

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BUSINESS SCHOOL**

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**IMPORT VALUATION AND FIRM-LEVEL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN
GHANA:
AN INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

BY

DANIEL K. TWIMASIE

(ID: 10704619)

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN MARKETING
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

JANUARY 2025

DECLARATION

I do, hereby, certify that this thesis, which I now submit for examination for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, is entirely the result of my own work and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other university. All references used in the work have been fully acknowledged. This thesis has been prepared according to the regulations for postgraduate study by the University of Ghana. I bear sole responsibility for any shortcomings.



.....

Daniel K. Twimasie
(10704619)

14-01-2025

Date



CERTIFICATION

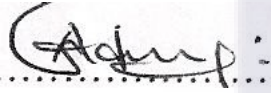
I do hereby certify that this thesis was supervised in accordance with procedures laid down by the University of Ghana.



.....
Prof. George Acheampong
(Lead Supervisor)

14-01-2025

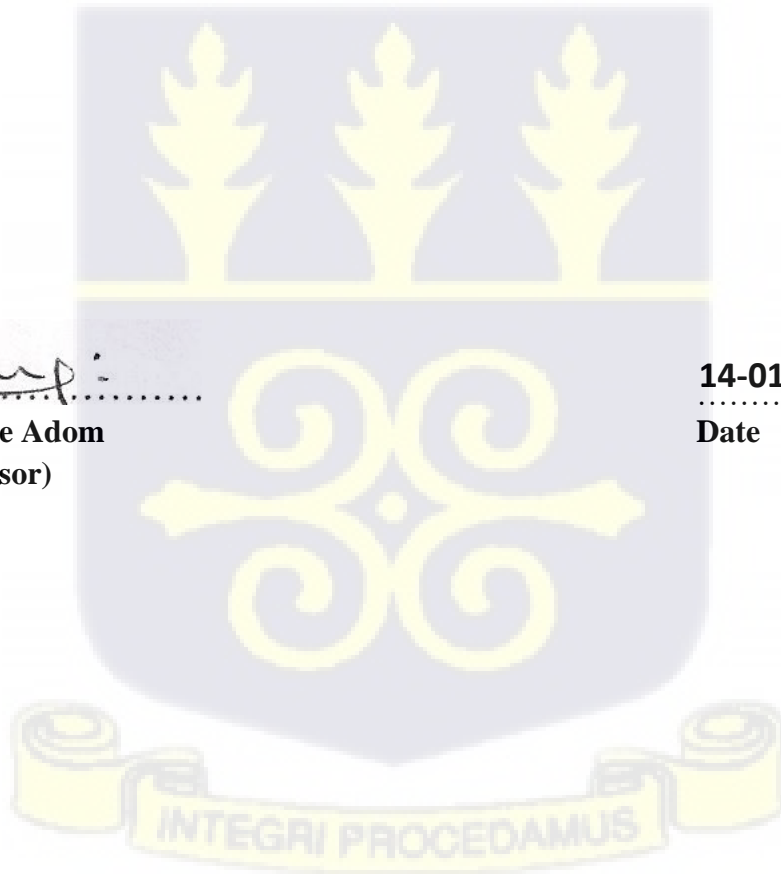
.....
Date



.....
Prof. Kwame Adom
(Co-Supervisor)

14-01-2025

.....
Date



DEDICATION

To the cherished memory of “Yaa Mansa” Dorothy Twimasie – an exemplary mother and leader; my prime inspiration!

