

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

ASSESSING THE SOCIAL AND BUSINESS IMPACTS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS AT ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS, DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)·

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Declaration

I, Mekdes Dagnachew, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for any degree or award in any other institution· It has been prepared under the guidance of my advisor, Asres Abitie, PhD, and reflects my own research and understanding of the topic· This thesis is submitted to Addis Ababa University, College of Business and Economics, Department of college of business and economics, as part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA)·

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Declaration

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Mekdes Dagnachew entitled "**ASSESSING THE SOCIAL AND BUSINESS IMPACTS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS AT ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**" and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Approved by the Board of Examiners

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Abbreviations & Acronyms

AAU: Addis Ababa University

BSI: Business Social Impact

CBE: College of Business & Economics

CBR: Community-Based Research

CE: Community Engagement

CEL: Community-Engaged Learning

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

FDR: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

HEI: Higher Education Institution

HRM: Human Resource college of business and economics

M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding

MSME: Micro, Small, & Medium Enterprises

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

PQ: Partnership Quality

RTTCEC: Research Technology Transfer Committee for Engagement Community

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

UIL: University-Industry Linkage

ABSTRACT

Universities worldwide are shifting from isolated institutions to engaged ones through community engagement. In Africa, this transformation supports local development. Ethiopia has adopted policies including the Higher Education Proclamation No. 1152/2019. Addis Ababa University's College of Business and Economics provides consultancy and training to address local business challenges. This research assesses the business and social impacts of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University, with primary emphasis on business impact. The study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The target population consisted of final-year undergraduate students and academic staff from five departments: Management, Economics, Accounting and Finance, Marketing Management, and Business Administration and Information Systems. Using the Yamane formula, a sample of 327 students and staff was selected through simple random sampling. Additionally, 80 local business owners were surveyed quantitatively. Also, 25 key informants including department heads, community engagement coordinators, and community residents participated in semi-structured interviews. The research revealed that partnership quality was the strongest predictor of both business impact and social impact, indicating that trust-based collaborations produce the most substantial results. Community involvement and awareness and outreach were significant predictors of positive outcomes. Businesses receiving support experienced substantial growth in revenue, profit, employment, financial management, and credit access. The community reported strengthened social networks and improved wellbeing. Qualitative themes confirmed that trust, open dialogue, tailored support, and follow-up are essential for successful engagement.

Keywords: Community Engagement, Social Impact, Business Impact, Addis Ababa University, Partnership Quality, Higher Education, MSME Development*reported*

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This research is aimed at figuring out the social and business impacts of the community engagement conducted by the college of business and economics, Addis Ababa University· Thus, the background illustrates the necessity of embedding community participation into the academic frameworks· Then, the problem statement emphasizes the difficulties that the departments have experienced in facilitating the effective engagement· The research questions are there to help explore these issues while the study objectives are used to delineate the general and the specific intentions of the work· Besides that, the value of the study points out the advantage(s) that the research result(s) can bring, and the scope is the one to set the limits which are also supported by the operational definitions to give more understanding·

1.1.Background of the Study

Universities worldwide are progressively transforming themselves from "ivory towers"to "engaged institutions·" This transformation is in line with the Third Mission concept that refers to universities' social and economic engagement besides their traditional roles of teaching and research (Bringle &Hatcher, 2022)· The notion has gone a long way around the globe and Business Schools are no exception to the trend· Here, community engagement is being used to remedy market failures, foster entrepreneurship and create socially conscious managers (Singh, Reisinger, &Dnos, 2023)· Universities are becoming aware of the need to be more relevant to society nowadays and therefore are resorting to community engagement as an indispensable part of the efforts to make sure that higher education has a positive impact on the local and global communities·

In Africa, community engagement is typically viewed as a vital tool for both decolonization and development· After the 1992 UNESCO conference, African universities were challenged to be the frontline agents of economic and social change (Nabaho, Aguti, &Oonyu, 2022)· This request from the international community stresses the importance of universities closing the gap between theoretical knowledge and the specific needs of indigenous communities· The use of engagement tactics becomes even more critical in addressing poverty alleviation and small business development,

thereby enabling higher education institutions to give back to the social fabric in a significant way (Desta &Belay, 2018)· Ethiopia is one of the countries that have a long history of national service campaigns going as far as the 1970s· Nowadays, this dedication is reflected in the signing of major policy documents such as the Higher Education Proclamation No· 1152/2019 and the 2024 Community Engagement Policy at Addis Ababa University (AAU) (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2019)· These instruments are designed to mainstream community outreach into the core functions of higher education institutions· In the case of the college of business and economics Department, Addis Ababa University is therefore required to find ways of supplementing theoretical knowledge with practical exposure through activities such as consultancy, training, and the furtherance of the local micro, enterprises and social organizations (Assaye, 2023)·

This shift is major, as it changes the local socio, economic landscape directly· The college of business and economics, by exposing students and faculty to real community problems, intends at the same time to deepen academic learning and to help the sustainable development in the region· Moreover, students' engagement in such projects can serve as experiential learning that were develop their character as the leaders of tomorrow·

Community, oriented activities give the university an opportunity to identify and meet the socio, economic commodity of the surrounding environment, thus, universities become the key drivers of the regional development· To this effect, the Ethiopian government has been urging universities to engage with the local communities in order to find solutions for social and economic problems (Bender, 2018)·

Engagement initiatives in Ethiopian universities with a special focus on Addis Ababa University are a reflection of the changing social responsibility role of higher education· It is the role of the universities to lead the way for the achievement of sustainable development via the extension activities, community service, and partnership with stakeholders (Hall &Tandon, 2017)· The above notion illustrates the increased recognition of the demand to localize education for meeting local needs and to employ educational materials for the community development·

The main goal of this research is to investigate the social and business impacts of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics at Addis Ababa University· The study were look at how these activities affect local community welfare, improve businesses, and promote economic development·

It aims to understand the changes in society (social impact) and the efficiency of local businesses (economic impact)· This research were cover various social, economic, and corporate effects of community collaboration that have not been fully explored in existing literature·

1.2.Statement of the Problem

While globally there is a move towards universities becoming 'engaged universities', the reality is that many higher education institutions in developing countries, such as Ethiopia, still heavily depend on traditional pedagogical models· These universities are frequently situated in socio, economic environments where the gap between academic theory and community practice is very wide· While university community service is a core function and its provision has always been mandated, the issue is that there is hardly any empirical evidence that shows how such community service activities have led to some tangible social and business impacts (Belay, 2018)·

The real problem lies in the fragmented type of engagement, the way it is mainly seen as a one, off, without sufficient resources and lacking in systematic methods for measuring the effectiveness of such actions· Therefore, universities have difficulty in providing evidence to the local community that businesses have been sustainably supported or that social welfare has been enhanced due to their outreach activities, with the result that there is a widespread disconnection between the community and the institutional potential (Assaye, 2013; Desta &Belay, 2018)· The severity of the matter is several layers deep· When a university does not have a comprehensive knowledge of how engagement affects its surroundings, it is very likely that it would continually allocate its resources in the wrong way· A great number of initiatives directed at the community are most probably being funded and staffed based on what the community doesn't really need· One of the consequences of this failure is that it has a negative impact on the public image of the institution; failing to demonstrate the department's

community contributions in a measurable way leads to a loss of its recognition as a leader in college of business and economics thought·

Besides that, students are being denied essential learning opportunities· Engagement activities, when not properly organized, take away students' chances of learning how to implement theoretical concepts of college of business and economics in solving real situations of Ethiopian businesses, thus, resulting in graduates without the necessary problem, solving skills (Birhanu, Addissie, &Abera, 2022)·

At the same time, the local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) sector is facing very high rates of failures which, among other reasons, is due to a lack of sufficient professional support from the academic world (Tadesse &Getachew, 2024)·

The College of Business and Economics at Addis Ababa University (AAU) faces several operational gaps that hinder effective community engagement and limit the benefits for the community· The first gap is the Partnership Gap, which highlights the lack of formal and high-quality partnership frameworks· This absence leads to a top-down approach that diminishes community involvement and collaboration (Yimer & Tilahun, 2022)· Secondly, the Resource, Outcome Gap refers to the absence of systems that track how given budgetary resources lead to specific social or business outcomes, which in turn diminishes the impact of engagement initiatives (Elifneh, 2015)· Moreover, the Awareness Gap shows that outreach efforts are not properly communicated, so, the potential beneficiaries remain unaware of the expertise the college of business and economics offers (Birhanu et al·, 2022)· Furthermore, aside from these operational issues the existing literature on university, community engagement (UCE) in Ethiopia and Africa reveals that there is still much to be done in regards to making the literature comprehensive·

The first is Conceptual Gaps and these gaps are evident as the majority of research papers put stress on social impacts such as health and literacy while overlooking the potential business benefits that college of business and economics, specific expertise could provide to local micro, enterprises (Desta &Belay, 2018)· The second one is Methodological Gaps and they exist as well; most of the research papers depend on

qualitative anecdotes, without rigorous analyses that link partnership quality or resource allocation to specific outcomes (Tefera, Aseffa, & Mogese, 2025)· Contextual Gaps arise, among other things, from the general discussion on University Social Responsibility (USR) where there is a frequent presumption of a condition of institutional autonomy and availability of resources that do not exist in the case of many public universities in Ethiopia· Besides that, it is said that there is a shortage of research on college of business and economics departments with agriculture and medical faculties being the dominant areas of focus (Assaye, 2013)· Lastly, Strategic Gaps are evident as most of the studies have concentrated on the community engagement component of education as "services “given to the community rather than as "co, learning “opportunities, which are advantageous for both the students and the community (Mengesha, 2023)·

This research Mainly investigates how community involvement and the quality of partnership contribute to the effectiveness of engagement programs at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University. It looked at how the distribution of resources and promotional efforts impact results as well as the function of educational programs in establishing enduring relations with local stakeholders. The purpose of the research is to fill the voids in the studies of the university-community engagement, In particular in the business area and the impact of the college of business and economics on the local enterprises. The fundamental goal is to investigate the influence of community engagement on social and business outcomes. The study will use these variables to uncover the operational and contextual deficiencies in the existing literature, which could eventually result in enhanced community engagement and educational achievement.

1.3.Research questions:

1) To what extent does the level of community involvement predict business and social outcomes of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University?
2) To what extent does partnership quality predict business and social outcomes of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University?

3) To what extent does resource allocation predict business and social outcomes of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University?
4) To what extent do awareness and outreach activities predict business and social outcomes of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University?
5) To what extent do educational programs offered by each predict business and social outcomes of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University?

1.4. Objective of the study

1.4.1. General objective

The general objective of the study is to assess the social and business impacts of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University·

1.4.2. Specific objectives

1, To assess the relationship between community involvement and the business and social outcomes of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University·

2, To assess the relationship between partnership quality and the business and social outcomes of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University·

3, To assess the relationship between resource allocation and the business and social outcomes of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University·

4, To assess the relationship between awareness and outreach activities and the business and social outcomes of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University·

5, To assess the relationship between educational programs and the business and social outcomes of community engagement across different at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University·

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Based on the research objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 significance level:

H1: Community involvement has a significant positive effect on business impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

H2: Partnership quality has a significant positive effect on business impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

H3: Resource allocation has a significant positive effect on business impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

H4: Awareness and outreach activities have a significant positive effect on business impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

H5: Educational programs have a significant positive effect on business impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

H6: Community involvement has a significant positive effect on social impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

H7: Partnership quality has a significant positive effect on social impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

H8: Resource allocation has a significant positive effect on social impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

H9: Awareness and outreach activities have a significant positive effect on social impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

H10: Educational programs have a significant positive effect on social impact of community engagement at CBE-AAU.

1.6. Significance of study

The significance of the study is that it brings out the importance of community engagement in social and business impacts· The study was conducted to investigate the case of the College of Business and Economics at Addis Ababa University and comprehend how working with the community can have a positive impact on people and establish better relations with local businesses· By conducting this research, was able to understand the best practices in community programs and how they can be used to the advantage of all parties involved· The results were assist the university administration and local authorities to design improved approaches to collaborating, which were result in a community that is more connected and prosperous· Moreover, the study were contribute to the current body of research on community engagement to demonstrate that universities can have a positive influence on the population around them· By addressing these issues in this study, they hope to offer a guiding hand and a practical solution, which can be adopted by other organizations and communities to increase their involvement activities·

1.7. Scope of the study

The scope of this study is defined by four key components: thematic scope, geographical scope, population scope, and methodological scope.

Thematically, the study focuses on assessing the business and social impacts of community engagement at CBE-AAU. The primary emphasis is on business impact measured by profitability, business growth, job creation, market access, financial management practices, and access to credit. The secondary emphasis is on social impact measured by social cohesion, community trust, quality of life, and collective efficacy. The study examines five independent variables: community involvement, partnership quality, resource allocation, awareness and outreach activities, and educational programs.

Geographically, the study was conducted at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University, with community participants drawn from a six-kilometer radius surrounding the university.

