial classification in Africa necessitates the reconsideration of entrepreneurial typologies and a redefinition of entrepreneurship as a potential solution to this problem, typically involving the empirical construction of entrepreneurial categories.

Therefore, by adhering to PRISMA guidelines, this review utilises existing literature to delve into the entrepreneurial landscape, with the aim of redefining and reclassifying entrepreneurship within the African context. The subsequent sections of this review paper are organised as follows: firstly, the literature review section with an examination of research trends in the field of entrepreneurship, which is followed by a discussion on different entrepreneurship typologies and the African entrepreneurial environment. Secondly, the distinctive methodology employed in this paper for studying entrepreneurship is outlined, including details on aspects such as the search for articles, criteria for selection, assessment of bias risk in studies, and the process of data extraction and synthesis. Furthermore, the main findings are discussed as metadata findings, conceptual findings, and thematic findings. Subsequently, an analysis of the proposed conceptual model derived from the results is provided. Ultimately, this review paper is concluded with a summary of findings and implications for future research.

#### 2. Literature Review

The literature is examined and deliberated upon in three delineated sections: (1) trends in entrepreneurship research, (2) entrepreneurial typologies, and (3) the African entrepreneurial environment.

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## 2.1. Trends in Entrepreneurship Research

The past decades entrepreneurial profiles and classifications have been inconsistent and uncommon. An entrepreneur, dating back to 1700 (Cantillon 1755), has been defined and characterised differently. Notably, the following deductions are drawn after an analysis of various definitions and attributes of entrepreneurship, revealing a lack of consensus in the academic literature. This discrepancy in defining the term "entrepreneurship" has led to misconceptions and inconsistencies, particularly in the identification of suitable samples for research purposes. Moreover, there is a persistent ambiguity surrounding the definition of an entrepreneur, with the literature failing to provide a clear and unified understanding. As a result, the concept of entrepreneurship remains inadequately defined in scholarly discourse, often leaving it open to interpretation.

Clearly, this situation does not provide any direction for either policymakers or researchers, hence the need to answer the question of who entrepreneurs are. Again, background information on the various meanings of the term entrepreneur, together with a discussion on the views of pioneers who dealt with this subject, forms the main contents of this section. A variety of qualities of the term "entrepreneur", which dates to 1700, can be described. The most crucial point to make is that the subsequent generation of entrepreneurship researchers has been greatly influenced by Schumpeter's initial ideas on entrepreneurial potential and risk-taking. Schumpeter posited that entrepreneurs play a critical role in fostering innovation through their novel concepts and business initiatives, thus making substantial contributions to economic advancement. Within Schumpeter's framework, entrepreneurs are placed at the nucleus of the capitalist structure, continuously questioning the existing state of affairs and seeking dominant market positions, hence propelling transformative changes and economic growth. Years later, in 1920 and 1950, respectively, Penrose (2009) stated that the entrepreneur is someone who converts uncertainty into a quantifiable risk. Considering the characteristics and definitional aspects during this period, entrepreneurship was simply defined as the process and desire of an entrepreneur to carry out new combinations.

More recently, investigations of "how", "by whom", and "with what" consequences chances to produce future products and services are found, assessed, and taken advantage of have been characterised as the research field of entrepreneurship (Calabro et al. 2022; Chakuzira 2019; Lebambo and Shambare 2017). Chakuzira and Shambare (2021) provide an inclusive definition of the entrepreneur, which has gained increasing acceptance, in terms of "by whom". They described an entrepreneur as someone who spots a business opportunity acquires resources and expands an enterprise to fill the resulting demands. He or she assumes the venture's risk and is compensated with profit if it is successful (Dhliwayo et al. 2017). The entrepreneur, therefore, embodies a set of distinct characteristics, notably encompassing innovativeness, which pertains to the capacity to identify and capitalise on unexplored opportunities. More importantly, the entrepreneur operates within a volatile environment, introducing new products, selecting a location, deciding on resource allocation, managing the operations of the business, and participating in competitive dynamics within the market. Clearly, the interconnectedness of all these characteristics is evident within the confines of the definition of an entrepreneur.

Consequently, entrepreneurship in this era can be defined as the emergency and growth of new businesses and the process that causes change in the economic system through innovations of individuals who respond to opportunities in the market. Calabro et al. (2022) describe an entrepreneur as an individual who realises a window of opportunity and pursues it. This is a person who is energetic, opportunity-driven, resourceful and has a different imagination, which he applies to set up a business. Entrepreneurs are individuals who analyse the market environment and set up innovative ideas, considering the risks associated with starting a business and their primary goal is to make a profit and create wealth. Akin et al. (2017) emphasised that these individuals have independent-explicit resources that expedite the identification of innovative opportunities in addition to the collection of capital for the business venture. Entrepreneurship plays a critical role in improving the

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Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of nations across the globe, Africa included (Islam 2020). As such, a positive correlation between entrepreneurship and extensive growth, as gauged by GDP escalation, underscores the pivotal significance of entrepreneurship in propelling economic expansion. It can be inferred that entrepreneurship serves as a stimulant for economic progress through the facilitation of novelty, employment generation, and the commercial exploitation of novel concepts, hence assuming a critical role in moulding a nation's GDP trajectory. Understandably, entrepreneurship may currently be defined as a process of producing something new and valuable while investing the necessary time and effort, incurring the associated financial, psychological, and social risks, and reaping the financial and personal gains that follow. Table 1 describes some of the definitions of entrepreneurship from different scholars.

**Table 1.** Definitions of Entrepreneurship.

Reference	Definition	
Timmons et al. (2004)	Entrepreneurship entails a cognitive approach, logical reasoning, and proactive behaviour that is fixated on identifying opportunities, adopts a comprehensive perspective, and maintains a balance between leadership qualities with the aim of generating and seizing value.	
Frederick and Foley (2006)	Entrepreneurship is a mechanism for fostering innovation and establishing new ventures across four key dimensions—individual, organisational, environmental, and procedural—which are supported by collaborative networks involving governmental bodies, educational institutions, and various organisations.	
Venter et al. (2008)	Entrepreneurship is a progression that involves formulating ideas, structuring, launching, and, through innovative means, nurturing a business opportunity into a potentially thriving venture in a challenging and unpredictable setting.	
Kearney et al. (2010)	Entrepreneurship is the process of generating something novel with inherent value by dedicating the required time and effort, assuming associated financial, psychological, and social risks and uncertainties, and reaping the ensuing benefits of monetary gains and personal fulfilment.	
Barringer (2012)	Entrepreneurship is a journey where individuals actively pursue opportunities without being constrained by the resources currently at their disposal.	
Nieuwenhuizen (2009)	Entrepreneurship entails the emergence and expansion of new enterprises, as well as a transformative process within the economic framework driven by innovative individuals who capitalise on market opportunities.	
Dalhoum and Jarboui (2016)	Entrepreneurship serves as a bridge between scientific knowledge and market demands, giving rise to fresh enterprises and products while embracing diverse disciplines and methodologies that foster innovation and market penetration.	
Rosemaro (2022)	Entrepreneurship is the implementation of inventive business concepts, risk management, and profit maximisation, involving a committed team that supports individuals in transforming novel ideas into profitable ventures through thorough market analysis and innovative strategies.	
Neck et al. (2023)	Entrepreneurship entails creativity, innovation, risk-taking, and social influence, encompassing traits like agility, resilience, promptness, adaptability, and vigour, in conjunction with the IDEA framework: Innovation, Development, Enthusiasm, and Action.	
Priyadi and Mulyani (2024)	Entrepreneurship is the process of developing fresh, innovative, and valuable products or enterprises, which necessitates resource optimisation, risk mitigation, and the embodiment of attributes such as dedication, creativity, and persistence.	

Entrepreneurship, as delineated in Table 1, is characterised by a myriad of essential traits including unwavering commitment, ingenuity, novelty, autonomy, persistence, receptiveness to new ideas, aspiration for accomplishment, practicality, capacity for handling uncertainty, forward-thinking, willingness to tackle challenges, propensity for risk-taking, and intrinsic control (Priyadi and Mulyani 2024; Shuaibu et al. 2021). This concept is further expounded upon by Rosemaro (2022), who characterises entrepreneurship as the activities involved in generating innovative and valuable goods or enterprises, embodying qualities such as strong dedication, creativity, and persistence. It is noteworthy that entrepreneur-

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ship not only plays a role in bolstering economic advancement but also fosters personal contentment, growth, the equilibrium between work and personal life, and self-governance. Consequently, in the context of African nations, it is imperative for individuals to grasp and internalise these entrepreneurial attributes in order to prosper in the ever-evolving and demanding realm of entrepreneurship, thereby propelling innovation, fostering job opportunities, and advancing societal development. Following brief discussions of different definitional characteristics of an entrepreneur and a multiplicity of definitions to describe entrepreneurship, this paper shifts its focus to a brief review of existing typologies and entrepreneurial typologies.

