

Exhibiting entrepreneurial behavior at work: a lived experience of a millennial entrepreneur

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper offers a story-based/narrative inquiry rooted in qualitative methodology, portraying a millennial entrepreneur in Uganda, a low-developed country that has successfully demonstrated entrepreneurial behaviors at work. The study of entrepreneurial behavior at workplaces by millennial entrepreneurs formed the basis for the real-life trials that entrepreneurs go through in their businesses. Besides, the produced empirical content gives a solid linkage between the story and the enterprise's work setting.

Design/methodology/approach – In this study, the authors used storytelling to get a clear view of reality and obtain a real-life experience of entrepreneurial behavior at work. The experiences and perceptions of the millennial entrepreneur were assessed by conducting in-depth interviews while focusing on the context, actions, results and lessons to generate a coherent story.

Findings – This paper reports that demonstrating entrepreneurial behavior at work by the millennial entrepreneur resulted in better performance that ultimately benefited the enterprise. Additionally, findings reveal that story-based narrative inquiry is appropriate for demonstrating the true reality at workplaces, especially in the context of exhibiting the behaviors of entrepreneurs. Other entrepreneurs can emulate what the actor did and benchmark on the findings to improve their performance and that of their enterprises.

Originality/value – This study is unique in its use of a positive story showing a real-life experience of how entrepreneurial behaviors are exhibited at workplaces in micro and small enterprises in a low-developed country like Uganda. The paper also offers evidence and insights into the use of a positive story to demonstrate a practical experience of how millennial entrepreneurs demonstrate entrepreneurial behaviors at work. Additionally, the study used multiple theories that best explained the current practice of entrepreneurial behavior among millennials at workplaces in micro and small enterprises.

Keywords Entrepreneurial behavior, Millennials, Micro and small enterprises, Story telling, Theory

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Globally, millennial entrepreneurship is important for the continuous growth of both developed and emerging economies (Vadera, 2018). Because of the millennials, the world is witnessing a lot of creativity, new opportunities and the emergence of unconventional work choices (Chatterjee *et al.*, 2021). Born between 1980 and 2000, millennial entrepreneurs are characterized by the significant changes that occurred during their time like the advancement



of technology, globalization and the millennium development goals (Vadera, 2018). These have had a great impact on their entrepreneurial behavior at work and in business (Basuki *et al.*, 2021). Researchers agree that little is known about them (Twenge, 2006; Chillakuri and Mahanandia, 2018). Prominent millennial entrepreneurs worldwide like Mark Zuckerberg (born in 1984), chief executive officer (CEO) of Facebook; Brian Chesky (born in 1981), of Airbnb, Kevin Systrom (born in 1983), CEO of Instagram, and others are regarded as early starters, entrepreneurial, tech-savvy and multi-taskers. In low-developed countries like Uganda, millennial entrepreneurs like Ricky Thomson, CEO of Safe Boda, David Mushabe of SMS ONE, Brian Dhikusooka of Sabula Uganda Andrew Irumba of the Pan African Pyramid also exhibit similar behaviors. Such behaviors have been instrumental in the survival of businesses for millennial entrepreneurs (Widyanti *et al.*, 2020).

Despite the significant role entrepreneurial behavior plays in the success of the businesses of millennial entrepreneurs (Twenge, 2006), the majority of the earlier studies have not taken a keen interest in the concept (Kyei-Frimpong *et al.*, 2022; Liu *et al.*, 2019; Chillakuri and Mahanandia, 2018). More so, prior studies on millennial entrepreneurship have focused on aspects like millennials empowerment (Ogamba, 2019), from baby boomers to millennials (Pillai and Dam, 2019), healing a hurt generation with humane entrepreneurship (Alves and Gilroy, 2021), knowledge applications for millennial entrepreneurs (Paulus, 2022), among others, with little or no focus on the behavior of millennial entrepreneurs. Besides, most of the earlier studies have focused more on developed economies (Liu *et al.*, 2019; López-Muñoz *et al.*, 2023) whose business environment is different, and the findings may not apply to low-developed countries like Uganda (Nassazi, 2013). In Uganda, there is little knowledge on the subject. This, therefore, calls for a study on millennial entrepreneurial behavior which is Uganda centric.