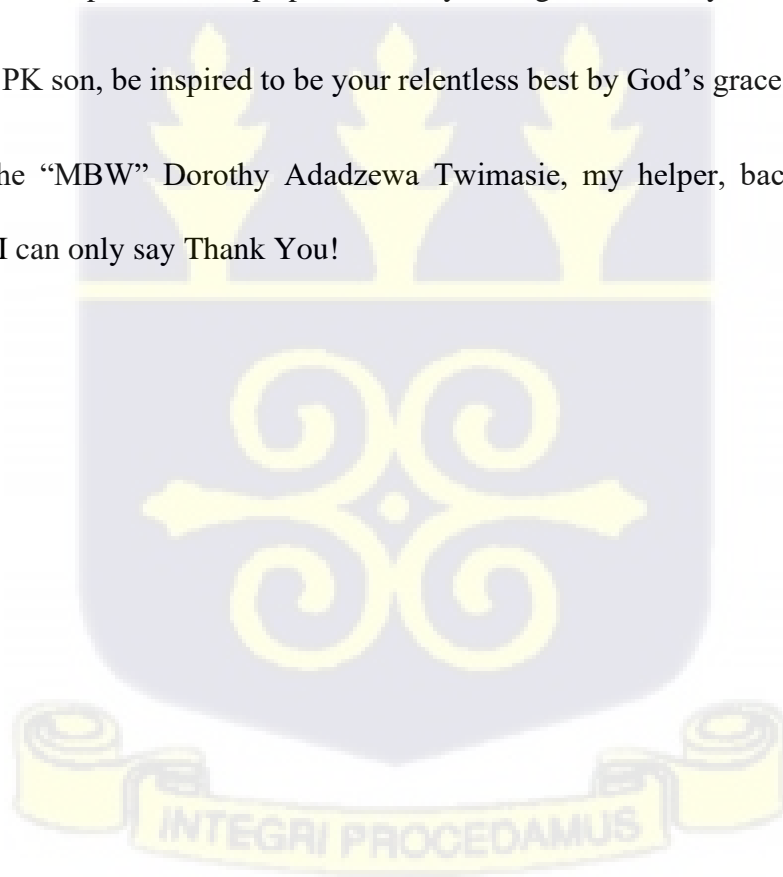
To Mr. Fifi “KB” Enchia and Mrs. Mamfio Esther Enchia whose hard work, love and mentoring in the late seventies to early eighties, laid the foundations to build a future.

To Mr. Fritz Baffour whose intellectual engagements inadvertently sparked a lasting curiosity to “get to the bottom of things”, historical and contemporary.

To Mrs. Lilian Kumaga for her timely insistence suggesting this is the way to go, “Uncle Dan” when the doctoral option came up spontaneously during a bible study class.

And, to you, PK son, be inspired to be your relentless best by God’s grace!

Finally, to the “MBW” Dorothy Adadzewa Twimasie, my helper, backbone and ultimate cheerleader. I can only say Thank You!



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to Almighty God for the opportunity and strength to carry out this project through to the end. My sincere appreciation goes to my supervisors at the University of Ghana Business School, Prof. Kwame Adom and Prof. George Acheampong for the cheerleader-like encouragement, comments and critique to ensure that this thesis meets the high standards of the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS). Their invaluable feedback has been crucial to this project. I must mention my niece Prof. Agyapoma Gyeke-Dako and her husband Prof. Ebo Turkson, who by their goodwill opened academic doors to commence this project.

I wish to express my deepest thanks also to all the respondents at the CTSB of the GRA-Customs Division, the management and interviewed members of GIFF, Dr Emil Opare and the various businesses who opened their doors to share insights on the phenomenon of Customs import valuation.

All of this would not be possible without the determined assistance of my beloved sisters Nasata and Annabelle, not to mention my very own senior Sir Dr Anthony Oteng-Gyasi.

For the encouragement and support of my colleagues, Tracy, Matilda, Elizabeth, Nicholas and Golda, and my neighbour Dr. Vivian Akoto, I am eternally grateful. Finally, I extend my gratitude to the faculty of the Department of Marketing and Entrepreneurship, UGBS, my special classmates of eight, and, all of whom contributed in diverse ways towards the successful completion of this thesis.