## 2.2. Entrepreneurial Typologies

There is a discussion regarding the criteria that form the basis of entrepreneur typologies, although it is somewhat limited. The classical perspective (1960–1980) defines the entrepreneur by the type of business endorsed by Smith (1967), who introduced the concepts of "craftsman-entrepreneur" and "opportunist entrepreneur". During the same era, preliminary research by Collins and Moore (1970) also identified two categories of entrepreneurs: the "administrative entrepreneur" and the "independent entrepreneur". Figure 1 illustrates the evolution of entrepreneurial typologies.

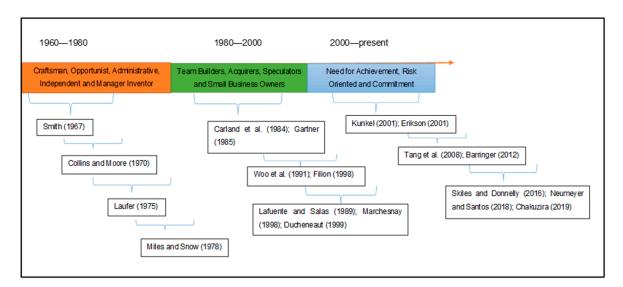


Figure 1. History of Typologies in Entrepreneurship. Smith (1967); Collins and Moore (1970); Laufer (1975); Miles and Snow (1978); Gartner (1985); Carland et al. (1984); Woo et al. (1991); Filion (1998); Lafuente and Salas (1989); Marchesnay (1998); Ducheneaut (1999); Kunkel (2001); Erikson (2001); Tang et al. (2008); Barringer (2012); Skiles and Donnelly (2016); Neumeyer and Santos (2018); Chakuzira (2019).

The categorisations of craftsman and administrative entrepreneurs primarily focus on historical and present aspects, exhibiting low levels of certainty and adaptability (Allen 2016). This stands in contrast to opportunist and independent entrepreneurs who demonstrate more sophistication with a significant degree of adaptability and a forward-looking approach. This implies that opportunistic and independent entrepreneurs are better positioned for innovation and are more likely to achieve substantial sales growth. Consequently, classifications focus on both the entrepreneur and the organisation. Laufer (1975) and Miles and Snow (1978) argue that the entrepreneur shapes the organisation as the means for innovation, leading to the emergence of the "manager inventor", "growth-oriented entrepreneur", "prospector", "follower", "innovator", and the "reactor". Therefore, the relationship between entrepreneurs and innovation is a key aspect of a typology put forth by Miles and Snow (1978), where classifications are influenced by the behaviour of entrepreneurs and the nature of innovation they introduce.

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It is worth noting that overarching classifications of entrepreneurs in numerous African nations are delineated based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to business scale, size of the workforce, entrepreneurial competencies, and motivational factors, all of which are visually represented in Figure 2. Within the context of this current academic discourse, it is posited that the quantitative methodologies elucidated in Figure 2 may lack explicit typologies and definitions pertaining to entrepreneurship, instead primarily offering a metric for categorising businesses operating within the African entrepreneurial landscape. Notably, Figure 2 visually portrays two overarching categories within which an entrepreneurial venture in Africa may be situated.

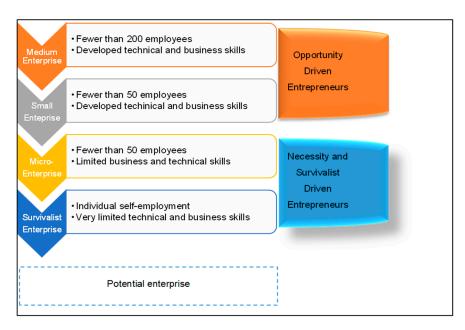


Figure 2. Classifications of Entrepreneurs in Africa. Source: Chakuzira (2019).

The initial classification category in Figure 2 encompasses a spectrum of entrepreneurial activities ranging from potential survivalist enterprises to micro-enterprises, as expounded upon by Bignotti and Myres (2022), typically operating outside the formal economic structures and often marginalised by governmental entities due to perceived constraints on scalability, as highlighted by Chakuzira (2019). Conversely, the second overarching category comprises enterprises of varying sizes including very small, small, and medium enterprises that are integrated within the formal economy, often being the recipients of government funding and support. Governmental interventions predominantly target this category, which is perceived to possess the potential for sustained growth and purposeful advancement, as asserted by Kunkel (2001).

An alternate viewpoint is rooted in entrepreneurial attributes, proposing diverse entrepreneurial typologies such as "team builders", "solo self-employed individuals", "acquirers", "speculators", "independent innovators", and "small business owner-manager" (Carland et al. 1988; Gartner 1985; Lafuente and Salas 1989). Moreover, in recent literature, various authors have linked their classifications to three fundamental entrepreneurial traits: the drive for achievement, risk-taking propensity, and commitment (Bignotti and Myres 2022; Rogerson 2017). Consequently, contemporary scholars have categorised entrepreneurs into multiple clusters, encompassing small business entrepreneurship, scalable startup entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, large company entrepreneurship, imitative entrepreneurship, innovative entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, digital entrepreneurship, and immigrant entrepreneurship, as defined in Table 2.

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**Table 2.** Some Typology Definitions.

Typology	Definition	References	Study Context
Small business entrepreneurship	Small business entrepreneurship is characterised by individuals establishing and managing businesses primarily for profit and growth, contributing significantly to economic development and job creation.	Ibaydullaevna (2024); Spremo and Mićić (2015); Yallapragada and Bhuiyan (2011)	USA, Uzbekistan, and Spain
Scalable startup entrepreneurship	Scalable startup entrepreneurship is characterised by the ability of innovative technological start-ups to quickly and significantly profit while contributing to technological and economic growth.	Picken (2017); Susilo (2020)	USA and Emerging Economies
Intrapreneurship	Intrapreneurship is described as a strategic approach within organisations that promotes innovation by effectively utilising employees. It involves motivating employees to produce and cultivate new ideas, resulting in the development of new competencies, products, and businesses.	Almeida and Miguel-Oliveira (2022); Ashal et al. (2023)	Portugal and USA
Large company entrepreneurship	Large company entrepreneurship, also referred to as corporate entrepreneurship (CE), encompasses a range of behaviours and strategies within established large firms that promote innovation, proactiveness, corporate venturing, and risk-taking to improve firm performance.	Ambad and Wahab (2013); Paunović (2012)	Malaysia and Serbia
Imitative entrepreneurship	Imitative entrepreneurship pertains to the duplication of successful business models, products, processes, and technologies from other enterprises to attain a competitive advantage.	Johansson (2010); Samuelsson and Davidsson (2009)	USA
Innovative and digital entrepreneurship	Innovative and digital entrepreneurship involves identifying and exploiting entrepreneurial prospects utilising digital tools and technologies, propelling advancements and processes while adjusting to the evolving dynamics of the global information sphere.	Kravchenko et al. (2015); Sahut et al. (2021)	USA and Russia
Social entrepreneurship	Social entrepreneurship is distinguished by its emphasis on accomplishing socially advantageous objectives while tackling significant societal issues through creative and sustainable resolutions. This field merges entrepreneurial fundamentals with a dedication to generating favourable and fair social influence, often giving precedence to social outcomes over financial profits.	Dzomonda (2020); Manyaka (2015); Manyaka-Boshielo (2017); Rivera-Santos et al. (2015); Urban (2008)	South Africa, Zimbabwe and Sub-Saharan Africa
Immigrant entrepreneurship	Immigrant entrepreneurship is defined by the active participation of migrants in establishing, overseeing, and expanding businesses in the countries they have migrated to.	Chodavadia et al. (2024); Ramos-Escobar et al. (2022)	USA and Various context

From Table 2, it is crucial to comprehend that small business entrepreneurship commonly functions with limited resources and a streamlined corporate framework, encountering obstacles such as insufficient financial resources and managerial expertise (Ibaydullaevna 2024; Susilo 2020). Conversely, Picken (2017) associates scalable startup entrepreneurship with rapid growth, innovative products, and groundbreaking technologies, aiming to achieve scalability and undertake significant investment risks. Across various nations, including those in Africa, both small business and scalable entrepreneurship

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make significant contributions to local economic advancement. Scalable startups attract investments, generate employment opportunities, and bolster GDP per capita, while small enterprises play a pivotal role in propelling economic growth in emerging markets. As posited by Almeida and Miguel-Oliveira (2022), intrapreneurship and large-company entrepreneurship share the common aspect of integrating entrepreneurial activities within established entities. While intrapreneurship directs its focus on recognising and capitalising on opportunities at an operational level, large company entrepreneurship underscores entrepreneurial conduct at a strategic level (Ashal et al. 2023; Ambad and Wahab 2013). Notably, imitative entrepreneurship involves duplicating prevailing successful business models or concepts, a phenomenon frequently observed in startups that emulate established enterprises (see Table 2).