The target population includes final-year undergraduate students from five departments (Management, Economics, Accounting and Finance, Marketing Management, and Business Administration and Information Systems) totaling 1,589 students, and academic staff from the same five departments totaling 210 staff members. Additionally, 80 local business owners within the six-kilometer radius were included.

Methodologically, the study employs a convergent parallel mixed-methods design combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis.

1.8 Operational Definitions

Community Engagement: The direct involvement of community members in the projects organized by the college of business and economics at Addis Ababa University, to meet the local needs and achieve cooperation (Alem, Asres, & Negussie, 2024)·

Social Cohesion: The extent to which the members of a community believe and feel connected and unified in a community, which can be measured by their participation in the community activities and their support of each other (Tadesse & Getachew, 2024)·

Educational Outcomes: The quantifiable outputs of educational interventions provided to the population, such as knowledge, skills, and general educational levels among the population (Mengesha, 2023)·

Partnership Quality: The efficiency and the robustness of relationships between the Addis Ababa University and local organizations, which may be considered by the measures like the level of satisfaction and the effect of the joint projects (Elifneh, 2015)·

Resource Allocation: The allocation and availability of financial, human, and material resources devoted to the community engagement projects in terms of the budget and the number of people allocated to each project (Wami, 2022)·

Awareness and Outreach Activities: The available strategies and campaigns conducted to educate the community members about the engagement opportunities, measured by the reach and the participation rate in these activities (Asfer, 2024)·

1.9. Organization of study

The study comprises five chapters· Chapter One presents the research background, the problem statement, the research questions, the objectives (both general and specific), the significance, the scope, and the operational definitions· Chapter Two is a literature review and it contains community involvement, resource allocation, and educational programs empirical studies along with a summary table and identification of research gaps in community engagement· Chapter Three describes in detail the research methodology including the research design, approaches, sampling frames, data sources, data collection methods, data analysis methods, description of variables, reliability, validity, and ethical issues. Chapter Four is the presentation of the results, analysis of the findings, and discussions· chapter five summarizes the findings of the study and then provides recommendations based on the social and business impacts of community engagement study at the Department of college of business and economics, Addis Ababa University·

CHAPTER TWO:

1. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter refers to the literature that is important in supporting the theoretical and empirical frameworks for assessing the social and business effects of community engagement in the Department of college of business and economics at Addis Ababa University· It looks at the ll, established ideas of community involvement and the results of such involvement in the academic and business environments· The chapter through the examination of previous studies, attempts to explain the conceptual basis and give a detailed understanding of the impact of community engagement on both the university and society at large· The research methodology was designed according to this framework and the assessment of community engagement's contribution to the realization of the set goals was carried out·

2.1.Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Community Engagement as a Business Strategy

Community engagement is defined as the process by which organizations deliberately involve community members in partnerships and decision-making regarding programs that affect their lives (Alem, Asres, & Negussie, 2024)· However, from a business perspective, community engagement is primarily a strategic tool that creates measurable economic value for local enterprises· When businesses receive support from university engagement programs, they experience direct improvements in profitability, operational efficiency, market access, and long-term sustainability (Daba, 2022)·

The business case for community engagement rests on three foundations· First, engagement builds a "Social License to Operate," which reduces business risks and prevents operational disruptions that could harm profitability (Al Amosh, Khatib, & Ananzeh, 2023)· Second, engagement provides access to specialized university expertise in financial management, marketing, strategic planning, and economic analysis at little or no cost, directly improving business performance (Elifneh, 2015)·

Third, engagement creates networks and partnerships that open new markets, customer bases, and supply chain opportunities, leading to revenue growth (Asfer, 2024)·

2.1.2.Social Impact Theory

Social Impact Theory (SIT) was originally introduced by Latan (1981) and has since been one of the most important sociological frameworks for explaining how the behavior of an individual can be shaped by the environment they are in· Communities can be analyzed through the lens of the social impact theory which predicts that the greater the strength, immediacy and number of the social influences, the greater the impact of the engagement initiative on the community (Nnodim, 2024)· Community development can be seen as a social impact, whereby social impact is defined as the deep and significant changes in the life situations of people, and communities resulting from interventions, activities, and collaborations (Fatima &Elbanna, 2023)· The success of community engagement is not the same in every case but depends on the affecting factors· Trust and transparency are the most important factors in community engagement according to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2025)· Hover, without respect, efforts can often be superficial· The notion of por sharing which is demonstrated in Arnsteins Ladder means that the results of the engagement are much greater when the community is not only giving but also has a say in the decision, making processes (Simbai et al·, 2024)· Besides, cultural appropriateness should be regarded as an important factor in engagement strategies in order to be able to appeal to the local customs and thus strengthen the social influence, which is a main element of SIT (Kumari &Krishnan, 2024)·

The impacts of community engagement can be seen in a "shared value"cycle in which both societal and corporate sectors reap the benefits· Community engagement from a societal standpoint nurtures "collective efficacy"a feeling by which the members of the community experience emporment to respond to the issues of their locality· This feeling of emporment leads to better health on the population level, increased civic engagement and more robust social lfare networks (Haenssgen et al·, 2025)· On the other hand, in the case of corporations, community engagement is not merely the issue

of CSR but is an approach that has turned out to be a business resource of one form or another· The literature indicates that the local community level activities were lead to a firm having a Social License to Operate (SLO) and thus significantly reducing the chances of a project delay and controversial scenarios (Al Amosh et al·, 2023)· Involvement in the community activity also fosters employee satisfaction and loyalty because the existing employees have increased interest in the social responsibility of their employers (Mahmud et al·, 2023)· As an illustration, the above principles re, to some extent, applied to the case of renewable energy projects· The difference in the number of community, leaders protests resulting from Asset, Based Community Development (ABCD)which essentially consists of finding and leveraging local skills and talentswas 40 times lor than with the companies that used top, down approaches (Simbai et al·, 2024)·

In addition, at school, within the context of behavioral health encouraging interventions, the perpetuation of parent engagement as ll as the organization of a number of community workshops led to a drastic decrease in student truancy thereby confirming the enormous social value of regular interaction (Figas et al·, 2025)· Social Impact Theory offers the idea that the key factors for successful community engagement are the level of intensity, repetition, and cultural alignment of the actions· Fulfilling these aspects results in social cohesion which is the basis for a ll, functioning community and, thus, a business, friendly environment while the community members benefit from a higher quality of life (Dong et al·, 2024)·

2.1.3 Business Impact Theory

Business Impact Theory, grounded in Stakeholder Theory, posits that an organization's success depends fundamentally on how well it manages relationships with all groups affected by its operations (Nnodim, 2024)· For local businesses, community engagement with universities produces measurable economic returns including increased sales, reduced costs, new customers, and access to capital·

Stakeholder Theory, originally articulated by Freeman (1984) and subsequently operationalized for higher education contexts by Harrison et al. (2019), serves as the primary theoretical lens for understanding community engagement business impact. The theory posits that organizational survival and sustained competitive advantage depend on the effective management of

relationships with multiple stakeholder groups whose interests converge upon the organization's strategic activities (Freeman, 1984; Freeman et al., 2010). Unlike shareholder primacy models that prioritize economic returns for investors, Stakeholder Theory advocates for the identification and balancing of diverse constituency interestsincluding employees, government bodies, industry partners, and local communitiesto generate mutual value and long-term organizational viability (Freeman, 1984; Reynolds et al., 2006). In the context of the Department of Management at Addis Ababa University, Stakeholder Theory illuminates the complex web of competing demands surrounding community engagement activities. The theory identifies three primary stakeholder categories exerting simultaneous pressure on departmental operations:

Primary Stakeholders: Government entities (Ministry of Education, AAU Administration) mandate community engagement as a statutory requirement under Proclamation No. 1152/2019, demanding 12.5% of faculty workload allocation to service activities. Industry partners (corporate clients, government agencies) seek consultancy and training services, representing potential revenue streams and applied research opportunities. Faculty members constitute internal stakeholders possessing expertise but facing competing time demands across teaching (62.5%), research (25%), and service obligations (12.5%) (Negassa, 2024; FDRE, 2019).

Secondary Stakeholders: Students benefit from experiential learning opportunities derived from engagement activities, while the broader AAU community gains reputational enhancement through high-profile partnerships. These stakeholders influence departmental legitimacy and resource acquisition, though they lack direct contractual authority (Harrison et al., 2019).The Shared Value Model developed by Porter and Kramer (2011) demonstrates that business competitiveness and community welfare are closely linked· When universities provide training and consultancy to local businesses, both parties experience direct economic benefits· Businesses improve their financial performance, reduce losses, and create jobs· Universities gain relevant teaching cases, research opportunities, and improved reputation that can attract funding and partnerships (Mahmud et al·, 2023)·

From a risk management perspective, Al Amosh et al· (2023) demonstrate that companies engaged in local community development not only achieve better financial outcomes but also significantly reduce their exposure to business risks· When a

business is trusted by its community, it faces fewer operational disruptions, less opposition, and lower regulatory scrutiny, all of which protect profitability·

From a marketing perspective, community engagement enhances brand equity and customer loyalty· Asfer (2024) found that businesses actively participating in community initiatives receive positive public reception, leading to increased sales and customer retention· Customers prefer to buy from businesses that are seen as socially responsible and connected to their community·

From an employee perspective, community engagement increases productivity and reduces turnover· Mahmud et al· (2023) found that employees working for businesses that support community development report higher job satisfaction, lower turnover intentions, and greater productivity· This directly affects business profitability through reduced recruitment costs and improved output·

2.1.4 Measuring Business Impact

Business impact from university engagement is measured through six key indicators as established in the literature (Daba, 2022; Asfer, 2024; Mahmud et al·, 2023)·

Profitability is the most direct measure of business impact, captured through increased revenues from new customers or improved products and decreased costs from better operational efficiency· Business growth is measured by expansion of operations including new products, new locations, or increased production capacity· Job creation is measured by the number of new full-time or part-time positions created as a direct result of university-supported business improvements·

Market access is measured by the ability to reach new customer segments, enter new geographic markets, or develop new distribution channels· Financial management is measured by the adoption of formal bookkeeping practices, improved record-keeping, and better tax compliance· Credit access is measured by the ability to obtain bank loans, improved loan terms, or reduced interest rates resulting from better financial documentation provided through university training·

Business survival, while longer-term, is measured by whether businesses remain operational beyond the typical three-year failure period· According to the Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (2023), approximately 65% of MSMEs in Ethiopia fail

within their first three years, making survival a critical business impact indicator·

2.1.5 Departmental Contributions to Business Impact

Different departments of the College of Business and Economics deliver different types of business support resulting in different business outcomes that can be measured.

Management Department gives business consultancy, leadership training, strategic planning workshops, and marketing assistance. Engaging with the Management Department can expose a business to effective strategy development that brings about higher sales, improved customer satisfaction resulting in customer retention, growth of the organization that opens up new avenues, and increased operational efficiency that leads to a reduction in costs (Mengesha, 2023).

Economics Department offers market research, economic impact analysis, feasibility studies, and policy briefings. Deployment of the Economics Department services often means a) better market intelligence leading to sound investment decisions, b) business risk reduction through feasibility study, c) new opportunities identification through market research, and d) cost savings through economic analysis of operations (Birhanu, Addissie, & Abera, 2022).

The Accounting and Finance Department offers training on bookkeeping, preparation of financial statements, tax advice, and help in credit application procedures. After engaging with accounting and the Finance Department business, what comes next impacts are to be expected: a) up-to-date financial records to decision-making, b) tax compliance for penalty reduction, c) ability to get bank loans by way of proper financial statements, and d) less financial errors due to properly trained staff (Elifneh, 2015).

2.1.6 Partnership Quality and Business Outcomes

The extent to which universities collaborate closely with local industries reliably shapes the latter's performance.By definition, partnerships that are based on mutual trust, openness, and give-and-take can generate more effective and longer-lasting business outcomes (Zikargae, 2020).When a company actually trusts the university, it is not only more willing to carry out the changes suggested, disclose sensitive financial figures, and dedicate staff to training sessions, but this, in turn, gives rise to improved business results since it is the actual execution that decides whether the acquired theoretical knowledge has brought about performance enhancements (Birhanu et al. 2022).

Trust makes people expose their changesTransparency leads to understanding and program re-alignment with business needsReciprocity results in mutual long term commitment which ensures that businesses will be continuously supportedRegular communication leads to quick response when businesses face challengesBalanced power sharing leads to businesses feeling respected and heard, increasing their engagement and follow-through (Simbai, Kudzanai, & Tinashe, 2024).

2.1.7 Resource Allocation and Business Outcomes

Resource allocation means allocating financial, human, and material resources for community engagement activities. When universities invest sufficient resources in business support programs, the performance of local businesses improves Much (Wami, 2022).