Due to their importance, major authorities and governments worldwide have given millennials attention and support. In Uganda, the government has also been making efforts to encourage people, especially millennials to get involved in entrepreneurial activities (Sebikari, 2019). In a bid to improve performance, reduce unemployment and eradicate poverty in a country with a huge number of the population being millennials, government of Uganda has been coming up with supportive programs like Prosperity for All in 2006–07, Youth Venture Capital Fund, Skilling Uganda (Business, Technical and Vocational Education Training strategic plan, 2011–2020), Uganda Microfinance Support Center to extend credit facilities to micro, Small small and medium enterprises (Nakku *et al.*, 2020), the parish development model in 2022, among others. While these and other interventions have looked brilliant, few businesses have succeeded (Sebikari, 2019). There is still a high failure rate of such businesses in Uganda (Turyahikayo, 2015) and the world over (Hobbs, 2017). Despite this failure rate, there are millennial entrepreneurs whose businesses have succeeded (Basuki *et al.*, 2021). Such success is premised on the ability of these individuals to exhibit entrepreneurial behaviors (Shane, 2003).

To overcome these deficiencies drawbacks, we use a positive story of a millennial entrepreneur from Uganda, a low-developed country, whose success is based on his ability to demonstrate entrepreneurial behaviors at work. According to Yost *et al.* (2015), stories with positive outcomes can be replicated by others in the future, as further emphasized by Nalweyiso *et al.* (2022). Possibly, this positive story in our study may be a yardstick for other millennial entrepreneurs to improve the performance of their enterprises.

2. Literature and theoretical review

Entrepreneurial behavior is a set of conducts or activities business people demonstrate that allow them to creatively improve prevailing ideas (Shane, 2003). They are activities of

starting a business and managing it, bearing all the risks getting gettingmake makes to get profits. Entrepreneurship is a great process that needs certain qualities for one to succeed (Wang *et al.*, 2022). The entrepreneurs' attributes and skills they exhibit at work are an explanation of their behaviors (Wang *et al.*, 2022). According to Dyer *et al.* (2008), some individuals are born with traits of being entrepreneurs, and a good percentage of entrepreneurial behaviors are credited to being inherited, but according to Kuratko (2017), entrepreneurial behaviors are learned and can be developed through thought, experience and education. From this, it can therefore be concluded that the behaviors entrepreneurs have at work can both be born and also be determined by internal and external factors like education, the environment and the experiences they go through (Nicolaou and Shane, 2009). Irrespective of how entrepreneurial behaviors are revealed, scholars (Shane *et al.*, 2003; Nicolaou and Shane, 2009) agree on the general characters and behaviors of these entrepreneurs.

According to Pew Research Center (2015), the millennial generation's behaviors are diverse and include tech-savvy, multi-taskers, job hoppers, racially diverse and highly educated generation. Struckell (2019) adds excessive interest in oneself, self-assured, work-life balance and optimism as the distinctive descriptions of millennial entrepreneur behaviors. These factors influence millennials' way of living and the way they work. According to Twenge (2006), these behaviors act as the millennial entrepreneurs' guiding tools at work. The personal characteristics of entrepreneurs are related to their entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors because the behaviors they exhibit are a reflection of their characters. This is supported by Hansemark (1998), Baum *et al.* (2007), Rauch and Frese (2007), and Antoncic *et al.* (2015) who noted that the characteristics of entrepreneurs significantly relate to their entrepreneurial behaviors, thereby determining the way they work or act in business.

To further explain entrepreneurial behavior at work by millennial entrepreneurs, we use several theories that form a foundation for this study. The study employs a multi-theoretical approach to comprehensively explain entrepreneurial behavior among millennials since none of them seem to adequately explain it on their own. Scholars like Suddaby *et al.* (2011) and Nalweyiso *et al.* (2022) support the use of multiple theories by echoing that theorizing requires combining concepts from several information sources. The theories include generational cohort theory (GCT), personal initiative theory (PI) and complex adaptive systems theory (CAST).