Table 2 further emphasises the common focus on leveraging innovation and technology to drive positive change and address societal challenges among innovative entrepreneurship, digital entrepreneurship, and social entrepreneurship (Sahut et al. 2021; Rivera-Santos et al. 2015; Urban 2008). The three types of entrepreneurship all embrace innovation and change, with social entrepreneurship uniquely concentrating on achieving social good, while innovative and digital entrepreneurship primarily target business growth and technological advancement. The typologies presented in Table 2 are considered enduring analytical frameworks in entrepreneurship, drawing their theoretical foundation from the notion that entrepreneurial ventures can be systematically categorised. Each business category is associated with distinct and predictable patterns of entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour. Nevertheless, a key challenge for typologies lies in the objective assignment of entrepreneurial ventures into conceptually distinct categories. This paper argues that the lack of a clear conceptualisation of entrepreneurial classification necessitates the consideration of entrepreneurial typologies as a potential solution to this classification problem, typically involving the empirical construction of entrepreneurial categories.

## 2.3. The African Entrepreneurial Environment

Remarkably, Africa is composed of 54 nations, with 46 of them categorised as sub-Saharan, excluding countries such as Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, and Tunisia (Adu-Appiah and Amankwah 2024; Onwe et al. 2024; Wu and Yan 2023). A significant portion of the sub-Saharan African countries exhibit poverty rates exceeding 35% (Igwe et al. 2018). Notably, despite difficulties in both regions, the entrepreneurial environment in sub-Saharan Africa seems to be predominantly shaped by a blend of economic, political, and social elements, distinguishing it from North Africa (Onwe et al. 2024). Consequently, numerous nations in sub-Saharan Africa have strategically emphasised entrepreneurship as a remedy for the complex challenges known as the triple threats, namely unemployment, poverty, and inequality (Endris and Kassegn 2022; Igwe et al. 2018; Tilt et al. 2021). For instance, in the early 1990s, countries like South Africa and Zimbabwe incorporated a range of crucial elements in their entrepreneurial policies aimed at fostering economic growth and creating job opportunities (Gunhidzirai 2024; Meyer and Meyer 2019).

Paradoxically, despite policy initiatives like Zimbabwe's Indigenisation Policy (Chivasa 2014) and South Africa's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) (Singer et al. 2015), the anticipated surge in African entrepreneurship for these countries did not materialise, leading to persistently high levels of unemployment and poverty. What is even more concerning is the absence of established criteria within these African countries to define, elucidate, and quantify entrepreneurial activities. Consequently, most African nations resort to adopting international entrepreneurship policies and standards, which often do not fully align with the African context. In essence, these policies overlook the lived experiences and actual challenges encountered by entrepreneurs in South Africa, underscoring the necessity to redefine and reevaluate the concept of entrepreneurship in Africa.

Moreover, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), donors, agencies, and governmental bodies have significant roles in influencing the entrepreneurial ecosystem in

Africa through their financial contributions and supportive measures (Dlamini and Schutte 2020; Meyer and Meyer 2019; Musabayana and Mutambara 2022). The implementation of governmental regulations, such as tax breaks and financial aid schemes, has been crucial in promoting entrepreneurial activities (Muzurura 2019). Furthermore, Bomani et al. (2015) and Munyawarara's (2021) research highlight the significance of professional background, educational qualifications of founders, and strategies for international collaborations in impacting the funding levels for startups in Zimbabwe, thus emphasising the influence of various stakeholders on the ecosystem. The study also demonstrates how informal entrepreneurial partnerships, exemplified by "Stokvels" prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa, can affect entrepreneurial processes within an ecosystem, indicating the diverse factors influencing entrepreneurship in different regions. Consequently, the entrepreneurial landscape in Africa is shaped by a combination of governmental policies, donor contributions, agency programs, and informal establishments, underscoring the complex nature of ecosystem development and the necessity to redefine entrepreneurship.

The informal sector in African entrepreneurship holds a significant position in African economies, as noted by Bakengela Shamba and Gasse (2019). Various contextual factors, such as corruption, political instability, and infrastructure, exert influence on this sector. The intricate nature of the informal entrepreneurial ecosystem necessitates consideration of ecological resilience and the various components that make up the entrepreneurship ecosystem (Igwe and Ochinanwata 2022). For example, the current economic landscape in Zimbabwe is characterised by a lack of creativity and innovation, a prevalence of the informal sector, high levels of youth unemployment, and a population grappling with poverty. Despite substantial investments in entrepreneurial support infrastructure, the country continues to face significant challenges such as high unemployment rates and increasing levels of poverty, as highlighted by Bomani et al. (2015) and Chivasa (2014). This situation raises questions about how entrepreneurship has been a driving force behind the economic success of Southeast Asia and Western nations, while its impact in Africa appears to be comparatively limited. It is worth noting that African countries have often adopted policies from their former colonisers, which has hindered their ability to harness the entrepreneurial boom, underscoring the importance of conducting a contextual study to redefine the dynamics of African entrepreneurship.

This disparity in governmental policies across African nations, directing interventions and resources primarily towards a specific subset of entrepreneurs while potentially neglecting the other cohort, underscores a crucial policy conundrum. It is imperative to acknowledge that the absence of a standardised metric for gauging the potential expansion capabilities among entrepreneurs, coupled with the diverse array of motives underpinning the establishment of start-ups, renders it unreasonable for governmental bodies to disproportionately favour one group of entrepreneurs over another. This disparity underscores a prevalent theme of policy incongruity evident in many African countries, indicative of a fundamental lack of comprehension regarding the intricacies of local entrepreneurial ecosystems.

#### 3. Research Methods

This systematic review is presented following the guidelines laid out in the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) statement (refer to Supplementary Material S1). The methodology for this review was formulated following the PRISMA checklist, which is an extended checklist delineating reporting guidelines for individual items and the updated flow charts for both original and revised reviews.

### 3.1. Rationale for Selected Approach

From the preceding section, one might argue that there has been little empirical validation of current entrepreneurial typologies, and there is conflict about the best taxonomy to describe entrepreneurs in Africa. This situation, in this paper, was addressed by a combination of methodical examination of literature, known as systematic literature review (SLR) and

the inductive content analysis method (Bruder and Baar 2024). The two methods involve a profound scrutiny of the essence of contemporary literature that defines and classifies entrepreneurship. By employing a systematic review approach, the haphazard selection of publications is averted, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the academic and practical works related to the entrepreneurship concept as well as entrepreneurship typologies. The identification of articles for inclusion in the review was carried out through a meticulously structured multi-stage process, adhering to the established guidelines of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) statement. This process yielded a total of 1230 articles from scholarly and professional periodicals, as well as governmental reports, spanning the years 2000 to June 2024. Subsequently the selection of articles, a thorough scrutiny and classification of their contents was conducted to ascertain pertinent definitions, practical implications, and recurring themes. The succeeding section elucidates the procedural steps adopted by this review paper, delineating the number of articles chosen and excluded at each phase of the process, in conjunction with the set criteria for selection. A subsequent segment expounds on the coding methodology employed to standardise and categorise the information encapsulated in the selected articles.

### 3.2. The Article Search and Selection Strategy

The authors selected the first set of potential articles by performing a keyword search for academic articles in SCOPUS, Web of Science, and ProQuest. The key search words used were "entrepreneurship typologies", ["entrepreneurship" AND "typologies"], "defining entrepreneurship", and ["defining AND "entrepreneurship"] for the academic databases. The time frame chosen was from 2000 to June 2024, when the concept of entrepreneurship typologies and defining entrepreneurship provided contemporary issues domineering the two concepts. The first search step on these three databases using the search words yielded the results in Table 3.

Table 3. Databases for article selection.