Financial resources allow universities to conduct free or reasonably priced training sessions, recruit experienced business-oriented staff, prepare quality training content, and provide continuous support. Human resources consisting of faculty time, student volunteers, and administrative support measure both the quantity and quality of business support delivered. Material resources like computers software training rooms, and transportation determine the provision and reach of business services (Daba, 2022). Resource Dependency Theory holds that organizations have to source their resources from their surrounding environment to continue operating. For universities providing business support, this means they should plan resource allocation to business support activities that not only lead to economic impact but also raise the extent to which the institutions are seen as legitimate entities. Asset-Based Community Development advocates for moving away from "needs-based" toward "asset-based" community business identification and reinvestment rather than centering on more deficiencies (Alem et al. 2024).

2.1.8 Awareness and Business Outreach

Awareness-raising and promotional activities reveal if companies in the area learn about and participate in university engagement programs The Diffusion of Innovations Theory guides how information about business support opportunities is shared within business communities (Zikargae, 2020)

Business outreach that is successful is not merely broadcasting but also creating awareness-knowledge, in this case, that business owners realize not only what the programs exist but also how these programs can be used to benefit their specific enterprises through improved sales, cost savings, or credit availability (Fatima & Elbanna, 2023)

Successful business outreach campaigns rely on local business associations and program participants who have achieved success as opinion leaders to strengthen the message's credibility and to motivate others to join. Besides that, the programme can be re-directed to business owners' real needs rather than to assumed requirements by collecting their feedback. Business communities and universities communication that is two-way creates enduring partnerships that generate ongoing business results (Asfer, 2024)

2.1.9 Educational Programs and Business Capacity Building

Educational programs are structured learning activities that enhance business capacity and Greatly raise business performance. Theory of Change indicates that business educators boost entrepreneurial self-determination that leads to a sequence of economic benefits such as increased income, employment generation, and business expansion (Birhanu et al. 2022). Through these programs, business owners receive not only knowledge and skills but also attitudes in areas like financial management marketing strategic planning, operations management, and human resource management. The change in business owners who were struggling operators barely surviving to growing enterprises that create jobs, pay taxes, and contribute to the local economy (Geremewe, 2022) is a direct reflection of the empowerment they derived from the programs.

Besides that, educational programs help business owners to develop not only confidence but also a willingness to take risks. After business owners acquire new skills and knowledge, they consider themselves capable of undertaking such actions as expanding the business employment credit facilities, and market diversification. This increased level of self-confidence will lead to them seeking growth opportunities even those which they avoided previously due to lack of knowledge or fear of failure (Mahmud et al. 2023).

2.2. Empirical Literature Review

2.2.1 Business Impact of University Engagement

Wang et al· (2020) demonstrated how institutional funding leads to sustainable community engagement in high-resource settings such as the United States and China· The study analyzed 45 universities over five years and found that dedicated funding streams, staff positions, and infrastructure support are associated with more sustained and impactful engagement· Universities with dedicated community engagement offices and budgets reported 56% more community partnerships and 42% higher community satisfaction ratings compared to universities without such resources· However, their findings are not directly applicable to Ethiopian institutions facing severe resource constraints, where the relationship between limited resources and engagement outcomes likely differs substantially·

Mahmud et al· (2023) investigated how community-oriented corporate social responsibility affects employee societal behavior using a moderated-mediated model· The study surveyed 520 employees across 65 companies and found that when companies engage in community support activities, employees report higher job satisfaction, lower turnover intentions, and greater productivity· Specifically, community engagement was associated with a 28% reduction in turnover and a 19% increase in self -reported productivity· This has direct implications for local businesses supported by university engagement: as businesses improve their community standing through university partnerships, they may also see improvements in employee outcomes· However, the study focused on employees of large companies rather than small business owners·

Desta and Belay (2018) conducted a case study of community engagement at the University of Gondar, Ethiopia· The study examined the nature, benefits, challenges, and opportunities of university-community engagement over a three-year period· The findings revealed significant impacts in health and agriculture sectors, with the university contributing meaningfully to community welfare through extension programs and community-based research· However, the research did not examine how university partnerships affected business performance of local enterprises, leaving a significant gap in understanding economic impacts· The study also noted that resource constraints

and lack of clear policies hindered more effective engagement· This study addresses that gap by focusing specifically on business outcomes and including business impact indicators·

Elifneh (2015) studied corporate social responsibility practices at Addis Ababa University using a mixed-methods approach· The study found that the university engages in various CSR activities including community service, environmental initiatives, and ethical governance· However, the study revealed that these activities were not systematically planned or evaluated· The research did not concentrate specifically on how business school departments contribute to local enterprise development or measure business impacts such as profitability, job creation, or credit access· The study recommended that universities develop formal CSR frameworks with measurable outcomes, which this study implements by including specific business impact indicators·

Daba (2022) examined the socio-economic effect of corporate social responsibility on local community development in Ethiopian manufacturing industries· Using a quantitative survey of 384 manufacturing firms, the study found that CSR activities positively affect community development and business performance· Specifically, firms that engaged in community support programs reported 23% higher customer loyalty and 18% higher employee retention compared to firms that did not engage· This provides strong empirical support for the link between engagement and business outcomes· However, the research focused on private companies rather than university engagement programs, and the sample was limited to manufacturing firms in specific regions, limiting generalizability to small businesses in other sectors·

Asfer (2024) studied the effect of corporate social responsibility on company image at St· George Brewery in Ethiopia· Using a survey of 150 customers and employees, the findings showed that CSR and community engagement directly impact corporate image and brand loyalty, which in turn affect sales and profitability· The study found that customers were 34% more likely to purchase from the company when they were aware of its community engagement activities· This supports the business case for engagement and demonstrates that community involvement produces tangible financial returns· However, the study did not measure how university engagement specifically

affects small business outcomes, nor did it examine the role of different types of business support·

2.2.2 Social Impact of University Engagement

Yimer and Tilahun (2022) analyzed community sentiment and participation in rural Ethiopia using a mixed-methods design with 420 survey respondents and 25 interviews· They found that community sentiment strongly influences participation rates, and that engagement activities improve social cohesion and trust· Specifically, communities with active engagement programs reported 41% higher levels of trust in institutions and 37% higher levels of collective efficacy compared to communities without such programs· This provides strong evidence for the social benefits of engagement· However, the study focused exclusively on rural contexts and did not examine business outcomes or urban university settings, limiting applicability to Addis Ababa University·

Alem, Asres, and Negussie (2024) studied forms and socio-demographic determinants of civic engagement among young undergraduates at Addis Ababa University· Using a survey of 623 students, they found that engagement activities improve students' sense of social responsibility and connection to community· Students who participated in community engagement reported 45% higher levels of civic awareness and 38% higher levels of community attachment compared to non-participants· The study also found that gender, family background, and field of study significantly influenced engagement patterns· This supports the social benefits of engagement for student participants· However, the study focused on student outcomes rather than community outcomes or business impacts, and did not examine how different departments produce different engagement outcomes·

Haenssgen et al· (2025) examined community engagement to support public health in Lao PDR using a mixed-method evaluation with 1,200 survey respondents and 60 interviews· The study found that engagement improves collective efficacy and community resilience, with engaged communities showing 52% higher confidence in solving local problems and 44% higher rates of mutual assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic· This provides evidence that engagement produces social benefits across different cultural contexts· However, the study focused on health outcomes rather than business or economic outcomes, and the Lao context differs significantly from Ethiopia·

Kumari and Krishnan (2024) studied community engagement as a predictor of psychological well-being among college students in India· Using a survey of 450 students, they found that community engagement positively predicts psychological well-being, with engaged students reporting 35% lower stress levels and 42% higher life satisfaction· The study also found that cultural appropriateness of engagement activities significantly moderated these effects· This supports the social benefits of engagement for student mental health· However, the study focused on student well-being rather than community or business outcomes·

2.2.3 Departmental Business Support

Mengesha (2023) assessed community service practices in Ethiopian universities, focusing on staff engagement at Dilla University· Using a survey of 120 academic staff and interviews with 15 department heads, the study found that academic staff were highly engaged in community activities, with 78% reporting participation in at least one community engagement activity per year· However, the study revealed significant variation across departments, with health and agriculture faculties showing the highest engagement rates (89%) and business and economics faculties showing much lower rates (34%)· The study did not analyze how different departments provided different types of business support or how this support translated into measurable business outcomes such as increased sales or job creation·

Birhanu, Addissie, and Abera (2022) conducted research on effective community engagement in resource-limited settings with a health focus· The study developed an evidence brief based on systematic review of 45 studies and consultations with 30 experts· Key findings included the importance of early engagement, transparent communication, community feedback mechanisms, and sustained relationships· While valuable for engagement principles, this work neglected the potential of business and economics consultancy as a form of community engagement that generates measurable business impacts· The study focused exclusively on health research contexts·

Tadesse and Getachew (2024) studied student civic engagement at Addis Ababa University, focusing on psychological and socio-demographic determinants· Using a survey of 850 students across six colleges, they found that 62% of students had

participated in some form of civic engagement, with business students showing lower participation rates (48%) compared to health science students (71%)· The study identified gender, family income, and academic major as significant predictors of engagement· However, their analysis emphasized student characteristics rather than how different business departments contribute to local enterprise development or what business outcomes result from engagement·

2.2.4 Partnership Quality and Business Outcomes

Zikargae (2020) examined community engagement during COVID-19 in Ethiopia, focusing on risk communication and community engagement· The study found that partnership quality significantly affected the effectiveness of engagement, with communities reporting higher trust in institutions that demonstrated transparency, responsiveness, and cultural appropriateness· Specifically, communities with high-quality partnerships reported 47% higher compliance with health recommendations and 53% higher satisfaction with institutional responses· While focused on health, this study provides evidence that partnership quality drives engagement outcomes· However, the study did not examine business partnerships or business outcomes·

Simbai, Kudzanai, and Tinashe (2024) reviewed corporate social responsibility initiatives and community development in developing countries· The review synthesized findings from 78 studies and found that partnership quality—specifically trust, transparency, and power symmetry—is the strongest predictor of successful community engagement outcomes· Partnerships characterized by genuine power sharing and mutual benefit were 3·2 times more likely to achieve their objectives compared to top-down, charity-based approaches· This supports the inclusion of partnership quality as a key independent variable in this study· However, the review was primarily theoretical and did not include primary data collection·

Birhanu et al· (2022) found that trust between universities and communities is built through consistent, reliable behavior over time· Their study of 30 community-university partnerships in Ethiopia revealed that partnerships lasting more than three years reported 62% higher trust levels and 58% higher satisfaction compared to newer partnerships· The study also found that transparency about goals, resources, and limitations was critical for building sustainable partnerships· However, the study

focused on health research partnerships rather than business support partnerships·

2.2.5 Resource Allocation and Business Outreach

Assaye (2013) explored challenges of university-community collaboration in Ethiopian public universities using qualitative methods with 45 interviews across four universities· The study identified lack of clear policies, inadequate funding, limited community awareness, and lack of staff incentives as major challenges· Specifically, 82% of respondents cited inadequate funding as the primary barrier to effective engagement, and 76% cited lack of clear policies· The study did not specifically address how these challenges affect business outreach or business outcomes for local enterprises, nor did it measure resource-to-outcome ratios quantitatively·

Olowu (2012) summarized outreach strategies of African universities, identifying common approaches including extension services, community-based research, service-learning, and technical assistance· The review found that successful outreach programs shared several characteristics: dedicated funding, trained staff, community input into program design, and regular evaluation· However, the article did not specifically address how business and economics departments reach out to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, which represent the primary business sector and employment source in Ethiopian communities (accounting for approximately 95% of all businesses and 70% of employment)·

Zhu and Wang (2022) investigated digital outreach in higher education, assuming high levels of digital literacy· Their study of 25 Chinese universities found that social media, websites, and email can effectively reach community members, with digital outreach reaching 3·5 times more people than traditional methods at one-third the cost· However, this assumption of digital literacy does not hold for many Ethiopian communities, where personal interaction and face-to-face consultancy sessions remain dominant, particularly in informal business sectors· According to the Ethiopian Communications Authority (2023), only 25% of MSME owners have regular internet access, and only 15% use email for business purposes·

2.2.6 Educational Programs and Business Capacity Building

Preece (2017) examined university community engagement and lifelong learning in Africa through case studies of six universities across the continent· The study found that educational programs targeting business skills—such as financial literacy,

marketing, and business planning—produced measurable improvements in enterprise performance· Participants in business training programs reported average income increases of 28% and employment increases of 35% within two years of program completion· However, the study focused on student development outcomes and community learning rather than sustainability of community partner businesses or long-term economic impacts·

Wami (2022) examined community participation in school improvement programs in Adea Berga Woreda, Ethiopia· Using a survey of 320 community members and 25 interviews, the study found that community participation positively affects school outcomes including student attendance (improved by 31%) and performance (improved by 27%)· The study also found that training programs for community members improved their capacity to contribute to school governance· However, the focus on educational administration left entrepreneurial training and business development components—highly relevant to business education—unexamined·

Geremewe (2022) studied socio-economic development contributions of cooperatives in Ethiopia, finding that training and education programs significantly improved cooperative performance· Cooperatives that received regular business training reported 43% higher revenues and 38% higher member satisfaction compared to those without training· This provides evidence that educational programs produce measurable business outcomes· However, the study focused on cooperatives rather than individual businesses or university engagement programs·