ABSTRACT

The issue-based qualitative case study explores how isomorphic pressures from the preeminent trade governing body of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and its affiliate the World Customs Organisation (WCO), shape the import valuation practices of the Ghana Revenue Authority-Customs Division (GRA-Customs). The thesis aims to highlight the Customs institution's import valuation practices and explore its attendant influences on entrepreneurial disposition and opportunity perception in Ghana. The study spotlights impediments to entrepreneurial endeavours arising from the inconsistent application of import valuation rules, amidst widespread importer-declarant under-invoicing.

The single case study's design comprised three (3) embedded units of analysis, namely, the GRA-Customs, a freight forwarder (agents) and firm enterprises (importers) groups. The mostly purposively sampled respondents totalled twenty (20) across the board: eight (8) Customs officers, four (4) freight forwarders, and seven (7) importing firm enterprises. Additionally, a stevedoring company based in the Tema port was interviewed for contextual input. Customs valuation documents were collated and analysed to supplement respondent interview transcripts. Furthermore, a conceptual framework was developed to capture the hierarchical flow of institutional influence from the WTO/WCO through to the firm-level entrepreneurship (FLE) construct.

The analyses of the findings yielded recurring, overlapping themes suggesting, among others, that the "transaction value" rule of the WTO valuation agreement (WTO-ACV) presents consistent, constraining administrative challenges for GRA-Customs. These challenges manifest as institutional voids that compromise the institution's role in impartially supporting entrepreneurship to flourish in Ghana. Through the lens of institutional theory (IT), the study highlights how the WTO valuation agreement (WTO-ACV), in tandem with the influential WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO-TFA), apply normative and coercive isomorphic

pressures on the GRA-Customs to achieve optimal global trade facilitation. The Customs institution, through its practices, thus engenders common behaviours amongst importing enterprises and intermediate freight forwarder agents, in ways deterrent to entrepreneurial development. The findings also reveal instances of government policy interference with normative WTO trade protocols, which then fosters an environment of uncertainty for entrepreneurial advancement, not to mention exacerbating an already inundated Customs bureaucracy.

Henceforth, practitioners and policymakers can consider addressing the widespread issue of importer-declarant under-invoicing and Customs' professionalism, to advance firm-level entrepreneurship in Ghana. This may be achieved through deepening transparency in the import processes of GRA-Customs for greater entrepreneurial confidence in the valuation practices.

The case study thesis' contribution to knowledge unveils otherwise obscure layers of Customs practices, within a challenging regulatory environment, that stifle firm-level entrepreneurship through inconsistent import valuation in Ghana.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
CERTIFICATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xiii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xv
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Statement of Research Problem.....	7
1.3 Research Gap.....	9
1.3.1 Issue and Context Gaps.....	10
1.3.2 Issue and Level of Analysis Gap.....	11
1.3.3 Theory Gap.....	12
1.3.4 Methodological Gap.....	12
1.4 Objectives and Research Questions.....	12
1.4.1 Research Objectives.....	12
1.4.2 Research Questions.....	13
1.5 Scope of the Study.....	13
1.6 Rationale for the study.....	15
1.7 Chapter Organization.....	17
1.8 Chapter Summary.....	17
CHAPTER TWO.....	18
CONTEXT OF THE STUDY – GHANA.....	18
2.0 Introduction.....	18
2.1 Country Profile.....	18
2.2 Ghana’s Economic Environment.....	20
2.2.1 Trade Report.....	21
2.2.2 Agriculture in Ghana.....	24