	Web of Science	Scopus	ProQuest
URL	https://www.webofscience.com/, accessed on 29 March 2024	https://www.scopus.com/, accessed on 29 March 2024	https://www.proquest.com/, accessed on 29 March 2024
Search Term 1	(TS=("entrepreneurship")) AND TS=("typologies") and ALL=("entrepreneurship typologies")	TITLE-ABS- KEY("entrepreneurship" AND "Typologies") and TITLE-ABS-KEY("entrepreneurship Typologies")	summary/title("entrepreneurship") AND summary/title("Typologies") and summary/title("entrepreneurship Typologies")
Number of Results	126	474	166
Search Term 2	(TS=("defining")) AND TS=("entrepreneurship") and ALL=("defining entrepreneurship")	TITLE-ABS-KEY("defining AND entrepreneurship") and TITLE-ABS-KEY("defining entrepreneurship")	summary/title("Defining") AND summary/title("entrepreneurship") and Summary/title("Defining entrepreneurship")
Number of Results	29	19	86
Search Terms 3	(TS=("definition")) AND TS=("entrepreneur") and ALL=("definition entrepreneur")	TITLE-ABS-KEY("definition entrepreneur") and TITLE-ABS-KEY("definition AND entrepreneur")	title("definition") AND title("entrepreneur") and Summary/title("definition entrepreneur")
Number of Results	227	21	82
Total Results	382	514	334

The keyword-based search for "entrepreneurship typologies", ["entrepreneurship" AND "typologies"] returned 474 results in SCOPUS, 166 in ProQuest, and 126 in Web of Science. The different number of results between the databases may be explained by the different sets of journals being available in each database and/or using a different search

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engine in each database. The search for "defining entrepreneurship" and ["defining AND "entrepreneurship"] returned 19 results in SCOPUS, 86 in ProQuest, and 29 in Web of Science. Lastly, the search for "definition entrepreneur" ["definition AND entrepreneurship"] returned 21 results in SCOPUS, 82 in ProQuest, and 227 in Web of Science. Thus, the preliminary search yielded a total result of 1230.

Upon completion of a thorough search of extensive databases, numerous articles in the respective field that were published prior to the year 2000 were deemed unsuitable for inclusion. Subsequently, out of the initial corpus comprising 945 articles, a total of 790 articles were eliminated as the research focus shifted specifically to Africa. Additionally, all instances of article duplication were identified and removed, resulting in the exclusion of 60 articles (refer to Figure 3). As a result, the remaining 95 articles were subjected to screening based on their titles and abstracts and were excluded if they met any of the predetermined exclusion criteria as shown in Table 4.

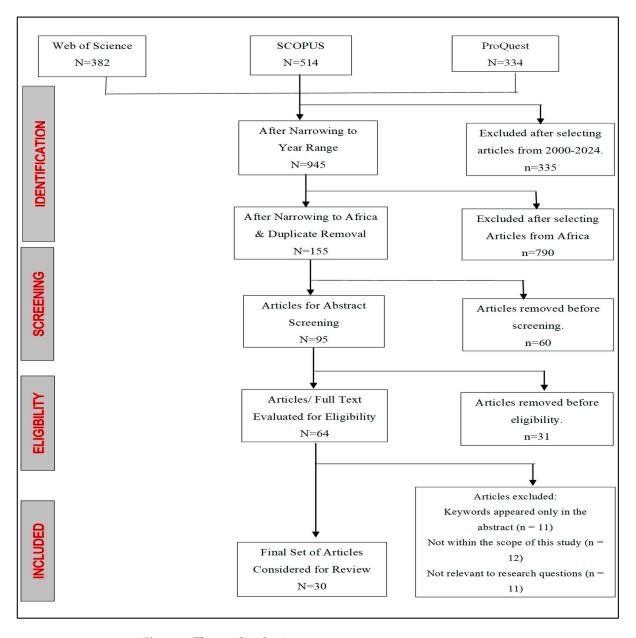


Figure 3. The article selection process.

Table 4. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	
	Exclude materials in non-acceptable formats (e.g., letters, master theses, entire books, lectures, course descriptions).	
Incorporate peer-reviewed publications discussing the specified research questions.	Eliminate instances of false positive (entrepreneurship): The term "entrepreneurship" should accurately represent entrepreneurship and its classifications.	
	Exclude false positive (typology): mentioned as a passing reference and does not encompass entrepreneurship studies	
	Exclude articles not written in English and disregarding topics that do not align with this study's scope.	

The process of abstract screening resulted in the exclusion of an additional 31 articles, thereby leaving 64 articles to undergo a comprehensive full-text review. During the conclusive phase of the selection process, a thorough reading of the articles was conducted. A further 34 articles were excluded after this reading, as their content did not directly align with the definitional characteristics and typologies of entrepreneurship. Subsequently, a final selection of 30 articles was chosen for detailed analysis and coding, facilitated by the utilisation of ATLAS.ti software v24.

#### 3.3. Data Extraction and Synthesis

Following the completion of the selection process, the 30 finalised articles were subjected to analysis in order to synthesise and extract information related to the methodologies used, the country of origin, the industry being studied, the specific themes explored, and the titles of the sources. The narrative synthesis approach was employed in this study to gather data concerning the research questions and to pinpoint emerging research themes within the literature. A narrative synthesis entails the delineation, juxtaposition, and amalgamation of findings across various studies into principal thematic domains through textual explication. From the final selection of articles, three different data types were analysed:

- 1. Metadata information—encompassing information regarding the data itself, such as the nature of the article (academic or practitioner), the year of publication, the utilised research methodology, the focus, and the scope of the article.
- Conceptual details—providing insights into key concepts and definitions utilised
  in entrepreneurship typologies and the expressed objective concerning African entrepreneurship (i.e., how can entrepreneurship be delineated and characterised within
  the African context).
- 3. Thematic data—highlighting the principal themes evident in the research articles concerning the factors influencing entrepreneurial success in Africa, the drivers, and hindrances of entrepreneurship in Africa, and the conclusions drawn by the authors regarding the utilisation of entrepreneurship as a catalyst for economic advancement in Africa.

Every article underwent coding in ATLAS.ti to standardise the information presented in the articles and to facilitate the detection of patterns in the literature. In total, ten attributes of the articles were encoded, aligning with the categories. The coding process was carried out by all authors, with cross-verification of the article coding for a subset of articles to ensure consistency in the interpretation of each category. Figure 4 provides a comprehensive coding procedure for the 30 articles identified in the review. The approach employed for article coding was content analysis, where inductive categorisations of the pertinent issues were developed, rather than applying predetermined concepts. The content analysis entailed an inductive, bottom-up identification of thematic categories. The researchers individually outlined and grouped descriptors extracted from the text into topics to generate

the categories. Subsequently, the researchers juxtaposed and amalgamated the resulting classifications into typologies, elucidated in the findings section.

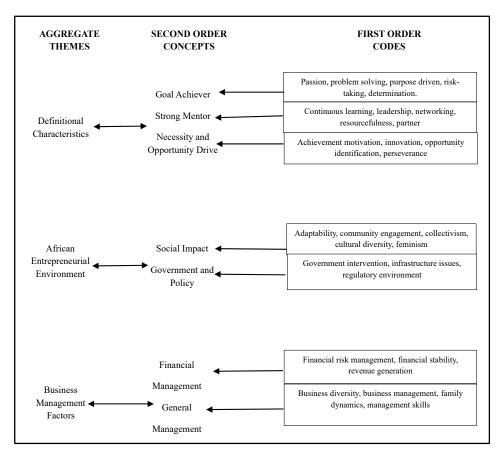


Figure 4. The Coding Procedure and data Structure.

## 4. Findings

The findings are discussed in two sections: (1) metadata findings—findings involving the data itself and (2) conceptual findings and thematic findings—entrepreneurship typologies in Africa.

## 4.1. Meta Data Findings

In the academic literature, various categories of outcomes have been delineated. Numerous scholarly works are dedicated to delineating the essence of entrepreneurship and providing theoretical insights into effective strategies aimed at enhancing entrepreneurial endeavours. An additional set of publications delves into specific case studies of entrepreneurial ventures and their consequences, primarily elucidating the key success factors and obstacles encountered by entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, the body of research scrutinising the impact of entrepreneurship in Africa and elucidating the prospects for policymakers to leverage entrepreneurship as a catalyst for economic advancement remains limited.

## 4.1.1. The Sequence of Research on Typologies and Definitions in Entrepreneurship

At this moment, the body of literature that delineates and categorises entrepreneurship in a localised manner is a recent addition to the entrepreneurship discourse, encompassing both practical applications and scholarly works. While a few publications addressing the definition and categorisation of entrepreneurship emerged between 2000 and June 2024, the defining attributes of entrepreneurship received minimal attention from scholars and decision-makers. Only in recent times has scholarly literature started to exhibit a growing body of research on the defining features and classifications of entrepreneurship,

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delineating novel initiatives, methodologies, and strategies to enhance entrepreneurship and its related classifications, while also examining localised obstacles in African nations. The chronology of articles examining entrepreneurship typologies and definitions in Africa is depicted in Figure 5.