2.2.7 Departmental Differentiation

Nabaho, Aguti, and Oonyu (2022) reviewed the "Third Mission" of universities across Africa, providing theoretical synthesis of 112 studies· The Third Mission refers to universities' social and economic engagement beyond teaching and research· The review found that African universities face unique challenges including underfunding, weak infrastructure, competing priorities, and lack of clear policies· The review also found that business and economics faculties were underrepresented in community engagement literature compared to agriculture, health, and education faculties· However, the study did not include primary empirical data from business and economics faculty perspectives, nor did it compare how different business departments

approach engagement differently·

Singh, Reisinger, and Dános (2023) edited a volume on community engagement from Global South perspectives, including case studies from 12 countries· Their comparative approach showed that community engagement takes different forms in different contexts based on historical, cultural, and economic factors· Business schools in the Global South face unique challenges including large class sizes, limited resources, and pressure to focus on employability rather than community engagement· However, the volume lacked sufficient depth regarding the specific socio-economic conditions of Addis Ababa and did not compare engagement approaches across different business departments·

2.3 Research Gaps

The review of the literature has uncovered multiple major gaps in the research. Firstly, almost all of the studies are highlighting social impacts In particular health and literacy benefits while neglecting the business benefits that business schools could bring to the local businesses (Desta & Belay, 2018) The literature hardly identifies or measures the impact of engagement on business profitability, job creation, or credit access Most of the time, the researches are qualitative and only a few of them involve quantitative analysis that links inputs to tangible outputs such as business profitability or job creation (Assaye, 2013) In fact, no study has empirically compared systematically how different business divisions including Management, Economics, and Accounting generate different kinds of business impact (Mengesha, 2023) Most of the conceptual models are derived from Western societies and arguably may be irrelevant to Ethiopian public universities that are confronted with various challenges including shortage of resources (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002) Business impact is considered as a secondary outcome instead of a primary one that needs detailed measurement and analysis This research tackles this gaps by identifying business impact as the primary dependent variable with six different indicators, applying multiple regression analysis, and comparing three departments ones.

2.4 Conceptual framework

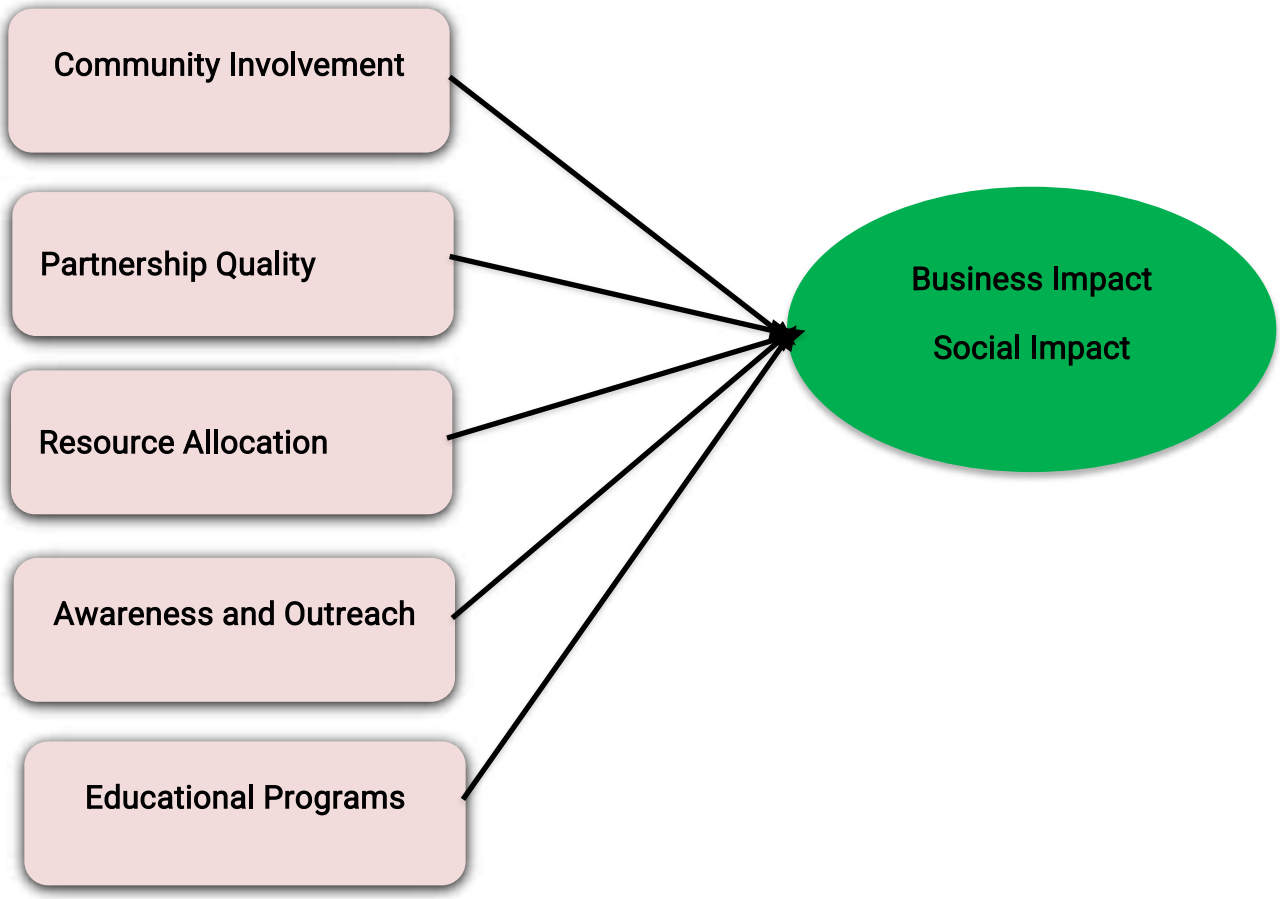


Figure 2·1· Conceptual framework

Source: Conceptual frameworks adopted from Alem, Asres, & Negussie (2024) and Asfer (2024) provide a foundation for understanding community engagement impacts·

To assess the social and business impacts of community engagement, a thorough conceptual framework is needed· This framework explains the elements that lead to successful community engagement and stresses their importance in a setting that is culturally contextualized·

Independent Variables

Community Involvement: This variable refers to the extent of active participation by local business owners and community members in the design, implementation, and

evaluation of university-led engagement initiatives (Alem, Asres, & Negussie, 2024)· It is measured by participation rates in business training programs, frequency of engagement with university staff, and the degree to which business owners are included in deciding what types of support are offered· When business owners are actively involved in planning, programs are more likely to address actual needs, leading to stronger business and social outcomes·

Partnership Quality: This variable refers to the effectiveness and strength of collaborative relationships between the university and local businesses (Elifneh, 2015)· It is measured by indicators of trust, transparency, reciprocity, communication frequency, and mutual benefit· When businesses trust the university and perceive partnerships as fair and beneficial, they are more wereing to implement recommendations, share financial data, and commit time to training programs (Zikargae, 2020)·

Resource Allocation: This variable refers to the distribution and availability of financial, human, and material resources dedicated to business support programs (Wami, 2022)· It is measured by budget allocation for business training, number of staff assigned to business outreach, availability of training materials and facilities, and administrative support for engagement activities· When adequate resources are provided, programs are higher quality, reach more businesses, and produce stronger outcomes (Daba, 2022)·

Awareness and Outreach Activities: This variable refers to the strategies and campaigns conducted to inform local businesses about available engagement opportunities (Asfer, 2024)· It is measured by the reach of outreach messages, business owner participation rates, and the effectiveness of communication channels used· When businesses know about available programs, they can participate and benefit· Effective outreach ensures that programs reach businesses that need support most (Fatima & Elbanna, 2023)·

Educational Programs: This variable refers to structured learning interventions provided to local businesses by each department (Mengesha, 2023)· It is measured by the relevance, quality, and accessibility of programs offered· The Management Department provides business consultancy, leadership training, and marketing assistance· The

Economics Department provides market research and feasibility studies· The Accounting and Finance Department provides bookkeeping training, tax assistance, and credit application support (Birhanu, Addissie, & Abera, 2022)·

Dependent Variables

Business Impact: Business impact refers to measurable changes in local business performance resulting from university engagement (Daba, 2022)· This variable is measured through six specific indicators· Profitability refers to increase in business revenues and reduction in costs resulting from university training and consultancy· Business growth refers to expansion of operations including new products, new customers, or new locations· Job creation refers to new employment opportunities generated as businesses expand· Market access refers to the ability to reach new customers or enter new markets· Financial management refers to improved accounting and financial practices including formal bookkeeping and tax compliance· Credit access refers to the ability to obtain bank loans or other financing (Asfer, 2024; Mahmud et al·, 2023; Wami, 2022)·

Social Impact: Social impact refers to changes in community welfare resulting from engagement initiatives (Yimer & Tilahun, 2022)· This variable is measured by social cohesion (how well community members get along), community trust (whether people trust each other and the university), quality of life (improvements in living conditions), and collective efficacy (whether community members believe they can solve problems together)·

CHAPTER THREE
3· RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The third chapter explains the research way employed in this study. It illustrates the research design and the approach taken in the study in a very transparent manner. Besides, the chapter identifies the sampling frame, i.e. the target population, how the sample size was determined, and also the sampling techniques used. In addition, it elaborates on the data sources and data collection methods, alongside the subsequent analysis, and model specification. Besides, the chapter categorizes the variables and refers to the classification by providing a table of the study variables. In the end, the chapter discusses reliability and validity which are crucial aspects in gaining the overall trustworthiness of research findings on the effects of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University.

3.1 Research design

This study employs a convergent parallel mixed-methods case study design serving both descriptive and explanatory purposes· The case study design is appropriate for this research because the study investigates a contemporary phenomenon community engagement within its real-life context, namely the College of Business and Economics at Addis Ababa University (Yin, 2018)· Unlike experimental designs that require manipulation of variables, the case study design allows the researcher to examine community engagement as it naturally occurs, preserving the authentic context in which engagement activities take place·

The descriptive purpose of the study addresses research questions one through four by providing a detailed account of community engagement parameters· These parameters include the extent of community involvement, the quality of partnerships between the university and local organizations, patterns of resource allocation for engagement activities, the effectiveness of awareness and outreach campaigns, and the range of educational programs offered by each department· Descriptive statistics were summarize the current state of community engagement at the college, offering a comprehensive picture of existing practices·

The explanatory purpose addresses research question five by examining the causal

relationships between independent variables community involvement, partnership quality, resource allocation, awareness and outreach activities, and educational programs and dependent variables, namely social impact and business impact· Multiple linear regression analysis were test these relationships, allowing the researcher to determine which independent variables significantly predict community engagement outcomes·

The convergent parallel design means that quantitative and qualitative data was collected simultaneously rather than sequentially· Quantitative data from structured questionnaires and qualitative data from key informant interviews was analyzed separately, then merged during the interpretation phase· This approach enables the researcher to compare findings across methods, identify areas of convergence and divergence, and provide a more comprehensive understanding of community engagement impacts than either approach alone could provide (Creswell & Creswell , 2018)·

3.2 Research approaches

This research features a mixed-method approach. Apart from the quantification of data through numerical analysis, it also incorporates a human element through qualitative methods in the form of interviews and focus groups. One of the main reasons for using a combination of these methods is triangulation, i.e. using multiple data sources to cross-validate findings and to obtain a full understanding of community engagement impacts (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

In the quantitative part, structured questionnaires were used to gather information from students and staff. With the help of numbers, data about community involvement, quality of the partnership, resource allocation, awareness raising activities, teaching programs, as well as business and social impacts was collected. Indicators of business impact are profitability, business growth, job creation, market access, financial management, and credit access. The quantitative data was processed with the help of descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression.

Qualitative part consists of conducting key informant interviews with participants who have been purposively selected for their expertise in community engagement. The

interviewees are heads of departments, community engagement coordinators, local business owners, and community leaders. Thematic analysis was used on qualitative data to explore themes, patterns, and insights related to engagement processes successes challenges, and business impacts.

3.3 Sampling Frames

3.3.1 Target population

The target population comprises three groups:

Group 1 (Internal University Population): Final-year undergraduate students and academic staff from five departments within CBE-AAU: Management (370 students, 46 staff), Economics (200 students, 40 staff), Accounting and Finance (374 students, 58 staff), Marketing Management (386 students, 39 staff), and Business Administration and Information Systems (259 students, 27 staff). Total student population: 1,589. Total academic staff: 210. Total Group 1 population: 1,799.

Group 2 (Local Business Owners): Business owners within a six-kilometer radius who benefited from at least one university engagement activity during the last 24 months (n=80 surveyed).

Group 3 (Community Residents): Local households within the six-kilometer radius providing information on social impacts through qualitative interviews (n=15).