GCT (Strauss and Howe, 1991) labels a group of people with similarities in the form of the era in which they were born and when they came of age by assigning them a set of characteristics, life experiences, beliefs and values. According to the theory, previous events are associated with recurring generational personas which categorize them as having similar beliefs, qualities and values (Strauss and Howe, 1997). As new generations come, they bring new and ground-breaking ideas, beliefs and values to replace those of older generations. Because people grow up during the same period, they share similar challenges, opportunities and thinking, and these shape the way they value/see things and behave in life, at work and in business (Strauss and Howe, 1997). This implies that the value that people attach to their work and the level of belief they have in themselves and things around them drive them to work. In a work setting, when one values work as being important to him/her and believe in themselves, they are likely to perform that task very well because of the importance they attach to that work (Salama, 2013).

Empirically, studies show that millennials work hard to see that their ventures perform well because of the value and belief they attach to their work (Enke *et al.*, 2018). They value their work as being important to them, and therefore, they should see good performance. However, according to Steffy (2023), not all millennials value their work the same way. This suggests a proactive behavior toward work which millennials exhibit at

their workplaces (Prifti *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, the foregoing discussion reveals GCT's ability to explain entrepreneurial behavior by millennial entrepreneurs which is a major concern of this paper.

The GCT also explains behavioral change by demonstrating how one changes habits or behavior at work to suit what an individual believes in achieving. The theory explains behavioral change by showing that when people believe in something, they change their behaviors to achieve it. It shows how people change their characters and enact actions they feel they can perform successfully. Behavioral change among millennials has been made possible by the changing global business environment, development in technology, communication and global transport network (Liu *et al.*, 2019). The change in habits makes millennials become more focused and result oriented, which ultimately plays a big role in their business turnaround. Based on empirical evidence, Liu *et al.* (2019) support that behavioral change is one of the ways entrepreneurs improve their performance at work and that of their businesses. However, scholars (Rudolph *et al.*, 2021) echo that the idea of generations is pervasive and is just used to explain different patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving that we see every day, especially in workplaces. Therefore, there is a tension between what science says about generations and what people do with the idea of generations. Additionally, GCT puts less emphasis on initiative conduct which is an important attribute in this study (Frese *et al.*, 1996) but is explained by the PI.

Personal initiative (Frese *et al.*, 1996) is characterized by its strong attributes of self-starting, being proactive and overcoming difficulties (resilience) that normally arise when one is pursuing a goal (Frese and Fay, 2001). The theory assumes that individuals with certain personalities are influenced by their surrounding the environment and the behavior they have (Frese and Fay, 2001). This means that, when entrepreneurs are self-starters, proactive and resilient, they to pursue their goals at work and succeed. This is what they call a behavioral pattern that results in an individual taking an active and self-starting approach to work (Kusemererwa *et al.*, 2020). Such people are resilient and persist in overcoming challenges when doing their work. Entrepreneurs normally increase their initiatives by taking on activities that improve their performance, which is a sign of personal initiative at work.

Empirically, studies show that initiative conduct is a strong character under personal initiative (Nsereko *et al.*, 2018). It is a work behavior in business that is witnessed when people are self-starting, proactive, resilient and goal and orientation-oriented, (Frese and Fay, 2001). According to Frese (2015), entrepreneurial behavior is a function of entrepreneurial initiative, implying that taking the initiative at work is key to becoming successful in business (Nsereko *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, business persons have to take the initiative at work if their businesses are to succeed (Kusemererwa *et al.*, 2020). Accordingly, the preceding review reveals PI's ability to explain entrepreneurial behavior among millennial entrepreneurs. However, scholars Nsereko *et al.* (2021) argue that not everyone can be a self-starter, proactive and resilient as the theory assumes. Some people wait to be told or even pushed. PI also pays less attention to adaptability tendencies which is important in this study but has been explained by the CAST.