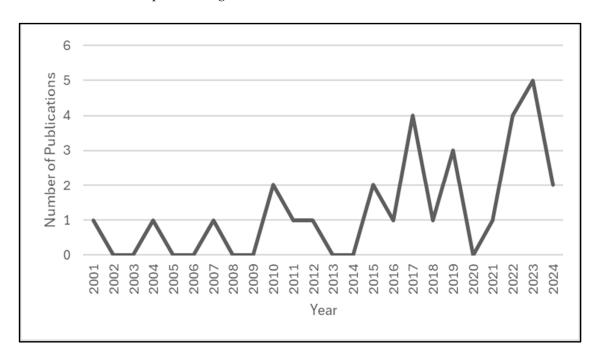


Figure 5. Publications on Entrepreneurship Typologies and Definitions in Africa.

The quantity of publications on entrepreneurship typologies has been steadily rising since 2015, underscoring the enduring and escalating importance of this concept within the field. Few publications were dedicated to the subject until 2010, resulting in the characterisation and definition of entrepreneurship literature being considered grey literature in the field of management. Between 2010 and 2015, some articles were published on the topic of entrepreneurship and its typologies; however, it was not until 2015 that the concept gained significant traction in Africa. Prior to the emergence of the so-called innovation turn, there was limited interest in entrepreneurship research among academic scholars focusing on innovation studies in Africa. Recently (from 2017–2024: Figure 5), both practitioners and academic scholars have increasingly produced a multitude of studies on the classification and conceptualisation of entrepreneurship in Africa. These studies describe novel, localised entrepreneurial processes and propose strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship in the African context. Hence, tackling the challenges related to funding and institutional support that African entrepreneurs encounter, as well as delving into the utilisation of cases and evidence-based practices in the development of entrepreneurship policies in Africa.

## 4.1.2. Research Genres of the Articles

The systematic review of the academic literature focused on encompassing the full range of research on African entrepreneurship. These academic articles are those that have undergone a rigorous peer review process before being published. Table 5 summarises the research genres of the articles.

**Table 5.** Research Genres of the Articles.

Cluster of the Papers	Core Papers	Title of the Papers
Definitional Concepts	Morris et al. (2015)	A portfolio perspective on entrepreneurship and economic development
	Letuka and Lebambo (2022)	A typology of challenges facing township micro-tour operators in Soweto, South Africa
	Bignotti and Myres (2022)	A typology of social entrepreneuring models continued: empirical evidence from South Africa
	Farhoud et al. (2023)	African perspectives on researching social entrepreneurship
	Halberstadt et al. (2024)	Cleaning the window of opportunity: Towards a typology of sustainability entrepreneurs
	Kobia and Sikalieh (2010)	Towards a search for the meaning of entrepreneurship
	Chakuzira and Shambare (2021)	Entremployees As a Type of Hybrid Entrepreneur: A Theoretical Explanation of how the Environment Shapes Entrepreneurs
Core Characteristics	Manyaka-Boshielo (2017)	Social entrepreneurship as a way of developing sustainable township economies
Core Characteristics	Urban (2011)	Social capital configurations for necessity-driven versus opportunity-driven entrepreneurs
	Lebambo and Shambare (2017)	The state of bed and breakfast establishments in rural South Africa
	Harbi et al. (2010)	Entrepreneurs and the environment: towards a typology of Tunisian ecopreneurs
A(: E :	Ibourk and Amaghouss (2016)	Entrepreneurial Activities and Level of Development in Morocco: Empirical Investigation from Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Data
African Entrepreneurial Environment	Kuada (2022)	Revisiting Entrepreneurship Development Policy Framework for Africa
	Rogerson (2004)	The impact of the South African government's SMME programmes: a ten-year review (1994–2003)
Business Success Factors	Elotmani and El Boury (2023)	Women's entrepreneurial success in Morocco: between transition and patriarchal resistance
	Constantinidis et al. (2019)	How families shape women's entrepreneurial success in Morocco: an intersectional study
	Piabuo et al. (2022)	Community forest enterprises (CFEs) as social enterprises: empirical evidence from Cameroon
	Ashaley-Nikoi and Abbey (2023)	Determinants of the level of informality amongst female street food vendors in sub-Saharan Africa: Evidence from two regions in Ghana
Business Challenges	Anderson and Mdemu Komba (2017)	Female entrepreneurs and poverty reduction: hair craft SMEs in Tanzania
	Amoah et al. (2023)	Reassessing the Inhibiting Factors of Entrepreneurship Development in the SME Segmen
	Bamfo (2012)	Exploring the challenges of small businesses in Ghana

Table 5. Cont.

Cluster of the Papers	Core Papers	Title of the Papers
Business Management Factors	Le Loarne–Lemaire et al. (2024)	Shaping entrepreneurial gender play: Intersubjectivity and performativity among female entrepreneurs
	Chipfupa and Wale (2018)	Farmer typology formulation accounting for psychological capital: Implications for on-farm entrepreneurial development
	El Hanchi and Kerzazi (2019)	A multidimensional framework for innovation typology: The case of Moroccan entrepreneurs
	Wamalwa et al. (2019)	Strategies of Kenyan firms: a case study of food processing firms in Nairobi

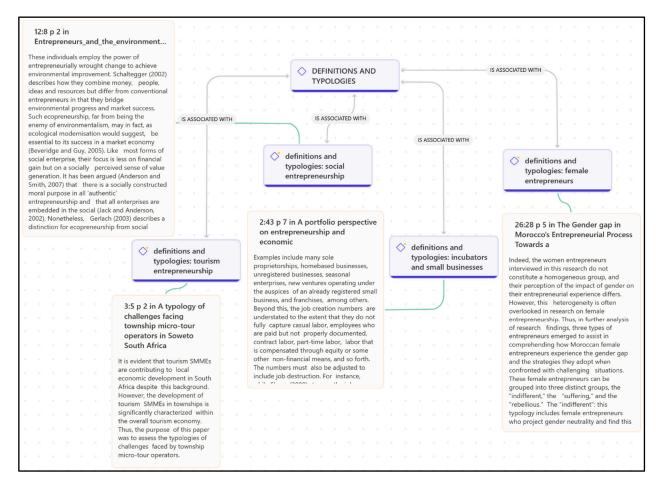
The 30 academic articles were published in various reputable outlets, such as the Academy of Entrepreneurship, Small Business Economics, African Journal of Science Technology, Innovation and Development, Africa Journal of Management, Social Enterprise Journal, African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship, International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business, South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences, African Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Journal of Contemporary African Studies, Development Southern Africa, Development and Practice, and African Journal of Economic and Management Studies. Moreover, within the existing body of literature, six distinct research clusters were identified. Essentially, each scholarly article would fall under one of the following categories: definitional concepts, core characteristics, the entrepreneurial landscape in Africa, factors contributing to business success, challenges encountered in business ventures, and factors affecting business management (refer to Table 4). It is worth noting that a significant majority of the 30 articles analysed in this study employed qualitative research methods. The absence of data-driven analysis and quantitative research approaches could potentially hinder the acceptance of these publications in reputable academic journals.

Among the clusters in Table 5, the theme that received the highest coverage was the exploration of definitional concepts and core characteristics of entrepreneurship in Africa. This suggests a strong emphasis on enhancing the precision of the definition and classifications of entrepreneurship in the African context. The depiction of the entrepreneurial environment emerged as the second most prevalent area of focus, addressing the persistent complexities of success determinants and obstacles encountered by entrepreneurs in Africa. Another commonly referenced theme pertained to factors related to business management, while certain subjects exhibited a more contemporary relevance, exemplified by the recent surge in attention towards the impact of COVID-19 on entrepreneurship literature since 2020.

## 4.2. Conceptual and Thematic Findings

Despite the significant growth in the literature in recent times, the analysed articles fail to comprehensively grasp the concept of entrepreneurship. Most definitions provided in these articles tend to focus on the purpose of the paper or provide contextual explanations. This issue is indicative of the field's lack of a unified definition or language pertaining to entrepreneurship. For example, in a study by Chakuzira and Shambare (2021), a new form of entrepreneurship called "Entremployee" was introduced, utilising demographic data, personal characteristics, behavioural trends, and entrepreneurial skills of the entrepreneur. In another study by Kobia and Sikalieh (2010), various approaches employed by researchers to define entrepreneurship were examined, with a specific emphasis on trait-based, behavioural, and opportunity-driven perspectives. Similarly, Bignotti and Myres (2022) addressed a specific call to define social entrepreneurship and conducted empirical research in this area. However, the methodologies utilised by these scholars in defining

entrepreneurship do not offer a comprehensive overview of entrepreneurship within the African context. This limitation often results in the absence of a universally accepted definition of entrepreneurship in Africa, consequently leading many African entrepreneurs to not identify themselves as such. Therefore, it is imperative for researchers and educators to provide a clear and holistic definition of entrepreneurship rather than solely focusing on individual aspects, such as the entrepreneur's behaviour or opportunity identification. The authors have chosen notably delineated entrepreneurs through the utilisation of four primary domains, specifically female entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, tourism entrepreneurship, and incubators and small businesses (Amoah et al. 2023; Harbi et al. 2010; Letuka and Lebambo 2022; Morris et al. 2015). A depiction of these areas is provided in Figure 6.