3.3.2 Sample Size Determination

For Group 1, the Yamane formula (Yamane, 1967) for finite populations was used:

$n = N / (1 + N(e^2))$

Where: n = Desired sample size; N = Total population (1,799); e = Margin of error (0.05 at 95% confidence level).

Applying the parameters:

$n = 1,799 / (1 + 1,799(0.05)^2) = 1,799 / (1 + 4.4975) = 1,799 / 5.4975 = 327.24 \approx 327$

Therefore, the required sample size for Group 1 is 327 participants (289 students and 38 staff).

For Group 2, 80 business owners were surveyed using purposive sampling. For Group 3, 15 community residents were selected for qualitative interviews (Patton, 2015).

Table 2: Sample Size Allocation for Group 1 (n = 321)

Target Population	Department	Population	Proportion	Sample Size
Students	Management	370	370/1,589 = 0.233	289 × 0.233 = 67
	Economics	200	200/1,589 = 0.126	289 × 0.126 = 36
	Accounting and Finance	374	374/1,589 = 0.235	289 × 0.235 = 68
	Marketing Management	386	386/1,589 = 0.243	289 × 0.243 = 70
	BAIS	259	259/1,589 = 0.163	289 × 0.163 = 48
	Total Students	1,589	1.000	289
Staff	Management	46	46/210 = 0.219	38 × 0.219 = 8
	Economics	40	40/210 = 0.190	38 × 0.190 = 7
	Accounting and Finance	58	58/210 = 0.276	38 × 0.276 = 11
	Marketing Management	39	39/210 = 0.186	38 × 0.186 = 7
	BAIS	27	27/210 = 0.129	38 × 0.129 = 5
	Total Staff	210	1.000	38
Total		1,799		327

3.3.3 Sampling Techniques

Simple random sampling was used to select 289 final-year students and 38 academic staff members. Complete rosters were extracted from the CBE registrar and human resource databases. Every individual was assigned a unique sequential identifier, and a digital random number generator selected participants (Taherdoost, 2016).

Purposive and criterion sampling were used to select 80 quantitative business owners and 25 qualitative key informants. Business owners had to operate within the 6km boundary and have documented history of university support. Key informants included five department heads, three community engagement coordinators, and fifteen community residents.

3.4 Source of Data

This study utilizes both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected from three groups: 327 students and staff, 80 local business owners, and 25 key informants. Secondary data was sourced from official documents including AAU strategic planning documents, annual community engagement performance reports (2021-2026), formal Memoranda of Understanding, training attendance records, and relevant government publications.

3.5 Method of Data Collection

Two structured questionnaires were administered. The campus questionnaire (for students and staff) contained six sections: demographics, community involvement and partnership quality, resource allocation and awareness, educational program delivery across five departments, social impact (for residents within 6km), and open-ended questions. The business owner questionnaire captured objective business performance metrics including revenue, profit, employee counts, credit access, market expansion, and perceived business impact on a 1-5 Likert scale.

Second, a business owner questionnaire was administered directly to the 80 local business owners at their places of business. This instrument captures objective business performance metrics including revenue before and after support (in ETB), profit before and after support, employee counts before and after support, credit access and loan amounts, market expansion indicators, financial management practices, business survival indicators, perceived business impact using 1-5 Likert scale, attribution of improvements to university support versus other factors, and advanced business impact indicators including business model changes, return on investment perception, value chain improvements, competitive position changes, and sustainability of improvements. Each business survey were take approximately 15 to 20 minutes.

Interview Data Collection: Semi-structured key informant interviews was conducted with 25 participants including seven department heads, three community engagement coordinators, and fifteen community residents. Each interview were last between 45 and 60 minutes and was conducted in locations convenient for participants, such as private offices at the college or community centers. The interview guide includes mandatory probes to elicit specific numerical data, documentary evidence, and causal attribution. For business impact questions, the interviewer were probe for specific revenue percentages, job creation numbers, loan amounts, and documentary evidence. For causal attribution, the interviewer were probe how respondents know that improvements came from university support rather than other factors, including counterfactual questions such as "What would have happened without the university's intervention?" All interviews was audio recorded with explicit written consent from each participant. Interviews was conducted in Amharic or English based on participant preference. Interviews conducted in Amharic was transcribed in Amharic and then translated into English for analysis.

Document Analysis: The researcher studied secondary documents to add support to the primary data collection. Such documents include annual community engagement reports, memoranda of understandings, training attendance records, previous evaluation reports, and relevant policy documents. Document analysis aimed at gathering quantitative data about the frequency of engagements, number of participants, resource distribution, and recorded results and, at the same time, capturing qualitative data about partnership structures, program designs, and the challenges reported by the parties.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

Quantitative data from 327 students/staff and 80 business owners were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) and inferential statistics (multiple linear regression). Prior to regression, assumptions including normality, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, and linearity were tested. The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

Qualitative data from 25 key informants were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006)

six-phase thematic analysis procedure. After separate analysis, quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated through side-by-side comparison.

3.6.1 Model specification

Two separate multiple linear regression models were estimated:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \varepsilon$$

Where Y = Business Impact or Social Impact; X_1 = Community Involvement; X_2 = Partnership Quality; X_3 = Resource Allocation; X_4 = Awareness and Outreach; X_5 = Educational Programs; ε = Error term.

3.7 Variables description

Table 3: Study variables description

Variable	Description	Expected Sign
Business Impact (Y_1)	Measures changes in business performance: profitability, growth, job creation, market access, financial management, credit access	Positive (+)
Social Impact (Y_2)	Measures changes in community welfare: social cohesion, trust, quality of life, collective efficacy	Positive (+)
Community Involvement (X_1)	Extent of active participation by community members in university-led initiatives	Positive (+)
Partnership Quality (X_2)	Effectiveness and strength of collaborations between university and local organizations	Positive (+)
Resource Allocation (X_3)	Amount of financial, human, and material resources dedicated to engagement projects	Positive (+)
Awareness and Outreach (X_4)	Effectiveness of campaigns informing community about engagement opportunities	Positive (+)
Educational Programs (X_5)	Relevance, quality, and accessibility of training programs by each department	Positive (+)

3.8 Reliability and validity

3.8.1 Reliability

For the study results to be dependable, the data gathering methods were made uniform, and only one set of structured questionnaires and key informant interview guides was employed for all participants. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess internal consistency. All constructs performed beyond the advisable threshold of 0.70. Data source triangulationengaging different informants (students staff business owners, community residents) and various data collection instruments (surveys interviews document analysis)was performed to validate findings and reduce measurement errors. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was the method to assess the internal consistency of survey items.

Table 4: Reliability Coefficients for Student and Staff Survey

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Community Involvement	5	0.84	Good
Partnership Quality	5	0.87	Good
Resource Allocation	4	0.81	Good
Awareness and Outreach	4	0.83	Good
Educational Programs	15	0.94	Excellent
Social Impact	7	0.88	Good

Table 5: Reliability Coefficient for Business Owner Survey

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Perceived Business Impact	9	0.91	Excellent

All constructs performed beyond the advisable limit of threshold (0.70), having scores from 0.81 to 0.94 for the student and staff survey and 0.91 for the business owner

survey, So demonstrating satisfactory reliability.

3.8.2 Validity

Validity refers to how well research tools really measure the very things that they are supposed to measure. The validity of the results was ensured by establishing three types of validity: content validity, construct validity, and face validity.

Content Validity: The survey tools and interview guides were prepared after a thorough literature review on community engagement, social impact theory, and business impact measurement. The questionnaires were then taken to academic advisors and experts from the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University, who assessed them to make sure that the questionnaires adequately captured all the critical elements of community engagement.Like that, experts independently judged each item on relevance, clarity, and comprehensiveness. Based on their comments, unclear or less relevant items were revised or removed.

Construct Validity: To determine if the items properly measured the underlying theoretical constructs, the researcher performed exploratory factor analysis (EFA) through the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) method using Varimax rotation.Left-clicking data suitability for factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was very high, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was very significant. Items with factor loadings less than the cut-off limit were removed. Items loaded strongly and correctly on their factors, with all factor loadings greater than the minimum value, indicating each factor had good construct validity.

Face Validity: In a pilot, participants the researchers excluded from the final sample were asked things like their perception of the clarity and relevance of each question, if they considered each question to be appropriate or not. This information was used to improve items which were confusing, as well as to eliminate those that were unnecessary. Based on the pilot test participants all, final questionnaires were considered clear and appropriate.

These processes have contributed to the reliability of the results of this research for understanding the social and business impacts of community engagement at the

College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University.

3.9 Ethical considerations

This study were follow established ethical principles for research involving human participants· Before data collection begins, ethical approval was obtained from the Addis Ababa University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the College of Business and Economics Research Ethics Committee·

All participants was informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their rights as participants· Each participant were sign a consent form indicating their voluntary agreement to take part· Participants was free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and may skip any question they do not wish to answer·

To protect confidentiality, questionnaires were not collect names or identifying information· Each participant was assigned a unique code number, and all data was stored on a password-protected computer accessible only to the researcher· For interview participants, pseudonyms was used in all reports and publications· Audio recordings of interviews was deleted after transcription· No incentives or compensation was offered for participation to avoid coercion· The study involves minimal risk as questions focus on community engagement activities and do not address sensitive personal topics· Contact information for university counseling services was provided to participants if needed· All data was stored for five years after thesis completion, then permanently deleted·

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the findings of the study. It begins with the response rate, followed by demographic profiles, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, qualitative findings, and discussion.

4.1 Response Rate

A total of 327 questionnaires were distributed to students and staff, and all 327 were returned, yielding a 100% response rate. For business owners, 80 questionnaires were distributed and 62 were returned, yielding a 77.5% response rate.

Table 6: Response Rate Summary

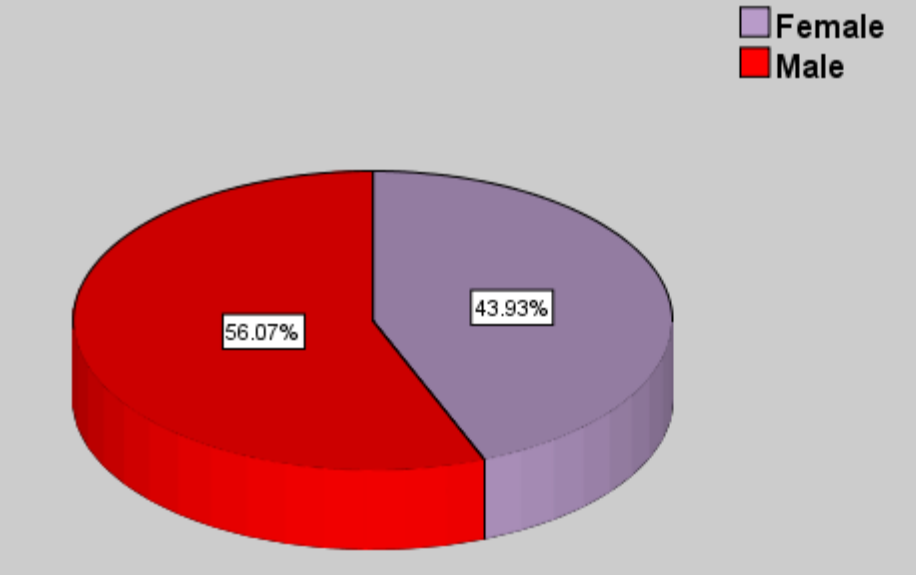
Respondent Group	Distributed	Returned	Valid	Response Rate
Students	289	289	289	100%
Staff	38	38	38	100%
Total Students and Staff	327	327	327	100%
Business Owners	80	62	62	77.5%

4.2 Demographic Profile

4.2.1 Demographic Profile of Student and Staff Respondents

4.2.1.1 Gender

Of the 327 respondents, 180 (55.0%) were male and 147 (45.0%) were female, indicating a relatively balanced gender distribution with a slight male majority.



4.2.2 Demographic Profile of Business Owner Respondents

A total of 62 business owners participated. Retail businesses comprised 25 (40.3%), services 23 (37.1%), manufacturing 9 (14.5%), and other types 5 (8.1%). Regarding registration status, 48 (77.4%) were officially registered. By distance from AAU, 28 (45.2%) were located 1-3km away, 21 (33.9%) 3-6km away, and 13 (21.0%) less than 1km. By years in operation, 28 (45.1%) had operated 11-17 years, 22 (35.5%) 6-10 years, and 12 (19.4%) 2-5 years.