2.3 Entrepreneurship in Ghana	24
2.4 Manufacturing Sector.....	26
2.5 WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement	28
2.5.1 A Local Challenge.....	30
2.6 Port Digitization at the Tema Port	32
2.7 Ghana National Single Window	33
2.8 GRA-Customs Division Valuation Policy	35
2.8.1 Database as a Risk Assessment Tool	36
2.8.2 The Benchmark Values Discount (BVD) Policy	37
2.8.3 Reversal of Benchmark Values Discount (BVD) Policy	37
2.9 The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Concerns.....	38
2.10 The Association of Ghana Industries (AGI's) Concerns	38
2.11 Chapter Summary	39
CHAPTER THREE	40
LITERATURE REVIEW	40
3.0 Introduction.....	40
3.1 Entrepreneurship Explained.....	40
3.2 Understanding Entrepreneurial Opportunity.....	42
3.2.1 Opportunity Exploration Described	42
3.2.1.1 The Preparation Phase	43
3.2.1.2 The Imagination Phase	44
3.2.1.3 The Amplification Phase	44
3.2.1.4 The Generation Phase.....	44
3.2.1.5 The Screening Phase.....	44
3.2.2 Opportunity Exploitation Described	45
3.2.2.1 The Formation Phase	45
3.2.2.2 The Evaluation Phase	45
3.2.2.3 The Operational Phase.....	45
3.2.2.4 The Updating Phase.....	46
3.2.2.5 The Accumulation Phase.....	46
3.3 Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO): A Critical Assessment	47
3.3.1 Discussing the Dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation	49
3.3.1.1 Autonomy	49
3.3.1.2 Proactiveness	50
3.3.1.3 Innovativeness	52

3.3.1.4 Competitive Aggressiveness	54
3.3.1.5 Risk-Taking	56
3.4 Firm-Level Entrepreneurship (FLE)	57
3.4.1 Definition of Concept.....	58
3.4.2 A Conceptual framework and focus of the study	60
Source: Author’s Construct	63
3.5 Global Customs Regimes - A Historical Perspective	64
3.6 Trade Liberalisation	66
3.6.1 International Trade & Sub-Saharan Africa	67
3.7 Chapter Summary	68
CHAPTER FOUR	70
THEORETICAL REVIEW	70
4.0 Introduction.....	70
4.1 The Theoretical Context	70
4.2 Understanding the Theoretical Foundation of the Study	71
4.2.1 Institutions.....	71
4.2.2 Institutional Theory Explained.....	72
4.2.3 Institutional Theory in “entrepreneurship and organizational studies”	74
4.2.4 Institutions and the Nature of Entrepreneurial Activities	76
4.2.5 Institutional Environment and Entrepreneurial Orientation of Firms	77
4.3 Contrasting Regulative Environment and EO	79
4.4 Normative Environment and EO	80
4.5 Cognitive Environment and EO.....	82
4.6 Conducive Environment and EO	84
4.7 Isomorphism	85
4.7.1 Types of Isomorphism.....	85
4.8 Institutional Voids.....	87
4.9 Chapter Summary	90
CHAPTER FIVE	91
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	91
5.0 Introduction.....	91
5.1 Philosophies of Research	91
5.1.1 The Positivist Worldview	92
5.1.2 Realism.....	93
5.1.3 The Interpretivist Worldview.....	94

5.1.4 The Social Constructivist Worldview	95
5.2 Qualitative Methods.....	98
5.2.1 Critique of Qualitative Methods.....	99
5.3 Methodological Framework Summary	100
5.4 Inquiry Strategy - Application of the Case Study Approach.....	100
5.5 Inquiry Strategy - Application of the Case Study Approach.....	102
5.5.1 An Embedded Multiple Units Single-Case Design.....	104
5.6 Data Generation and Collection Method	105
5.6.1 Choosing the Sites.....	105
5.6.2 Rationale for employing interviews as the main method for collecting data.....	106
5.6.3 Sampling for the Interviews	107
5.6.3.1 Interviewing the GRA-Customs Division	108
5.6.3.2 Interviewing Freight Forwarder Group	109
5.6.3.3 Interviewing Firm-Level Enterprise Group.....	109
5.6.3.4 Stevedore Operations (Tema Port)	110
5.6.3.5 Determining Saturation Point	111
5.6.4 Direct Observations.....	111
5.6.5 Documents.....	111
5.6.5.1 Policy Documents.....	112
5.6.5.2 Newsprint Source	112
5.7 The Analysis Process	113
5.6.1 Coding Themes	113
5.7 Ensuring Quality and Trustworthiness.....	115
5.8 Confidentiality and Ethics	116
5.9 Limitations of the Case Study Approach.....	116
5.10 Chapter Summary	117
CHAPTER SIX	118
CASE DATA PRESENTATION	118
6.0 Introduction.....	118
6.1 Interview Sources	119
6.1.1 GRA-Customs Interview Excerpts.....	119
6.1.1.1 GRA-1 (Senior Customs Officer).....	119
6.1.1.2 GRA-2 (Senior Customs Officer).....	120
6.1.2 Freight Forwarder Interview Excerpts	122
6.1.2.1 Freight Forwarding Company (FF-1).....	122