**Figure 6.** Depiction of Entrepreneurship Definition. Source: ATLAS.ti. (Schaltegger 2002; Beveridge and Guy 2005; Anderson and Smith 2007; Jack and Anderson 2002; Gerlach 2003).

In defining social entrepreneurship, Harbi et al. (2010) used entrepreneurial focus and entrepreneurial drive. Letuka and Lebambo (2022) acknowledged the economic benefits associated with tourism entrepreneurship as they endeavoured to establish a clear definition of tourism entrepreneurship. Morris et al. (2015) employed categories of entrepreneurs to elucidate incubators and small enterprises, whereas Amoah et al. (2023) underscored certain fundamental attributes of women in their elucidation of women's entrepreneurship, along with the experiences of women. (Refer to excerpts in Figure 6) Entrepreneurship is predominantly portrayed as context, behaviour, type, and experience-driven based on the definitions provided. The conceptualisation of entrepreneurship often lacks a detailed exploration of the actual business creation process. Recently, there has been a growing focus on examining the process through a behavioural intention lens (Bignotti and Myres 2022; Ibourk and Amaghouss 2016). This perspective highlights the involvement of various

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actors in entrepreneurship and their interconnectedness, emphasising the significance of behavioural intention. Entrepreneurship encompasses a range of actors, activities, artefacts, institutions, and relationships, including both complementary and substitute relations, crucial for business success. Therefore, when discussing entrepreneurship, it is essential to view it not as an individual effort but as a dynamic and emergent process shaped by multiple actors and their interactions. However, such a perspective remains uncommon in the existing literature. Acknowledging the challenges in conceptualising entrepreneurship, this manuscript will shift its focus towards an examination of the results pertaining to entrepreneurship defining features, the entrepreneurial landscape in Africa, and ultimately culminating in deliberations on a comprehensive framework for delineating and categorising entrepreneurship.

## 4.2.1. Definitional Characteristics of Entrepreneurship

From the foregoing sections, there is a call for definitions that are specifically directed towards entrepreneurs' character and environment. Such a definition reveals African entrepreneurship definitions given this study's contemporary entrepreneurial environment. When examining the defining characteristics of entrepreneurship, several authors in the chosen papers linked their categorisations to four fundamental entrepreneurial attributes, namely the following: (1) goal achiever, (2) inborn selflessness, (3) strong mentor, and (4) necessity and opportunity drive, as depicted in Figure 7.

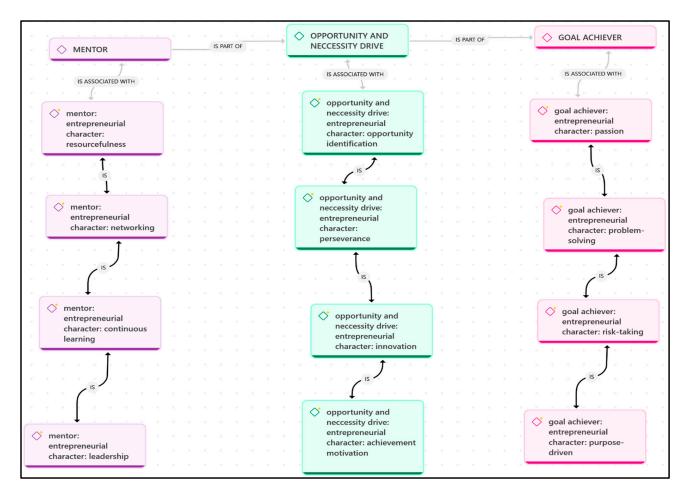


Figure 7. Depiction of Definitional Characteristics. Source: ATLAS.ti.

Morris et al. (2015, p. 716) posited the idea that entrepreneurs act as mentors and play a central role in facilitating ongoing learning. The authors expressed the following viewpoints:

"The entrepreneurial path is one of launching something new without much in the way of guidelines or a script, making misjudgements and errors, learning quickly, and adapting until a sustainable business model is realized, it is path filled with novel events."

As such, one way to characterise entrepreneurship in Africa is through the exploration of innovative domains, particularly in cases where the enterprise may exhibit lower levels of productivity at the outset (while prioritising education and advancement over setbacks), as opposed to persisting with established practices over an extended period. Entrepreneurs are further distinguished by their capacity to assume leadership positions; specifically, entrepreneurs are required to comprehend the various business stakeholders involved to inspire the principles that drive and encourage support from both internal and external stakeholders (Bignotti and Myres 2022). Other mentorship roles observed include networking and resourcefulness, the establishment of networks providing entrepreneurs with avenues to enhance their managerial skills, exchanging resources and best practices, engaging in collaborative research efforts, and gaining exposure to relevant funding opportunities (Farhoud et al. 2023; Urban 2011). It is also essential to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary support and resources to build their risk-taking capacity (Amoah et al. 2023).

Another way of characterising entrepreneurship is the entrepreneurs' necessity and opportunity drive. It is essential for entrepreneurs to possess qualities such as a drive for achievement, innovation, passion, and a constant ability to identify opportunities. According to Halberstadt et al. (2024), the fundamental aspect of any entrepreneurial endeavour lies in the identification of opportunities and the subsequent decision-making process to pursue them. Importantly, Morris et al. (2015) further noted that when one is concentrated on the generation of innovative ideas, it is probable that a number of setbacks must occur in order for a significant triumph to be achieved. Failures then act as catalysts for the acquisition of knowledge, the process of learning, adaptation, and the development of resilience; hence, entrepreneurs need to persevere and be passionate about their novel ideas.

Furthermore, it has been substantiated by data from the selected papers that entrepreneurs exhibit characteristics of goal attainment and possess inherent selflessness. Entrepreneurs are not only problem solvers and driven by purpose, but they also exhibit traits of risk-taking, altruism, ambition, empathy, self-awareness, and proactiveness. According to Amoah et al. (2023) and Kobia and Sikalieh (2010), entrepreneurs who are open to taking calculated risks are more inclined to capitalise on opportunities, foster innovation, and adapt to the evolving business landscape. Conversely, individuals with a limited capacity for risk-taking may encounter difficulties in surmounting challenges and might hesitate to invest in their entrepreneurial endeavours. Elotmani and El Boury (2023) emphasise the significance of altruism in entrepreneurship by defining women's entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial success as the capacity to support others by aiding them in overcoming obstacles or enhancing their well-being, thus contributing value and meaning to their lives. Consequently, entrepreneurs are adept at cultivating trust, nurturing loyalty, accessing resources, and deriving satisfaction from their work, thereby establishing businesses that are not only financially sustainable but also socially and ethically accountable. Whether pursuing profit-driven ventures or not, entrepreneurs consistently demonstrate a proclivity for achieving the goal which they set, as highlighted in the citation from Halberstadt et al. (2024, p. 6) and Kobia and Sikalieh (2010, p. 112) below:

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"Every activity I complete and every goal I reach gives me incredible satisfaction and keeps me going." This sense of fulfillment serves as a potent catalyst, nurturing resilience, fostering creativity, instilling a sense of purpose and ultimately leading to the sustained success of ventures led by women."

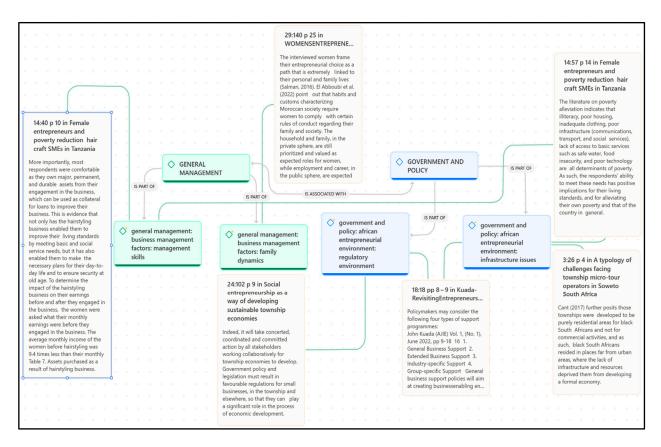
"Some of the sustainability entrepreneurs even strategically searched for a problem that appeared worth solving, and that they considered to be solvable. "I followed debates on the so-called SDGs, you know, and there I identified education as a field where I really could make a contribution, could make a difference" (I20). "I did research in the field of social entrepreneurship. And I traveled. I went to India for a while and got into contact with different social entrepreneurs before I discovered my task, what I wanted to do" (I06)."