Table 7: Demographic Profile of Business Owner Respondents (N=62)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Business Type	Retail	25	40.3
	Service	23	37.1
	Manufacturing	9	14.5
	Other	5	8.1
Registration	Registered	48	77.4

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
	Not Registered	14	22.6
Distance from AAU	Less than 1km	13	21.0
	1-3km	28	45.2
	3-6km	21	33.9
Years in Operation	2-5 years	12	19.4
	6-10 years	22	35.5
	11-17 years	28	45.1

Source: Survey data, 2026

4.3 Business Owner Objective Business Performance

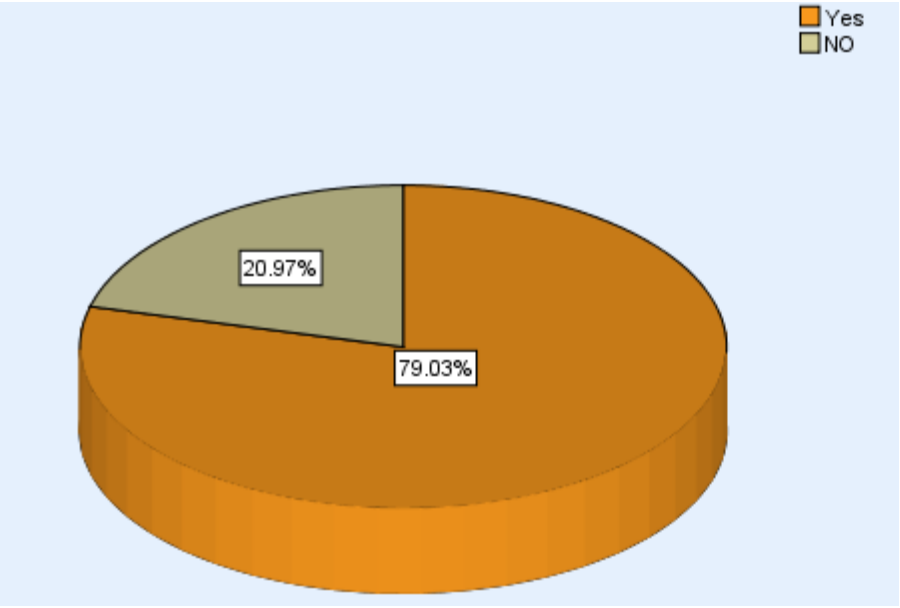
Of 62 business owners, 49 (79.0%) confirmed receiving support from CBE, while 13 (21.0%) had no interaction. For the 49 supported businesses, the most reported support types were business planning (22.4%) and one-on-one consultancy (22.4%), followed by student project assistance (18.4%), marketing assistance (16.3%), training/workshop (12.2%), and financial/accounting advice (8.2%).

By supporting department, BAIS was mentioned most frequently (34.7%), followed by Management (24.5%), Accounting and Finance (20.4%), Economics (12.2%), and Marketing Management (8.2%). Participation frequency was high: 51.0% participated 5-7 times, 34.7% 3-4 times, and 14.3% 1-2 times.

Table 8: Business Owner Engagement with University

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Received Support	Yes	49	79.0
	No	13	21.0

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Type of Support (n=49)	Business planning	11	22.4
	Financial/accounting advice	4	8.2
	Marketing assistance	8	16.3
	One-on-one consultancy	11	22.4
	Student project assistance	9	18.4
	Training/workshop	6	12.2
Department (n=49)	Accounting & Finance	10	20.4
	BAIS	17	34.7
	Economics	6	12.2
	Management	12	24.5
	Marketing Management	4	8.2
Participation (n=49)	1-2 times	7	14.3
	3-4 times	17	34.7
	5-7 times	25	51.0



8Figure 4: Received Support

4.3.1 Market Access, Business Growth and Business Survival

Reported monthly revenue increased 36.5% from 153,278 ETB to 209,244 ETB, while monthly profit increased 41.4% from 22,102 ETB to 31,250 ETB. Full-time employees increased 30.9% (from 6.8 to 8.9) and part-time employees increased 42.9% (from 3.5 to 5.0). Formal record-keeping rose from 42.6% to 83.7%, and tax compliance rose from 46.8% to 80.9%. Additionally, 34.7% obtained bank loans averaging 421,041 ETB.

Table 9: Market Access, Business Growth and Business Survival

Indicator	Yes n (%)	No n (%)
Added new products/services	33 (67.3%)	16 (32.7%)
Entered new customer markets	32 (65.3%)	17 (34.7%)
Expanded to new locations	21 (42.9%)	28 (57.1%)
Acquired formal certification	18 (36.7%)	31 (63.3%)
Business still operating	49 (100%)	0 (0%)
Expect to operate next 3 years	39 (79.6%)	10 (20.4%)

Source: Survey data, 2026

4.4 Descriptive Statistics

4.4.1 Community Involvement and Partnership Quality

All community involvement and partnership quality items scored above the theoretical neutral level of 3.0. The highest mean was "College actively involves community in planning" (M=3.71, SD=1.093). For partnership quality, "Strong, trusting relationships" recorded the highest score (M=3.75, SD=1.108), followed by "Clear agreements followed by both sides" (M=3.74, SD=1.041).

Table 4.6 Descriptive Statistics for Community Involvement and Partnership Quality (N=327)

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics for Community Involvement and Partnership Quality (N=327)

Item	Statement	Mean	SD
Community Involvement	College actively involves community in planning	3.71	1.093

Item	Statement	Mean	SD
	Community members participate regularly	3.65	1.161
	Local businesses suggest engagement activities	3.64	1.112
	Community feedback taken seriously	3.69	1.081
	College collaborates as equal partner	3.63	1.056
Partnership Quality	Strong, trusting relationships	3.75	1.108
	Regular and open communication	3.70	1.065
	Both parties benefit	3.64	1.121
	Clear agreements followed	3.74	1.041
	Resources shared fairly	3.68	1.110

4.4.2 Resource Allocation and Awareness Activities

For resource allocation, adequate materials scored highest (M=3.79), followed by enough staff (M=3.71). For awareness, outreach reaches wide range was the top scorer (M=3.74). All items were above 3.0, indicating positive perceptions.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics for Resource Allocation and Awareness (N=327)

Item	Statement	Mean	SD
Resource Allocation	Sufficient budget for engagement	3.64	1.138
	Enough staff assigned	3.71	1.049
	Adequate materials and facilities	3.79	1.061
	Resources distributed fairly	3.64	1.096
Awareness & Outreach	College effectively informs community	3.65	1.152
	Outreach reaches wide range	3.74	1.068
	College uses multiple channels	3.69	1.110
	Community aware of participation	3.69	1.074

4.4.3 Educational Program Delivery by Department

All five departments scored above the neutral midpoint of 3.0. Marketing Management

earned the highest score (M=3.79 for market research), followed by BAIS (M=3.74 for e-commerce), Economics (M=3.72 for economic analysis), Accounting and Finance (M=3.71 for tax assistance), and Management (M=3.69 for consultancy services).

Table 12: Descriptive Statistics for Educational Program Delivery (N=327)

Department	Program	Mean	SD
Management	Business consultancy services	3.69	1.116
	Leadership and management training	3.68	1.154
	Marketing assistance	3.66	1.121
Economics	Market research services	3.71	1.089
	Economic analysis and feasibility	3.72	1.096
	Policy briefings	3.66	1.093
Accounting & Finance	Bookkeeping and financial training	3.69	1.046
	Tax assistance and financial advice	3.71	1.143
Marketing Management	Branding and digital marketing training	3.76	1.080
	Market research and customer analysis	3.79	1.100
BAIS	Business software and record-keeping	3.73	1.126
	E-commerce and digital business advice	3.74	1.040

4.4.4 Social Impact

Social impact was evaluated for 226 respondents residing within 6km. The highest scoring items were "Community feels more connected to university" (M=3.83), "Strengthened social networks" (M=3.82), and "Improved community health and wellbeing" (M=3.82). The lowest were "Improved quality of life" (M=3.55) and "Community empowered to solve problems" (M=3.57).

Table 13: Descriptive Statistics for Social Impact (n=226)

Statement	Mean	SD
Improved relationships among community members	3.68	1.189
Increased trust between university and community	3.60	1.144
Improved quality of life	3.55	1.132

Statement	Mean	SD
Community empowered to solve local problems	3.57	1.114
Strengthened social networks	3.82	1.001
Improved community health and wellbeing	3.82	1.119
Community feels more connected to university	3.83	1.037

4.4.5 Business Owner Perceived Business Impact

All business impact items for 49 supported businesses rated at least 3.9. The highest was "University support improved my financial record-keeping" (M=4.3, SD=0.89), followed by "Improved my business planning" (M=4.2, SD=0.88) and "Would recommend this program" (M=4.2, SD=0.87).

Table 14: Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Business Impact (n=49)

Statement	Mean	SD
University support improved my business profitability	4.0	0.92
University support helped me reduce business costs	3.9	0.87
University support helped me increase sales revenue	4.1	0.85
University support helped me access new customers	4.0	0.94
University support improved my financial record-keeping	4.3	0.89
University support helped me become tax compliant	4.1	0.96
University support improved my business planning	4.2	0.88
Benefits worth my time investment	4.0	0.91
Would recommend this program to other business owners	4.2	0.87

Source: Survey data, 2026

4.5 Correlation Analysis

4.5.1 Correlation Matrix for Social Impact

Pearson correlation revealed all five independent variables have statistically significant positive relationships with Social Impact at $p < 0.01$. Partnership Quality showed the strongest correlation (r=0.56), followed by Awareness and Outreach (r=0.53), Community Involvement (r=0.52), Resource Allocation (r=0.49), and Educational

Programs (r=0.48).

Table 15: Pearson Correlation Matrix for for Social Impact

Variable	CI	PQ	RA	AO	EP	SI
Community Involvement (CI)	1					
Partnership Quality (PQ)	0.68	1				
Resource Allocation (RA)	0.62	0.59	1			
Awareness & Outreach (AO)	0.58	0.63	0.66	1		
Educational Programs (EP)	0.55	0.57	0.60	0.56	1	
Social Impact (SI)	0.52	0.56	0.49	0.53	0.48	1

4.5.1.1 Multicollinearity Assessment

In the evaluation of multicollinearity, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values were considered. Hair et al. (2010) explain that the VIF values lower than 5 signify that there are no serious multicollinearity problems, and value less than 2.5 are regarded as excellent. As illustrated in Table 16, the entire set of VIF values lies between 1.72 and 2.08, being far below the threshold level of 5. Partnership Quality emerged as having the highest VIF (2.08) and the lowest Tolerance (0.48), whereas Educational Programs resulted in having the lowest VIF (1.72) and the highest Tolerance (0.58). These findings indicate that multicollinearity is not present in the regression analysis, and using all five independent variables in one model is supported. And, no multicollinearity guarantees that the regression coefficients remain consistent and that the unique effect of each predictor on Social Impact is precisely measured.

Table 16: Multicollinearity test for Social Impact

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Community Involvement	0.52	1.92
Partnership Quality	0.48	2.08
Resource Allocation	0.51	1.96

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Awareness and Outreach	0.53	1.89
Educational Programs	0.58	1.72

4.5.2 Correlation Matrix for Business Impact

All five independent variables showed statistically significant positive correlations with Business Impact at $p < 0.01$. Partnership Quality correlated highest ($r=0.62$), followed by Awareness and Outreach ($r=0.56$), Community Involvement ($r=0.55$), Resource Allocation ($r=0.48$), and Educational Programs ($r=0.46$).

Table 17: Pearson Correlation Matrix for Business Impact

Variable	CI	PQ	RA	AO	EP	BI
Community Involvement (CI)	1					
Partnership Quality (PQ)	0.65	1				
Resource Allocation (RA)	0.58	0.55	1			
Awareness & Outreach (AO)	0.54	0.60	0.62	1		
Educational Programs (EP)	0.52	0.53	0.56	0.51	1	
Business Impact (BI)	0.55	0.62	0.48	0.56	0.46	1

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N = 49.

4.5.2.1 multicollinearity test for Business Impact

Examination of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values was conducted as a method of assessment for multicollinearity. All VIF values fell between 1.67 and 2.00, which is Much below the acceptable limit of 5. Partnership Quality was the variable

with the highest VIF (2.00) and the lowest Tolerance (0.50), whereas Educational Programs was the variable with the lowest VIF (1.67) and the highest Tolerance (0.60). These findings indicate that the problem of multicollinearity does not exist for the regression model of business impact, Because of this making it possible to estimate with considerable accuracy the unique contribution of each predictor to Business Impact. Overall, Partnership Quality turned out to be the most important factor in influencing business impact, with Awareness and Outreach and Community Involvement being its successors.

Table 18: multicollinearity test for Business Impact

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Community Involvement	0.54	1.85
Partnership Quality	0.50	2.00
Resource Allocation	0.53	1.89
Awareness and Outreach	0.55	1.82
Educational Programs	0.60	1.67

4.6 Regression Analysis Results

4.6.1 Model Summary for Business Impact

The model indicates R = 0.68, showing a fairly strong positive association. R^2 = 0.46 indicates the five variables account for 46% of variability in Business Impact. Adjusted R^2 = 0.41 confirms the model is not overfitted. Durbin-Watson = 2.060 indicates no autocorrelation.

Table 19: Model Summary for Business Impact

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	Durbin-Watson
0.68	0.46	0.41	0.72	2.060

4.6.2 ANOVA for Business Impact Model

The ANOVA table confirms that the sample regression function fits the data well and the results indicate that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 9.48$, $p < 0.001$). It shows the five independent variables as a group are powerful predictors of Business Impact. Because of this, the alternative hypothesis that at least one regression coefficient is not equal to zero is

accepted, thereby the model demonstrates strong predictive power.