CAST presumes an adaptive tendency where people adjust in a complex business environment to match emerging market challenges (Goldstein *et al.*, 2010). The technology environment millennials have grown that requires them to continuously adapt to changes at work. Drucker (1995) notes that an individual may or may not be visionary at the initial stages of the business, but eventual victory is achieved after they have adapted to the challenging environment. Drucker (1995) adds that people make the right adjustments to the business for them to succeed, which means that success is a function of meaningful adjustment in business. Millennial entrepreneurs make changes in their behaviors at work, for them to

become more competitive. Adaptation also helps them to get the best balance between the business and its environment (Hazy *et al.*, 2007). This is in support of Raza *et al.* (2020) who echoed that businesses should not be entirely resistant to change; they have to welcome some adaptations to their ecosystem as this will help them improve.

Based on empirical evidence, millennial entrepreneurs should find the adaptation of virtually all aspects of their work important because the ability to learn and adapt is important (Liu *et al.*, 2019). Most businesses for the millennials are micro and small (Twenge, 2006), and they are more susceptible to environmental trials. They do not have enough cash for their businesses, and most of them borrow money to fund their operations and normally depend on a small customer base (Liu *et al.*, 2019). These challenges need a more pragmatic entrepreneur who can read the situation and adjust. The entrepreneur can have a strong impact on the business if he/she can rationally react to tricky situations in the business. However, they may resist adapting if they do not have a core attachment to the enterprise (Frese and Fay, 2001). This means that they may take longer to acknowledge the importance of adjusting which can affect the business. Even Nalweyiso *et al.* (2022) add that CAST requires that companies work in an unstable atmosphere where it is hard to anticipate results, which calls for a type of leadership in business that encourages the creation of new ideas rather than adapting to the situation. However, that does not take away the great impact of CAST in organizations (Daniel and Daniel, 2023). The aforementioned review of literature and theories form a strong basis for the use of a multi-theoretical approach in explaining this study.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study context

The study was carried out on Tushanga (pseudonym), a millennial entrepreneur, the owner of Tushanga Media Ltd, a company found in Kampala, Uganda. His company specializes in technology innovation, content and software development. He started it as a small family business that later grew into a big company. We selected Tushanga because he demonstrated entrepreneurial behaviors at his work that successfully turned his enterprise around. Tushanga Media is now one of the leaders in technology innovation, content and software development in Uganda.

3.2 Research philosophy

Ontologically, we used social constructivism which assumes that reality is based on people's subjective experiences of the external world (Žukauskas *et al.*, 2018). To get reality in this study, we employed an in-depth examination by getting involved through observing, interviewing and interacting with Tushanga. With this qualitative methodology, we used in-depth interviews to get knowledge about entrepreneurial behavior. This helped us to get human interest into the study and also tap into reality (Ryan and Rutty, 2019). According to Nalweyiso *et al.* (2022), this qualitative methodology helps to get a clear understanding of the issues under investigation.

3.3 Research design

In entrepreneurship, the interaction between theory, design and practice is not fully determined (Hoffmann, 2021). For this study, we wanted to get a clear view of reality, and we used storytelling. According to Nalweyiso *et al.* (2022), storytelling is another form of narrative inquiry that is rooted in the qualitative methodology that makes the researcher experience the story for real. We used unstructured questions to get a proper understanding

of reality (Namatovu *et al.*, 2016). With this method, we were able to think about and discuss real-life entrepreneurial behavior at work. This is supported by Kondratjew and Kahrens (2019), who asserted that narrative inquiry makes the researchers and the respondents get deeply involved in the story. It is from this that scholars like Passon (2019) maintained their support for storytelling by echoing that with this technique, the researcher is more likely to remember the evidence shared in the story.

3.4 Study population and sample

The study focused on the business owner Tushanga who is a millennial entrepreneur. We first focused on four millennial entrepreneurs by observing their entrepreneurial behaviors at their workplaces for three months. After reviewing the literature on millennial entrepreneurial behaviors (Foster *et al.*, 2003; Pew Research Center, 2015), these studies exposed such entrepreneurial behaviors for millennial entrepreneurs like tech-savvy, innovativeness, multitasking, optimism and others. It is these behaviors and others that we based on to choose Tushanga for the study. He exhibited these behaviors more than the other millennial entrepreneurs. We observed him for some time, the way he was doing his work and how he responded to situations.