Acknowledging the significance of all the distinctive entrepreneurship attributes outlined by scholars in the chosen literature review paper, the situation in Africa appears to deviate. It is apparent that start-ups in Africa are not yielding significant technological advancements or major innovations. Hence, policies in Africa that aim to promote entrepreneurship may be deemed as unsound public policy (Morris et al. 2015; Shane 2009). The key argument presented is that the number of start-up ventures driving substantial economic growth in Africa is currently limited. From the aforementioned characteristics, various typologies such as small business entrepreneurship, scalable startup entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, large company entrepreneurship, women's entrepreneurship, innovative entrepreneurship, hustler entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, and digital entrepreneurship are utilised for the classification and definition of entrepreneurship in Africa. Scholarly works dating back to the early 1960s are also acknowledged in the paper and were conducted in diverse settings by different researchers to establish a foundational comprehension of entrepreneurial typologies (Filley and Aldag 1978; Miner 2000; Smith 1967; Smith and Miner 1983). Yet, in striving to elucidate the characteristics and definition of entrepreneurship in Africa, this review paper delves into the rationale behind the perception of certain entrepreneurship promotion policies in Africa as inadequate public policies. It suggests the introduction of a new array of typologies that offer a comprehensive perspective of the entrepreneurial environment in Africa. Consequently, this paper emerges as a cornerstone for entrepreneurial taxonomies in Africa, with the ensuing section providing a succinct overview of the findings detailing the entrepreneurial landscape in Africa and several business management elements in the region.

## 4.2.2. African Entrepreneurial Environment and Business Management Factors

The final papers chosen in the refinement of definitions and typologies of African entrepreneurship demonstrated the significance of governmental policies and interventions aimed at fostering entrepreneurship. This was particularly noticeable in the findings related to the entrepreneurial landscape in Africa and factors related to business management. The issues surrounding infrastructure and business investments were central to these discussions. Letuka and Lebambo (2022), in their research focusing on the challenges encountered by micro-tour operators in Soweto, South Africa, highlight the distinctiveness of townships as unique environments facing specific challenges not seen in other regions of the country. Consequently, current efforts to improve townships in South Africa are proving to be ineffective due to existing infrastructure deficiencies, such as inadequate provision of essential services like clean water and proper roads and insufficient investment in ICT infrastructure to enhance business operations. Figure 8 depicts some of the results that emerged:

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**Figure 8.** Depiction of African Environment and Management Factors. Source: ATLAS.ti. (Salman 2016; El Abboubi et al. 2022; Cant 2017).

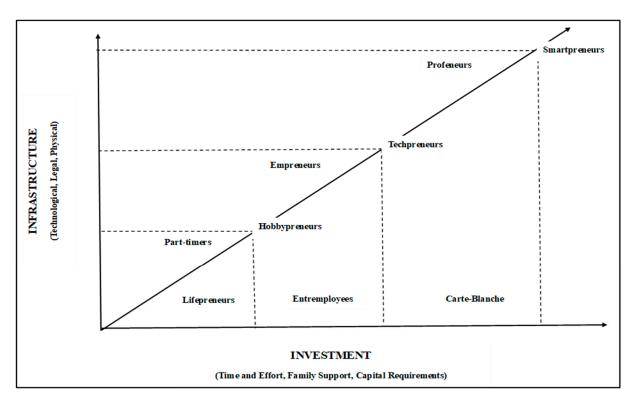
The selected paper pinpointed the kind of infrastructure needed by entrepreneurs when starting an entrepreneurial venture. From the papers, the type of infrastructure needed was so different across the spectrum of entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, a consistent need for technological, physical, and legal infrastructure emerged in the analysis of diverse papers (Anderson and Mdemu Komba 2017; Letuka and Lebambo 2022). In terms of investment, Anderson and Mdemu Komba (2017) and Manyaka-Boshielo (2017) attested to family support, time, expertise, and capital requirements as the key investment needs of African entrepreneurs. Thus, entrepreneurs in the African business landscape allocate resources such as financial and capital investments. Moreover, the decisions made by entrepreneurs regarding investments play a crucial role in initiating a business, including the allocation of time and expertise. For instance, African entrepreneurs need to engage in comprehensive market analysis to determine the various investment options at their disposal. As such, the current review paper employs a comprehensive methodology to categorise and define entrepreneurship. It utilises definitional attributes, infrastructure requirements, and investment necessities to develop an intricate framework of distinct typologies and descriptions of entrepreneurs, which will be further elaborated in the subsequent section.

#### 5. Discussions

Entrepreneurship is widely perceived as possessing the capacity to enact substantial economic transformation within the African States; nevertheless, an examination of the existing literature indicates that entrepreneurship is failing to fully realise this potential. Across numerous African states, entrepreneurial activities demonstrate inconsistent contributions to their respective economies while also grappling with prevalent conceptual ambiguity. The literature elucidates a noticeable prevalence in the utilisation of entrepreneurship as a mechanism to mitigate poverty and enhance economic conditions in African coun-

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tries. Nevertheless, a predominant occurrence of marginal economic enhancements, as opposed to transformative economic shifts, is noticeable in most African countries. Furthermore, there is a lack of consistency in the gathering and analysis of pertinent data regarding the performance of businesses, while the verification of innovation, originality, and value addition typically associated with entrepreneurship remains elusive. One of the primary issues highlighted in the literature pertains to the absence of consistency and agreement in relation to the defining characteristics and classification of entrepreneurship. The absence of a universally recognised definition poses a challenge in discerning the boundaries of entrepreneurship. Moreover, a comprehensive definition encompassing various entrepreneurial classifications is lacking, thus impeding the assessment of the role of entrepreneurship in African economies. Consequently, this study proposes a conceptual framework that outlines and categorises diverse entrepreneurs in Africa, as illustrated in Figure 9.



**Figure 9.** A framework to refine definitions and typologies of entrepreneurship.

This study then used the 30 selected papers to ascertain entrepreneurial activities in Africa. Consequently, this article proposes a variety of groupings and classifications for entrepreneurs in Africa. Subsequently, the analysis integrated the definitive characteristics and environmental aspects of African business, such as investment and infrastructure, to propose nine typologies of entrepreneurial endeavours that might be prevalent in Africa (see Figure 9). The nine types of entrepreneurs contained in the new taxonomy of entrepreneurial ventures in Africa plotted against infrastructure and investment as depicted in Figure 9 are (1) Lifepreneurs, (2) Part-timers, (3) Hobbypreneurs, (4) Entremployees, (5) Empreneurs, (6) Techpreneurs, (7) Carte-blanche, (8) Profeneurs, and (9) Smartpreneurs. As such, the nine types of entrepreneurs contained in this taxonomy of entrepreneurial ventures are briefly described next.

Lifepreneurs are individuals who engage in entrepreneurship driven by a desire
for self-employment. Their primary focus is on generating income, with minimal
resources, mainly time, being allocated to their ventures. Unlike traditional businesses
that aim for profit maximisation, Lifepreneurs do not typically pursue this objective.

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They often operate artisanal trades, like being handymen, plumbers, and carpenters, embodying leadership qualities geared towards accomplishing specific goals.