6.1.2.1 Freight Forwarding Company (FF-2).....	123
6.1.3 Firm Enterprises Interview Excerpts.....	124
6.1.3.1 Electrical Cable & Conductors Company(FL-1A).....	124
6.1.3.1 Electrical Cable & Conductors Company(FL-1B).....	125
6.1.3.2 Agri-business (Rice Milling) Company (FL-3).....	126
6.1.3.3 Agro-Chemicals (Wholesaler/Retailer) Company (FL-4).....	127
6.1.4 Stevedore Company Interview Excerpts.....	128
6.1.4.1 Stevedore Company.....	128
6.2 Direct Observations in the Field.....	130
6.3 Documentation.....	131
6.3.1 Newspaper Sources.....	131
6.3.2 WTO, WCO and GRA Sources.....	136
6.4 Chapter Summary.....	141
CHAPTER SEVEN.....	143
THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	143
7.0 Introduction.....	143
7.1 Thematic Analyses of the Case.....	143
7.1.1 Hierarchy of Themes.....	144
7.1.2 Thematic Analyses of The Case Interviews.....	145
7.1.2.1 International Trade Regulatory Factors.....	146
7.1.2.2 Government Policy.....	148
7.1.2.3 Customs Internal Policy.....	150
7.1.2.4 Customs Resource Constraints.....	151
7.1.2.5 Compliance Level.....	153
7.1.2.6 Customs Professionalism.....	155
7.1.2.7 Market Imperatives.....	155
7.1.2.8 Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO).....	157
7.2 Documentation Analysis.....	160
7.2.1 Newspaper Sources.....	160
7.2.2 Notes on a Schedule of Revised Assessments on Selected Imports.....	167
7.3 Chapter Summary.....	168
CHAPTER EIGHT.....	169
DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....	169
8.0 Introduction.....	169
8.1 Summary of Research.....	169

8.1.1 A Summary of the Research Findings	171
8.2 Discussions of Findings	172
8.2.1 Relationship of Findings to Existing Knowledge	173
8.2.1.1 Exploring pressures that bear upon the GRA-Customs' valuation practices (RQ1)	174
8.2.1.2 Exploring the influences of GRA-Customs' valuation practices on firm-level opportunity perception (RQ2)	175
8.2.1.3 Exploring the influences of GRA-Customs' valuation practices on firm-level entrepreneurial orientation (EO) (RQ3)	176
8.3 Implications of The Study.....	177
8.3.1 Theoretical Contribution of the Study.....	177
8.3.2 Implication for Practice.....	178
8.3.3 Implication for Policy.....	180
8.4 Reflection on the methodology used for this research.....	182
8.4.1 GRA-Customs Division	183
8.4.2 Firm-Level Group	183
8.4.3 Freight forwarders.....	184
8.4.4 Stevedoring Firm (Contextual).....	184
8.5 Recommendations.....	185
8.5.1 Directions for Future Research	187
8.6 Conclusion	189
REFERENCES	191
APPENDICES	220
Appendix 1: Letter of Introduction.....	220
Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form	221
Appendix 3: Semi-structured Interview Questions.....	224



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Map of Ghana showing the 16 regions20