3.5 Data collection

The researchers used an interview guide to collect data. This type of inquiry is appropriate for strength-based research. The design is inquisitive and produces descriptive positive conversations looted on social reality (Watkins *et al.*, 2016). After deciding that Tushanga was the ideal participant in our study, we physically in-person went to his company Tushanga Media Limited many times and conducted several interviews, which helped the researchers to get a clear story. We introduced ourselves and told him why we had gone there. We had some background questions like why we chose his business for this research. Data were collected over time, we went to his company eight times to collect data, get his experience, and observe his entrepreneurial behaviors. Each of the eight sessions was long enough between 45 and 60 min, and this enabled the researchers to get deep insights into Tushanga's life. The different times we went to his company helped us observe his behaviors, the way he was doing his work and the general situation at his company. We let him choose the time for the interviews, and once there, we began with easy questions. We took notes and audio-recorded the interviews after for seeking permission from him (Nalweyiso *et al.*, 2022). They were conversational interviews where we used unstructured questions. For every session, we started with introductory questions like Can you tell me about . . .? and Could you describe to me how . . .? then we used follow-up and probing questions like Could you say something more about . . .? What exactly happened? What did you do? How did you experience it? and What do you think about it? and lastly, we asked specifying questions like Do you have any examples of this? and What did you actually do when . . .? (Creswell, 2013). Toward the end of the interview, we asked interpreting questions like You then mean that . . .? Is it correct that? and others. We were flexible when asking him questions, and we listened to him with an open mind and also allowed him to ask questions.

3.6 Data analysis

We used the content analysis technique that handles voice recordings and written, spoken and visual pieces. This analyzed transcripts and field notes. With this technique, we examined how Tushanga was able to understand the indicators of entrepreneurial

behavior. We used themes of context, actions, results and lessons to come up with a comprehensible story. The context highlights what is happening that has to be worked on, actions show what has been done to overcome the challenges, results are the outcomes and lastly, the lessons are what we learn from the story. As indicated by [Nalweyiso et al. \(2022\)](#), the above-mentioned themes became the unit of analysis in this study, and with them, we were able to capture and analyze the experiences, perceptions and emotions of the respondent in terms of entrepreneurial behavior. The researchers coded the data, and coding was intended to make the analysis systematic and avoid jumping to premature conclusions. To remove bias from the coding process (Straus and Corbin, 1990), the initial coding was done by the head of the research team and later confirmed by the whole study team. To ensure that the right information was taken under the individual themes for each interview, transcripts were cautiously handled by the researcher. Then, the observations that were common across all interviews were put together to give a clear story.

3.7 Ethical considerations

We asked for an introductory letter from Makerere University Business School which we presented to the participant. We introduced ourselves to Tushanga, the participant, and then enlightened him on the reasons why we were carrying out a study ([Saunders et al., 2012](#)). We agreed with Tushanga and further informed him about the confidentiality issues. For instance, we told him that it was not a must for him to participate, and this was done every time we went to interview him. The researcher requested the participant to choose the time for the interviews. We also requested him to allow us to record the interviews. The researchers informed the participant that they were all guided by the [Uganda Data Protection and Privacy Act \(2019\)](#) and agreed on the respect for confidentiality and informed consent.

4. Findings

The researchers present their findings in the arrangement of a positive story titled “Demonstrating Entrepreneurial Behavior at Work.” The story below is structured under context, actions, results and lessons ([Smith, 2012](#)). To [Kondratjew and Kahrens \(2019\)](#), stories and case studies are intended to explore real-life perspectives. Using a story format to present findings provides comprehensive information about the perceptions of the participants and its conclusions link to the other elements of the study. To reinforce the findings of the study, we included verbatim quotes in the story.