Table 20: ANOVA for Business Impact Model

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	28.45	5	5.69	9.48	0.000
Residual	33.55	43	0.60		
Total	62.00	48			

4.6.3 Regression Coefficients for Business Impact

Constant term (0. 45) is not statistically significant (p = 0. 152) which means that a situation where all independent variables are set to zero is not likely to result in a Business Impact that is A lot different from zero.

Partnership Quality (β = 0.42, p < 0.001): This factor is the most powerful one that can be used to forecast Business Impact. The positive value of the standardized coefficient suggests that a change of one standard deviation in Partnership Quality will result in a change of 0. 42 standard deviations in Business Impact. It means that the business returns that local businesses get when they collaborate based on trusted relations, have clear communication, and are mutually beneficial are the ones that are the highest.

Community Involvement (β = 0.28, p = 0.018): This is the second most important factor in predicting Business Impact. Business Impact increases by 0. 28 when the value of Community Involvement goes up by one unit. The business outcomes that include revenue growth and profit increase are effects of a business owner who participates actively in planning and implementing the engagement activities.

Awareness and Outreach (β = 0.23, p = 0.028): The third predictor that turned out to be significant is this one. For every one unit increase in awareness activities, Business Impact increases by 0. 23. This supports the idea that businesses need reliable communication methods and outreach campaigns to get to the programs of the university that support them and to the benefits that come with those programs.

Resource Allocation (β = 0.10, p = 0.377): This predictor is not statistically significant. Although the coefficient is positive, the p-value exceeds 0.05, indicating that resource

allocation does not have a significant direct effect on Business Impact in this model.

Educational Programs (β = 0.08, p = 0.394): Besides this one, the predictor is not statistically significant. The small positive coefficient is indicative of a weak relationship but the high p-value points that measured educational programs do not have the power to A lot predict Business Impact. Possibly, the educational programs impact indirectly or through other variables.

Table 21: Regression Coefficients for Business Impact

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.45	0.31		1.45	0.152
Community Involvement	0.22	0.09	0.28	2.44	0.018
Partnership Quality	0.31	0.08	0.42	3.88	0.000
Resource Allocation	0.08	0.09	0.10	0.89	0.377
Awareness and Outreach	0.18	0.08	0.23	2.25	0.028
Educational Programs	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.86	0.394

Partnership Quality (β=0.42, p<0.001) was the strongest predictor, followed by Community Involvement (β=0.28, p=0.018) and Awareness and Outreach (β=0.23, p=0.028). Resource Allocation (p=0.377) and Educational Programs (p=0.394) were not significant.

4.6.4 Model Summary for Social Impact

R = 0.61 indicates a fairly strong positive association. R^2 = 0.37 indicates the variables explain 37% of variation in Social Impact. Adjusted R^2 = 0.36. Durbin-Watson = 1.860 indicates no autocorrelation.

Table 22: Model Summary for Social Impact

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	Durbin-Watson
0.61	0.37	0.36	0.77	1.860

4.6.5 ANOVA for Social Impact Model

The ANOVA table indicates the result of the regression model as being highly statistically significant (F=25.48, p<0.001). This means that collectively the five independent variables Much predict the Social Impact. The very large F-score (25.48) against the degrees of freedom points to Truth is the model strongly predicts the social outcomes.

Table 23: ANOVA for Social Impact Model

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	65.23	5	13.05	25.48	0.000
Residual	110.77	220	0.51		
Total	176.00	225			

4.6.6 Regression Coefficients for Social Impact

The constant term (0.82) is highly significant from a statistical point of view (p < 0.001), so it reflects that in the absence of any independent variables, Social Impact still exists at some baseline level. Partnership Quality (β= 0.28, p < 0.001): The impact of Partnership Quality on Social Impact is the greatest among all factors. An increment of one unit in Partnership Quality results in Social Impact rising by 0.28. Because of this, trustworthy partnerships that communicate clearly, are mutually beneficial, and have transparent agreements seem to produce the most positive outcomes at the community level, such as enhanced social cohesion, trust, and collective efficacy. Community Involvement (β= 0.20, p = 0.005): This factor is the second strongest predictor with a significant association. Increasing community involvement by one unit causes a 0.20 increase in social impact. It circles around the idea that communal members' direct engagement in planning and performing participation activities lead to better social outcomes and the empowerment of the local residents to address their problems.

Awareness and Outreach (β= 0.19, p = 0.008): This variable is the third significant predictor of Social Impact. An increase of one unit in awareness activities is linked to a 0.19 increase in Social Impact. This points out that well-devised communication

strategies, availability of multiple outreach channels, and comprehensive information campaigns are key in making community members aware of and accessible to engagement opportunities. Resource Allocation (β= 0.13, p = 0.068): This variable is close to achieving statistical significance but does not meet the traditional p < 0.05 criterion. The positive sign of the coefficient implies that resource allocation has a role in social outcomes, but may be working through other variables such as awareness and outreach activities.

Educational Programs (β = 0.11, p = 0.073): This variable almost reaches the threshold for statistical significance but that is not enough for it to be considered as significant. The coefficient is positive, which would imply that there is a weak relationship between the deliverance of educational programs and the social impact; But, the p-value is greater than 0.05, which means the direct effect of educational programs on social outcomes could be minimal, or a bigger sample size is needed to identify it.

Table 24: Regression Coefficients for Social Impact

4.7 Qualitative Findings

As a supplement to the data results, we held semi-structured interviews with 25 key informants comprising of 5 department heads (D01-DO5), 3 community engagement coordinators (C01-C03), and 15 community residents located within the 6km radius (R01-R15). The thematic analysis surfaced five predominant themes which are discussed below.

Many of the interviewees pointed out that trust and mutual respect were at the core of any successful community engagement. A department head from the Management Department (D02) remarked:

"Initially, when we rolled out our outreach programs, the community didn't believe in us. But after three years of constant support and showing them what we do, it is now business owners who come to us for help. Trust develops over time, but it is the cornerstone of everything." (D02, Department Head, Management)

One of the community engagement coordinators (C01) remarked:

"The ones that really open up are the businesses with which we have an ongoing

conversation. We don't impose them what they have to do, we ask them. This way of communicating with each other has changed our community relations completely." (C01, Community Engagement Coordinator)

But, other participants recognized that there are differences across departments. A business owner (B03) commented:
"Some departments are very cooperative and proactive. They come to our store, see our difficulties, and think of workable solutions. Other ones just mail us without even caring if we'll be there. The two approaches couldn't be more different." (B03, Business Owner, Retail)

Such qualitative findings correspond to the quantification of Partnership Quality, which was the most powerful predictor of the business impact ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$*) as well as the social impact (* $\beta = 0.28, p < 0.001$*).*

A department from Accounting and Finance mentioned that they had to sacrifice producing research publications because of the volume of demands in community service. As a department head, he said:
"*More training requests come to us than we are able to handle. Our employees are already being stretched thin between teaching and research. We see that community engagement demands dedicated personnel But the budget doesn't support us.*
Besides that, a community engagement coordinator (C02) pointed out the problem of lack of facilities: "It would be great if we could hold more practical workshops but what are we to do, when the training spaces are simply not available?

Actually, it happens that we have to refuse a business because we can't fit them into our premises.

Correspondingly, a business owner (B07) acknowledged the impact of these limitations by saying:

"The training programs are very good; But, they need to be conducted more often. The last time I required a tax records workshop, I was told that it would be another three months before it took place. By that time, the deadline for filing had already passed for me." (B07, Business Owner, Service Sector)

These results are consistent with the figure from the survey that Resource Allocation did not become a significant predictor (p=0.377 for business impact; p=0.068 for social impact). Even if resources are made available, their effectiveness would be diminished if the frequency and timing cannot be controlled.

Remaining unawareness has been and will be a major obstacle.

A department head from Economics (D03) remarked: "We have good programs, Still most of the small business owners in the neighborhood are not aware of us. In particular, our outreach is not managing to get to those within the 3-6km radius." (D03, Department Head, Economics)

A community resident (R08) recalled:
"I have been living here for ten years and the only time I found out about the free business training at the university was last month When a neighbor told me. The university does not do any promotion in the community that I know of. No flyers, no local radio, no door-to-door information." (R08, Community Resident)
Another informant who gave suggestions for the betterment of the situation was a community engagement coordinator (C03):
One leader from the community commented,
"In fact, the university is heavily dependent on using emails and social media to get the message across. Still, a large number of our local business owners are older and not very active online. They require direct communication, community meetings, and working with other local associations to meet their needs." (C03, Community Engagement Coordinator) Such findings reveal why Awareness and Outreach had a major effect on living business impact (β=0.23, p=0.028) and social impact (β=0.19,

p=0.008) at the same time, with the mean score of outreach effectiveness being only moderate (C6, M=3.74).

Majority of the interviewees have associated their responses with positive experiences. One business owner (B11) gave an example:
"Before the university's intervention, I was tossing all the receipts in a shoe box. I had no clue if I was running a profit or loss. Thanks to their bookkeeping training, I am now complying with proper record-keeping. Last year, I filed my tax returns for the first time and even got a bank loan to further my business expansion."

(B11, Business Owner, Manufacturing) A BAIS department head (D07) commented:
"We have seen positive results in the student project assistance recently. Our students not only develop websites for the businesses but also help them to set up online payment systems and create their marketing materials. The businesses are happy to get free professional services, and Then again, our students get practical exposure. So, it is win-win."

(D05, Department Head, BAIS) A local community member (R12) acknowledged the social benefits:

"The university has really helped us in health matters. They were here to organize free check-ups and familiarize us with sanitation. The people in our community are now becoming more health-oriented." (R12, Community Resident)

These results support the statistical evidence of high mean scores for the social impact items E5 (Social networks, M=3.82), E6 (Health and wellbeing, M=3.82), and E7 (University connection, M=3.83), besides the business performance increases of 36.5% in revenue and 41.4% in profit. Business owners and coordinators shared the main reasons why educational programs were not a significant predictor for positive business impact. One of the reasons is that the programs did not sufficiently customize their support to the needs of different types of businesses. For instance, the micro-

enterprise with one employee calls for completely different assistance than the small manufacturing business with fifteen employees. At the same time, programs still take a one-size-fits-all approach to support which limits their effectiveness, Mainly for those businesses that require tailored assistance.

This was the challenge that a community engagement coordinator (C01) recognized while explaining:

"We have struggled to provide individualized support. Our programs are often one-size-fits-all, but businesses have very different needs. A micro-enterprise with one employee calls for completely different assistance than a small manufacturing business with fifteen employees. We need to do better at tailoring our support." Another problem with the educational programs was that there was a lack of that crucial follow-up.

One business owner (B05) shared his/her thoughts:

"They came once, gave us a two-hour training, and never returned. There was no follow-up, no one checked if we implemented what we learned. Without ongoing support, the training was useless."

In addition, a business owner (B02) who attended multiple training sessions shared that the sessions were quite general and he/she personally did not receive the help he/she needed:

"I attended three workshops on business planning, but nothing changed for my business. The trainers gave general advice that did not apply to my specific situation. I sell vegetables at a small stall. I need practical help with pricing and suppliers, not theories about strategic management."

(B02, Business Owner, Retail) Besides, some businesses may not benefit from training because they are not yet ready to change and apply the knowledge they get.

Department head (D05) put it this way:

"We provide the knowledge, but they must be willing to use it. Without owner

commitment, even the best training will fail."

We learn from these stories that these negative cases are the reasons why Educational Programs were not a significant predictor ($p = 0.394$ for business impact; $p = 0.073$ for social impact). The one-size-fits-all approach and lack of follow-up were factors that lessened the effectiveness of the programs for businesses that needed tailored assistance.

4.8 Discussion

The findings confirm that partnership quality is the strongest predictor of both business and social outcomes ($\beta=0.42$, $p<0.001$ for business; $\beta=0.28$, $p<0.001$ for social), supporting Zikargae (2020) and Simbai et al. (2024) who found trust, transparency, and power symmetry are the strongest prerequisites for engagement success.

Businesses realized a 36.5% revenue increase and 41.4% profit increase, exceeding the 28% income boost reported by Preece (2017) in African contexts. The 41.1% improvement in formal record-keeping and 34.1% in tax compliance support Elifneh (2015)'s recommendation for formal structures with measurable outcomes.

Resource allocation was not significant ($p=0.377$ for business; $p=0.068$ for social), contradicting Resource Dependency Theory. Qualitative data revealed that while budgets existed, training was sporadic, facilities were inadequate, and allocation was perceived as unfair. Simply providing resources is insufficient; deployment mechanisms matter more.

Educational programs were also not significant ($p=0.394$; $p=0.073$). Qualitative findings explained this: programs were generic, lacked follow-up, and did not address specific business needs. Marketing Management ($M=3.79$) and BAIS ($M=3.74$) showed highest program delivery scores, while Management scored lowest ($M=3.66$), indicating inter-departmental variation in engagement quality.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

This study assessed the social and business impacts of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University. The key findings are summarized as follows:

Finding 1: Partnership quality was the strongest predictor of both business impact ($\beta=0.42$, $p<0.001$) and social impact ($\beta=0.28$, $p<0.001$). Trust-based collaborations with clear communication and mutual benefit produce the most substantial results.