- Part-timers enter the business world to supplement their existing income. These
  entrepreneurs usually hold full-time jobs elsewhere, such as a university lecturer
  managing a student boarding house. Part-timers demonstrate entrepreneurial skills
  by identifying gaps in the market and leveraging their business and educational
  expertise to establish part-time ventures. Profit remains a key driver for this category
  of entrepreneurs.
- Hobbypreneurs, as the name suggests, are individuals who have transformed their
  hobbies into business endeavours. While profit is a motivating factor, their primary
  goal is to cover operational expenses and protect intellectual property rights. Hobbypreneurs tend to blur the lines between work and leisure, displaying a passion for
  their craft and a willingness to engage in it without monetary compensation. Examples
  include special types of social entrepreneurs from the selected papers who fall into the
  hobbypreneur category.
- Entremployees are mostly found in developing nations where individuals engage in both full-time employment and entrepreneurship concurrently. In contrast to developed countries, where individuals typically pursue one career path at a time, the rise of hybrid entrepreneurs is notable in developing economies. Entremployees manage their businesses alongside their primary jobs, utilising their employers' resources like office space, telephones, and computers for personal ventures. This group often offers professional services, such as accounting, language editing, and consulting, with a significant presence in government and public sector organisations. The distinction between Entremployees and Part-timers lies in the former's active involvement in their business operations during regular working hours at their primary workplace. Entrepreneurs exhibit a tendency to leverage their employers' resources, such as office space, telephones, or computers, for their personal business endeavours. The Entrepremployee sector encompasses professional services like accounting, language editing, and consultancy. Within this sector, most individuals are situated in government agencies or public sector establishments.
- Empreneurs are the entrepreneurs sitting right at the centre of the matrix depicted in Figure 9. (Empreneurs are the changeover point for most entrepreneurs. Those operating businesses below this level tend to be small and micro ventures. And beginning from the Empreneurs, the type of business moves more towards medium-sized enterprises.) Empreneurs have four distinguishing characteristics: (1) They are full-time entrepreneurs, and (2) they started their business careers as entrepreneurs. (3) Their businesses grew to levels requiring their full-time attention. (4) Empreneurs operate businesses within the same industry as their previous employment, such as a mechanic opening an automotive repair shop.
- Techpreneurs represent a distinct category of business enterprises that combine technology with family support. The entrepreneur falling under this classification possesses extensive technical knowledge but encounters obstacles related to securing capital resources.
- Carte-blanche demands a substantial amount of financial investment for its establishment. This financial input must be accompanied by the procurement of tangible infrastructure. Many franchise businesses align with this description, thus earning the classification title of Carte-blanche.
- Profeneurs encompass a group of specialised entrepreneurs who navigate through numerous legislative frameworks and require significant capital for their entrepreneurial pursuits. Individuals falling into this category typically engage in large capital procurements and are experts in providing classic services.
- Smartpreneurs constitute a category of businesses that heavily rely on capital, predominantly within the high-tech sectors. These enterprises commonly originate as medium-scale ventures with the potential to expand into large-scale operations. Gener-

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ally, Smartpreneurs are characterised by ambitious and strategic personalities. Notable examples of Smartpreneurs include Econet by Strive Masiyiwa and Sephako by Aliko Dangote, with the individuals themselves often possessing high intellect and charisma.

Despite the variety of traits outlined in these nine typologies, a universally recognised definition of an entrepreneur remains elusive, with scholarly works presenting various criteria, including creativity, innovation, and personal attributes like behaviour and style. Moreover, the challenge in Africa lies in the insufficient comprehension of entrepreneurial dynamics, leading to a significant undermining of entrepreneurship by policymakers. As a result of their lack of knowledge and information, local African entrepreneurs are often subjected to a one-size-fits-all policy implementation. Given these discrepancies, the proposed refined typologies in Figure 9 offer policymakers, entrepreneurs, and scholars a framework for understanding entrepreneurial activities in Africa. Scholars can utilise these refined typologies to elucidate entrepreneurial dynamics in an African context and rectify misconceptions put forth by earlier authors in the field of entrepreneurship.

The nine proposed typologies, when equipped with adequate support and suitable strategies in a timely manner, have the potential to significantly impact entrepreneurial activities in Africa. This impact could be crucial in terms of poverty alleviation and economic growth, as it fosters an environment conducive to development. Previous literature discussions have underscored the positive influence of entrepreneurship on poverty reduction, economic growth, and the overall entrepreneurial landscape in Africa (Chivasa 2014; Gunhidzirai 2024; Onwe et al. 2024; Rogerson 2017). Thus, entrepreneurship can not only generate job opportunities but also spur innovation, boost productivity, and contribute to sustainable economic progress. The nine typologies put forth can assist governments and policymakers in recognising the diverse cultural contexts that impact various essential entrepreneurial elements. Factors such as cultural norms, social connections, attitudes towards risk and failure, regulatory frameworks, and incentives for entrepreneurship development may be linked to different types of entrepreneurs like Lifepreneurs, Part-timers, and Hobbypreneurs. Therefore, providing the necessary support to the right entrepreneurs is crucial as they have a significant influence on the outcomes of entrepreneurial activities in Africa

Furthermore, entrepreneurship's role in alleviating poverty in emerging African countries is significant, as it works to reduce income disparities, improve capabilities, and provide informational advantages to the impoverished population. The existing literature has already highlighted how entrepreneurship can help decrease income inequality among African societies, underscoring the need to create a conducive environment for economic advancement (Akin et al. 2017; Igwe and Ochinanwata 2022; Susilo 2020; Urban 2008). Consequently, entrepreneurship plays a key role in enhancing capabilities through avenues like education, skill development, and facilitating access to financial and market resources, thereby fostering entrepreneurship growth and ultimately leading to sustainable poverty reduction in African communities. Moreover, establishing a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem in Africa, tapping into external expertise, and fostering collaborative relationships between local and global entrepreneurs are crucial elements for poverty alleviation on the continent.

As such, efficient entrepreneurial approaches aimed at poverty reduction in developing nations necessitate a comprehensive strategy. Initially, this involves stimulating economic progress and enacting institutional changes to boost efficiency and optimise resource utilisation by providing adequate resources tailored to each typology within the proposed model. Additionally, leveraging informational entrepreneurship, like systematic search within constraints and developing typology models as depicted in Figure 9, can equip African entrepreneurs with effective interventions, thereby creating competitive advantages and ensuring long-term advancements in poverty alleviation. Thus, by integrating these strategies, a holistic and enduring framework can be established to address poverty in African countries.

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#### 6. Conclusions

From the chosen articles, the primary challenge faced by African governments in promoting entrepreneurship across various emerging categories is predominantly twofold: firstly, the absence of a coherent classification system for entrepreneurial endeavours and secondly, the lack of explicit strategies for implementing existing policies. The delineation of nine typologies in Figure 9 now presents a well-defined framework of entrepreneur profiles in Africa that could potentially inform the implementation strategies of entrepreneurship policies in African nations. This framework represents a comprehensive array of local entrepreneurial initiatives that could be initiated across diverse African regions. Additionally, the proposed nine typologies offer insights into the entrepreneurial requirements associated with each category of entrepreneurial activities within the depicted venture classifications. Consequently, it is recommended in this paper that governments utilise these nine typologies in policy formulation, particularly in identifying the specific entrepreneurial needs of individual entrepreneurs, addressing classification challenges (moving away from quantitative classification methods such as the SMMEs classification, which may not align with entrepreneurs' needs), and grasping the nuances of local entrepreneurial dynamics (transitioning from a uniform understanding of entrepreneurs to utilising the suggested nine typologies as the foundation for characterising entrepreneurial profiles in Africa).

The concept of entrepreneurship constitutes an exciting proposition for entrepreneurs who are willing to increase their level of innovativeness through interactions between internal innovations. Nevertheless, the concept of entrepreneurship to date still lacks universal definition. In light of this, the current attempt is to uncover interesting and crucial characteristics of the definition of entrepreneurship in the South African context. These crucial characteristics have significant implications for policymakers and business owners, as they provide an approach to guide the implementation of entrepreneurship practices for businesses and insight into how some interconnected practices contribute to the sustainable performance of businesses in the context of developing countries. This study suggests several critical factors that drive the entrepreneur to start up an entrepreneurial venture. All the same, this is despite the fact that there are factors that are not within the entrepreneur's control, such as entrepreneurial success factors and entrepreneurial challenges, which this study established. Notably, several entrepreneurs in Africa are faced with a plethora of challenges, and as such, the current study attempts to address the gap by advancing the adoption of the suggested nine typologies as the key success factor of the grey areas of entrepreneurship research in Africa.

There are unquestionably certain limitations present in this review of the literature. Initially, it fails to encompass the entire range of scholarly publications within the fields of management, marketing, and entrepreneurship due to its reliance on a selection of journals chosen according to specific criteria. Secondly, the temporal scope is confined to the period spanning from 2000 to June 2024. This restriction was mitigated by this paper's endeavour to establish connections between the current literature and relevant contributions that were published before 2001. Like all systematic literature reviews, the present study utilised a methodical approach to consolidating research on the typologies of African entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, achieving a thorough coverage of pertinent literature proved to be difficult, as certain development journals, where insights on African entrepreneurship are explored, were not included in this study. Furthermore, the current review was based solely on published literature, potentially overlooking valuable insights from grey literature sources like editorial pieces and newspapers. While these sources offer diverse perspectives, they are often constrained by limited accessibility and depth of information. This manuscript advocates for additional research on entrepreneurial typologies in Africa. To begin with, in-depth research should empirically examine the proposed nine entrepreneurial typologies across various African nations. Additionally, in-depth research elucidating how these nine typologies could support the development of entrepreneurship policies in a particular country is imperative as well.

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