4.1 Demonstrating entrepreneurial behavior at work

4.1.1 Context. Tushanga, a young entrepreneur, is the director of Tushanga Media Ltd, a company located in Kampala that specializes in technology innovation, content and software development. He founded his business in 2008 as a small family company that later expanded into a big company. They started by developing content that was sent to the public on their cell phones through different keywords like news updates, sports news updates, daily inspirational quotes and daily religious messages, among others, using shortcodes like 4444, 5555 and others as gateways. However, the content sent would often also go to people who had not subscribed for it, and their money was taken. This brought outrage from the public who complained of being cheated by these companies. The business was so profitable, and the much revenue they were making pushed them to expand. They ventured into other businesses like signing with musicians to get rights over their music and sell it as caller tunes to people. On realizing that it was profitable, the artists

also hiked their charges which made Tushanga and other SMS companies to even fail to pay them. The SMS companies used to work with telecom firms on a revenue share basis, and their work was to manage payments on behalf of the SMS businesses. When telecoms realized that the SMS companies were making a lot of money, they parted ways and decided to do business themselves by developing the same content. This made Tushanga lose business and revenues drastically. Tushanga had a huge number of staff whose salaries were not even being paid on time. He so believed in himself that he would not consult anyone when doing his work which led him to make so many mistakes like choosing the wrong media when promoting his content. On knowing that these companies were even deducting money from people who had not subscribed, the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) came in with a policy to safeguard Ugandans. They stopped companies from sending content if one had not subscribed for it. The UCC even ordered the SMS companies to delete all the databases they had and promote their content afresh for people to subscribe. This made them lose about 95% of their clientele and revenue. Consequently, many SMS companies collapsed as they could not meet their expenses.

4.1.2 Actions. Having realized that things were getting worse every day and the business was going down, Tushanga decided to become innovative and looked for new opportunities within the same SMS business by creatively developing attractive and unique content and platforms that did not require working with/depending on telecoms as was the case before. He did this to become independent because the telecoms were making it increasingly difficult to work with them. For instance, he developed a short code that people use to check their results of national final examinations such as Primary Leaving Examination, Uganda Certificate of Education and Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education when they are out. Rather than losing all the musicians because their charges were high, Tushanga took the initiative and looked for ways to maintain a good relationship with them by renegotiating their contracts to favorable terms. Because he had a huge number of staff whose performance was not even good, he maintained his values by quickly devising means to pay them and then reduced their number to remain with those who were more competent and was able to pay. He started consulting his network of friends in the media to promote his content by advertising them on radio stations around the country cheaply using his money. With the belief that he could get back his customers, Tushanga complied with the new UCC regulation and stopped sending content to people who had not subscribed. He later deleted all the telephone contacts in his company's databases and looked for new customers completely. Tushanga performed these actions to address the challenges his company had as detailed in the context.

4.1.3 Results. As a result, his company developed unique platforms and is now attracting more customers who are willing to subscribe and pay for his services at will. This helped his company to expand to even manage big clients like government agencies, banks, telecoms, media houses and other companies in and outside Uganda using his software. Tushanga started working with musicians freely again on better payment terms. He remained with a few competent employees who started developing content efficiently at reduced costs. His company started making profits again, and he even started paying his overhead costs like salaries, rent and others. Tushanga acquired knowledge from his network of friends who started guiding him on how to promote his content and platforms. He built credibility and gained the confidence of customers and other government agencies, and people started paying for his services. Tushanga now runs a successful company that is one of the leaders in technology innovation, content and software development in Uganda.

4.1.4 Lessons. From the story, we learn that when people take the initiative at work, they accomplish entrepreneurial goals. When people maintain their values at work, they make good decisions. Complying with the regulators builds trust among the clientele, and when people change their behaviors, it creates harmony among partners and the business benefits.