Finding 2: Community involvement significantly predicted both business impact ($\beta=0.28$, $p=0.018$) and social impact ($\beta=0.20$, $p=0.005$). Active participation by business owners in planning and implementing engagement activities directly improves outcomes.

Finding 3: Awareness and outreach significantly predicted both business impact ($\beta=0.23$, $p=0.028$) and social impact ($\beta=0.19$, $p=0.008$). However, qualitative findings revealed that businesses beyond 3km and those not active online remained unaware of programs.

Finding 4: Resource allocation was not a significant predictor of business impact ($p=0.377$) or social impact ($p=0.068$). Budgets existed but were deployed ineffectively due to sporadic training schedules, inadequate facilities, and perceived unfair distribution.

Finding 5: Educational programs were not significant predictors ($p=0.394$ for business; $p=0.073$ for social). Programs were generic, lacked follow-up, and did not target specific

business needs. Marketing Management (M=3.79) and BAIS (M=3.74) showed highest program delivery scores.

Finding 6: Supported businesses experienced remarkable improvements: 36.5% revenue increase, 41.4% profit increase, 30.9% growth in full-time employment, 41.1% improvement in formal record-keeping, and 34.1% improvement in tax compliance. All 49 businesses were still operating, and 79.6% expected to continue beyond three years.

Finding 7: Social impact was perceived positively by 226 residents, with highest scores for university connection (M=3.83), strengthened social networks (M=3.82), and improved health/wellbeing (M=3.82). Quality of life (M=3.55) and community empowerment (M=3.57) were identified as areas needing improvement.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

Conclusion 1: Community engagement by CBE-AAU creates shared value through improved business performance and social outcomes. Partnership quality is the single most critical success factor.

Conclusion 2: The mere allocation of resources does not ensure results; deployment frequency, timing, and accessibility are more important than budget size.

Conclusion 3: Generic educational programs are ineffective. Customization to specific business segments, combined with follow-up support, is essential for meaningful impact.

Conclusion 4: Marketing Management and BAIS departments demonstrate strongest program delivery and should lead future engagement initiatives, while all departments need capacity strengthening.

Conclusion 5: Community engagement at CBE-AAU is economically viable and contributes to MSME survival rates significantly above the national average (79.6% vs. 35% expected three-year survival).

Conclusion 6: Hypotheses H1, H2, H4, H6, H7, and H9 were supported. Hypotheses H3, H5, H8, and H10 were not supported, indicating that resource allocation and educational programs require restructuring to achieve impact.

5.3 Recommendations

For CBE-AAU Management

Recommendation 1: Formalize partnership agreements with local business associations and community organizations. Establish memoranda of understanding that define roles, responsibilities, and mutual benefits.

Recommendation 2: Establish a dedicated community engagement office with at least one full-time coordinator responsible for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Recommendation 3: Ring-fence budgets for outreach activities and ensure training sessions are offered at least monthly, eliminating current three-month waiting periods.

Recommendation 4: Diversify communication channels beyond email and social media to include face-to-face community meetings, local radio, flyers, and partnerships with business associations, particularly to reach businesses within the 3-6km radius.

For Department Heads

Recommendation 5: Discontinue one-size-fits-all training. Conduct pre-training needs assessments to tailor programs to specific business types (micro-enterprises vs. small manufacturers).

Recommendation 6: Establish follow-up systems including post-training check-ins at 1, 3, and 6 months to monitor implementation and provide ongoing support.

Recommendation 7: Marketing Management and BAIS departments should lead college -wide community engagement initiatives, sharing best practices with other departments.

Recommendation 8: Implement outcome measurement systems tracking business results for at least one year after training.

Policymakers

Recommendation 9: Co-invest in university-business linkage programs through matching grants or tax incentives for participating MSMEs.

Recommendation 10: Mandate that colleges allocate a minimum percentage of their budget to community engagement activities with measurable results.

Recommendation 11: Establish a national mechanism for monitoring university engagement impact on MSME development.

For Future Researchers

Recommendation 12: Conduct longitudinal studies tracking the same businesses for 3-5 years to assess sustained performance and survival rates.

Recommendation 13: Investigate why certain departments outperform others in engagement delivery through comparative case studies.

Recommendation 14: Perform cost-benefit analyses to determine return on investment for different types of engagement programs.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

First, the cross-sectional design captures perceptions at one point in time, limiting causal claims. Second, business impact data was self-reported, potentially subject to recall bias. Third, the geographical scope was confined to a six-kilometer radius. Fourth, common method bias may exist since both independent and dependent variables were measured through similar Likert scales. Fifth, the business owner sample of 49 supported businesses limits statistical power for detecting small effects. These limitations were addressed through triangulation with qualitative interviews, scrutiny of statistical diagnostics (all VIF values under 2.1), and use of objective accounting figures where possible.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should employ longitudinal designs tracking businesses for 3-5 years.

Comparative studies across different colleges of Addis Ababa University would reveal best engagement models. Cost-benefit financial analyses would guide resource allocation decisions. Experimental or quasi-experimental designs with control groups would strengthen causal claims. Finally, research in other Ethiopian universities would increase generalizability across different institutional contexts.

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7. ANNEXES

ANNEX I: STUDENT AND STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Study Title: Assessing the Social and Business Impacts of Community Engagement: A Case Study of the College of Business and Economics at Addis Ababa University

Dear Participant,

This questionnaire is intended to gather data for academic research only. The research aims at measuring the social and business effects of community engagement at the College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University. Your candid answers will be very valuable for the success of this study. All the data you give will be kept entirely confidential and academic purposes only. You should not write your name anywhere on this survey.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Mekdes Dagnachew

MBA Candidate

Addis Ababa University

Section A: Demographic Information

Please tick (✓) or fill in the appropriate response.

No.	Question	Response
A1	Gender	Male ☐ Female ☐
A2	Age group	_____ years
A3	Department	Management ☐ Economics ☐ Accounting & Finance ☐ Marketing Management ☐ Business Administration & Information Systems ☐
A4	Status	Student ☐ Staff ☐
A5	Years at AAU (students)	_____ years
A6	Years at AAU (staff)	_____ years
A7	Do you currently reside within 6 kilometers of Addis Ababa University?	Yes ☐ No ☐ *(If No, please skip Section E)*

Section B: Community Involvement and Partnership Quality

Please indicate your level of agreement using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Community						

Involvement						
B1	The college actively involves community members in planning engagement activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B2	Community members participate regularly in the college's engagement programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B3	Local businesses are given opportunities to suggest engagement activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B4	Community feedback is taken seriously when designing programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B5	The college collaborates with community members as equal partners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Partnership Quality						
B6	The college has strong, trusting relationships with local organizations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B7	Communication between the college and community partners is regular and open	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B8	Both the college and community partners benefit from the relationship	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B9	Partnership agreements are clear and followed by both sides	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B10	The college shares resources fairly with community partners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section C: Resource Allocation and Awareness Activities

Please indicate your level of agreement using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Resource Allocation						
C1	The college allocates sufficient budget for community engagement activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C2	Enough staff are assigned to coordinate community engagement programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C3	The college provides adequate materials and facilities for engagement activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C4	Resources are distributed fairly across different community programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Awareness and Outreach Activities						
C5	The college effectively informs the community about available engagement opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C6	Outreach messages reach a wide range of community members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C7	The college uses multiple channels to communicate with the community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C8	Community members are aware of how to participate in college programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section D: Educational Programs Offered by Departments

Please indicate your level of agreement using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Note: This section asks about what programs your department OFFERS to the community, not about whether those programs improved business performance.

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Management Department						
D1	Our department offers business consultancy services to local businesses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D2	Our department provides leadership and management training to the community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D3	Our department delivers marketing assistance to local businesses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Economics Department						
D4	Our department provides market research services to the community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D5	Our department offers economic analysis and feasibility studies to local businesses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D6	Our department produces policy briefings for local economic planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accounting and Finance						

Department						
D7	Our department delivers bookkeeping and financial training to local businesses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D8	Our department provides tax assistance and financial advice to community members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D9	Our department offers training on public procurement and contract management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D10	Our department conducts public financial management workshops	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D11	Our department offers training on inventory and warehouse management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D12	Our department provides supply chain optimization advice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Marketing Management Department						
D13	Our department delivers practical training on branding and digital marketing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D14	Our department offers market research and customer behavior analysis services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Business Administration and						

Information Systems Department						
D15	Our department offers training on business software and record-keeping systems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D16	Our department provides e-commerce and digital business advice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section E: Social Impact (For Residents Within 6km Only)

Screening Confirmation: You indicated in Question A7 that you reside within 6km of AAU. Please complete this section. If you answered "No" to A7, please skip to Section F.

Please indicate your level of agreement using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
E1	Community engagement has improved relationships among community members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E2	Trust between the university and the community has increased due to engagement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E3	The quality of life in the surrounding community has improved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E4	Community members feel more empowered to solve local problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E5	Social networks and cooperation within the community have strengthened	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E6	Community health and wellbeing have improved through	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	engagement programs					
E7	The community feels more connected to the university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ANNEX II: BUSINESS OWNER QUESTIONNAIRE

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Study Title: Assessing the Social and Business Impacts of Community Engagement: A Case Study of the College of Business and Economics at Addis Ababa University

Dear Business Owner,

This questionnaire is designed to collect data directly from business owners like yourself who have participated in community engagement activities with the College of Business and Economics. Your honest responses are essential for accurately measuring business impact. All information you provide was kept strictly confidential. Your individual business financial information were only be reported in aggregate form with no identifying information. You are not required to write your name anywhere on this questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Mekdes Dagnachew

MBA Candidate

Addis Ababa University

Section A: Business Information

No.	Question	Response
A1	Business type	Retail ☐ Service ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Other ☐
A2	Years in operation	_____ years
A3	Legal registration status	Registered ☐ Not registered ☐
A4	Business location (distance from AAU)	Less than 1km ☐ 1-3km ☐ 3-6km ☐
A5	Current number of full-time employees	_____ employees
A6	Current number of part-time employees	_____ employees

Section B: Engagement with University

No.	Question	Response
B1	Have you received support from AAU College of Business and Economics?	Yes ☐ No ☐ *(If No, please stop here)*
B2	Type of support received (tick all that apply)	Training/workshop ☐ One-on-one consultancy ☐ Financial/accounting advice ☐ Marketing assistance ☐ Business planning ☐ Student project assistance ☐ Other: _____
B3	How many times have you participated?	_____ times
B4	When did you first receive support?	Month: _____ Year: _____

B5	When did you most recently receive support?	Month: _____ Year: _____
B6	Which department provided the support? (tick all that apply)	Management ☐ Economics ☐ Accounting & Finance ☐ Public Administration ☐ Logistics & Supply Chain ☐ Marketing Management ☐ BAIS ☐

Section C: Objective Business Performance Metrics

C1. Revenue and Profitability

Period	Average Monthly Revenue (ETB)	Average Monthly Profit (ETB) (if known)
Before receiving university support (12 months prior to first engagement)	_____ ETB	_____ ETB
Current (last 12 months)	_____ ETB	_____ ETB

C2. Employment

Period	Number of Full-Time Employees	Number of Part-Time Employees
Before receiving university support	_____ employees	_____ employees
Current	_____ employees	_____ employees

C3. Credit Access

No.	Question	Response
C3.1	Have you obtained a bank loan since receiving university support?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C3.2	If yes, what was the loan amount?	_____ ETB

C3.3	If yes, did university support help you prepare the loan application?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C3.4	Have you received other forms of credit (microfinance, supplier credit, family loan)?	Yes ☐ No ☐

C4. Market Access and Business Growth

No.	Question	Response
C4.1	Have you entered new customer markets since receiving university support?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C4.2	Have you expanded to new physical locations?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C4.3	Have you added new products or services?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C4.4	Has your business acquired formal certification or licensing?	Yes ☐ No ☐

C5. Financial Management Practices

No.	Question	Response
C5.1	Do you currently maintain formal written financial records?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C5.2	Before university support, did you maintain formal records?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C5.3	Do you currently file taxes regularly?	Yes ☐ No ☐
C5.4	Before university support, did you file taxes regularly?	Yes ☐ No ☐

C6. Business Survival

No.	Question	Response
C6.1	Is your business still operating?	Yes ☐ No ☐

C6.2	Do you expect your business to continue operating for the next 3 years?	Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

Section D: Perceived Business Impact

Please indicate your level of agreement: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree.

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
D1	University support improved my business profitability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D2	University support helped me reduce business costs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D3	University support helped me increase sales revenue	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D4	University support helped me access new customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D5	University support improved my financial record-keeping	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D6	University support helped me become tax compliant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D7	University support improved my business planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D8	The benefits of university support were worth my time investment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D9	I would recommend this program to other business owners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