5. Discussion

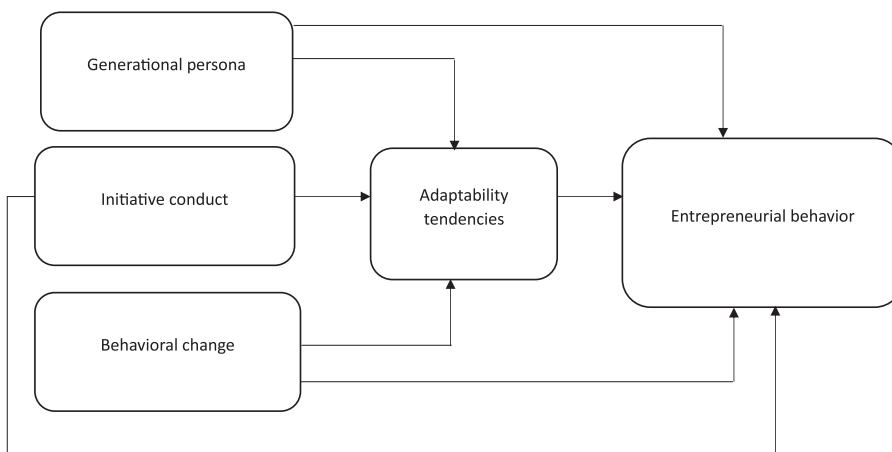
The findings show that when the business was almost closing, Tushanga took the initiative to look for new opportunities within the same SMS industry without changing the business line. Consequently, the company became an innovation hub. Tushanga revealed that he started developing attractive and unique content and platforms that did not require working with/depending on telecoms as was the case before. This means that taking the initiative at work helps one to realize entrepreneurial goals, which ultimately benefit the enterprise. The finding is similar to that of [Kilic and Gök \(2022\)](#) who found out that one's proactive orientation like taking an initiative turns into enacting creativity in work processes. The finding is also similar to that of [Fay et al. \(2022\)](#) who indicated that when individuals foresee themselves as engaging in proactive work behavior, they rate their work as more meaningful and increase their performance. Though in practice, most entrepreneurs fail, and they, therefore, need to persevere and become innovative. However, their study was carried out in Germany, a developed country, unlike the current study which is done in Uganda, a low-developed country. Thus, this study adds to the existing body of knowledge by indicating that when individuals show initiative conduct at work, they might exhibit entrepreneurial behaviors. Also, the findings of our study concur with PI which asserts that the more personal initiative the entrepreneur shows, the higher their performance ([Frese and Gielnik, 2023](#)).

Findings further show that Tushanga changed his behaviors/habits at work and enacted actions he felt he could do successfully. Having realized that his company was going to lose all the musicians whom they were getting money from, he devised means to maintain a good relationship with them by renegotiating their contracts to favorable terms. Tushanga adds that he did this to avoid losing all the musicians who were his cash cow. Musicians are now freely working with Tushanga Media. This means that when people change their habits at work and treat their business partners well, it can create harmony and business benefits. The finding concurs with [Freud \(1917/1953\)](#) as sighted by [Metallo et al. \(2021\)](#) who showed that human beings are a complex combination of conscious and rational aspects as well as unconscious and irrational aspects of the self. Sometimes they change their behaviors and habits in business which yields good or bad outcomes. Therefore, this finding concurs with GCT which asserts that people in a particular age group may share a distinct set of habits and characters. It is these characters and habits that shape one to act in a given way at work ([Strauss and Howe, 1991](#)).

Furthermore, the findings reveal that Tushanga valued his work highly. He worked hard because his work was of great importance to him. He further revealed that because he wanted his company to have good performance, he carefully reduced the number of staff and remained with those who were more competent and was able to pay. They developed content efficiently at reduced costs, and his company started making profits again. This means that when entrepreneurs consider their business to be important to them, they employ competent workers who can perform their duties competently. This finding is in line with [Silva et al. \(2023\)](#) who assert that individuals feel good about themselves when they see their efforts yielding good results. Those individuals measure their performance by the impact of their actions and that of those they employ. The generational persona of such individuals is shown by the value and importance they attach to their work. If the importance they attach to their work is high, they work hard and also employ only those

people whom they think can perform. This finding supports GCT which asserts that generational persona determines the way people do their work (Strauss and Howe, 1991). Thus, in GCT, people carefully act on issues that will bring good results to the business because the entrepreneur feels the business is so important to them. They, therefore, look for employees who can give a good performance.

Lastly, findings show that Tushanga complied with the UCC's regulations and stopped sending content to people who had not subscribed for it. It was a hard decision for him to even delete all the telephone contacts in his company database as required by the regulator, UCC. The regulator, after finding out that these companies were taking people's money who had not subscribed to their content, ordered all companies to immediately stop it and delete the contacts they had. Tushanga complied, and this meant he had to adapt to the reality of operating without customers. He revealed that he complied with the regulation by becoming more innovative and started developing content that brought old and new customers and built his company even stronger. Such a finding implies that when entrepreneurs comply with the regulators in the country where they are operating, they gain credibility and the trust of the public and government, and ultimately the company gets more customers. The finding concurs with those of Biggeri *et al.* (2023) who assert that a company is considered compliant with applicable regulations if it conforms to international and domestic laws, regulations, guidelines and specifications relevant to its business processes. Moreover, violations of regulatory compliance often result in legal consequences (Akfirat, Bayrak, Üzümlü, Ergiyen, Yurtbakan and Uysal, 2023). This finding is explained by CAST which presumes an adaptive tendency where people adjust in a complex environment to match emerging market challenges (Goldstein *et al.*, 2010). The theory explains how Tushanga used his abilities to adapt, especially after losing all his customers by becoming more innovative. Based on the foregoing discussion, we propose a conceptual model (Figure 1) for conducting entrepreneurial behavior. This model is practically and theoretically supported because we got the independent variables from the story and they are all supported by the theories we are using. The framework developed shows that entrepreneurial behavior is directly explained by generational persona, initiative conduct and behavioral change. The framework also affirms that generational persona, initiative conduct and behavioral change when mediated by adaptability tendencies will as well explain entrepreneurial behavior. From the story, we



Source(s): Authors own

Figure 1.
The proposed
conceptual framework
for entrepreneurial
behavior

get lessons that become the basis of the study. The lessons produced the variables of interest which we have used to come up with the model below.

6. Conclusion, implications, limitations and areas for further research

In conclusion, this paper summarizes that story-based narrative inquiry is appropriate for demonstrating the true reality at workplaces (Rossetti and Wall, 2017), especially in the context of exhibiting the behaviors of entrepreneurs. This is because the study revealed a real-life experience of how a millennial entrepreneur succeeded by demonstrating entrepreneurial behaviors at his workplace. Other entrepreneurs can emulate what Tushanga did and benchmark on the findings to improve their performance and that of their enterprises. This could help the many businesses for the millennials that are failing in low-developed countries like Uganda to improve and survive. The lessons we learn from the story reveal Tushanga's ability to demonstrate initiative conduct, behavioral change, adaptability tendencies and generational persona at work, and this shows that entrepreneurial behavior has a major influence on the performance of the entrepreneur and that of the enterprise. With this impact, people's businesses will improve and their income and hence the study contributes to a positive change in people's quality of life.

The stated impact of entrepreneurial behavior at workplaces by millennial entrepreneurs formed the basis for the real-life trials that entrepreneurs go through in their businesses. Besides, the produced empirical content gives a solid linkage between the story and the work setting. According to Elliott (2006), stories of this nature offer evidence of a sequence of experiences. Theoretically, understanding Tushanga's actions from the story called for a theoretical explanation, and the study used multiple theories that best explain the current practice of entrepreneurial behavior among millennials at workplaces in micro and small enterprises. The findings show that GCT, PI and CAST explain entrepreneurial behavior by explaining the study variables, that is generational persona, initiative behavior, behavioral change and adaptability tendencies, which the study used to explain the behaviors. These theories affirm that the study is built on a strong foundation, and it will be based on the above conceptual framework (Figure 1). Other scholars in the future can base on our model to further explain entrepreneurial behavior.

This study has limitations and areas for future studies. First, we conducted this research on the entrepreneurial behavior of a millennial entrepreneur. However, studying it on entrepreneurs of other generations like Generation Z and baby boomers could be interesting. Future research may investigate that to see if such a study could give different findings. Secondly, the study was qualitatively done based on a narrative inquiry. It would be of significant importance if studies in the future quantitatively tested the model we proposed. Irrespective of these limitations, the study remains relevant because it gives results that are premised on the actual context of the study (Miller and Konstantinou, 2022).

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