Figure 2. 2: Product composition of merchandise trade22

Figure 3. 1: Conceptual Framework63

Figure 5. 1: Methodological Framework Summary 101

Figure 5. 2: An Embedded Multiple Units Single-Case Design 104

Figure 6. 1: The WTO Agreement on Customs Valuation (WTO-ACV) 136

Figure 6. 2: The Trade Facilitation Agreement (Summary)..... 137

Figure 6. 3: Overview of Evaluation Procedure 138

Figure 6. 4: Valuation Procedure at Customs Technical Services Bureau (Head Office)..... 138

Figure 6. 5: The Valuation Approval Process 139

Figure 6. 6: Random Selection of Import Merchandise for Valuation Assessment 140



LIST OF TABLES

Table 2. 1 Ghana Country Profile.....	19
Table 2. 2: Trade Profiles (2019 – 2022)	21
Table 2. 3: Taxes, Levies and Charges Applied to Imported Goods.....	23
Table 2.4: Scope of WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement	29
Table 2. 5: Ghana Government Activity in Trade Facilitation.....	31
Table 2. 6: Procedures to import goods into Ghana	34
Table 2. 7: Fiscal Revenue, 2014-20 (GHS million).....	36
Table 5. 1: Assumptions of Qualitative Research Methodology.....	99
Table 5. 2: Firm Enterprise Group by Sector	110
Table 6. 1: Respondent Group Particulars.....	119
Table 6. 2: National Newspapers Excerpts Summary	132
Table 6. 3: Schedule of Revised Assessments on Selected Imports (June 2020 – March 2023)	141
Table 7. 1: Hierarchy of Themes.....	145
Table 7. 2: Themes of Units of Analyses	146
Table 7. 3: National Newspaper Excerpts	161
Table 7. 4: A Schedule of Revised Assessments on Selected Imports (June 2020 – March 2023).....	167
Table 8. 1: Summary of Case Study Findings.....	171



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1D1F	-	One District One Factory
ACV	-	Agreement on Customs Valuation
AfCFTA	-	African Continental Free Trade Area
AGI	-	Association of Ghana Industries
BOE	-	Bill of Entry (Customs)
BVD	-	Benchmark Values Discount
CCC	-	Customs Collaboration Council
COO	-	Country of Origin
CPI	-	Corruption Perception Index
CPP	-	Convention Peoples' Party
CTN	-	Cargo Tracking Notes
CTSB	-	Customs Technical Services Bureau
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
EO	-	Entrepreneurial Orientation
FLE	-	Firm-Level Entrepreneurship
GATT	-	General Agreement on Trade & Tariffs
GCEPS	-	Ghana Customs, Excise and Preventive Service
GCMS	-	Ghana Customs Management System
GCNET	-	Ghana Community Network
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GIFF	-	Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders
GITC	-	Ghana International Trade Commission
GLNS	-	Ghana Link Network Services Ltd
GPHA	-	Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority
GRA	-	Ghana Revenue Authority
ICC	-	International Chamber of Commerce
ICUMS	-	Integrated Customs Management System
IT	-	Institutional Theory
MFN	-	Most Favored Nation
MOF	-	Ministry of Finance

MOTI	-	Ministry of Trade and Industry
NEIP	-	National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme
OECD	-	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAARS	-	Pre-Arrival Assessment Report System
PPRSD	-	Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate
SME	-	Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
SOE	-	State Owned Enterprises
SSA	-	Sub-Saharan Africa
TFA	-	Trade Facilitation Agreement
TIN	-	Tax Identification Number
UN/CEFACT	-	United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business
WCO	-	World Customs Organization
WTO	-	World Trade Organization



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the background of the study, the problem statement where the various gaps were identified, the objectives, research questions, scope, rationale and chapter disposition of the study.

1.1 Background

In contemporary literature, the difficult, dynamic environment encountered by entrepreneurial initiatives and activity in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is often attributed to financial, human capital and infrastructure constraints, as well as bureaucratic bottlenecks. Moreover, there is empirical evidence pointing to the effects of culture, history, values and education on entrepreneurial activity (Correa & Borja-vega, 2013). Hence, Sorescu and Spanjol (2008) argue that firms in the region continue to face disproportionately greater risks of innovation failure compared to those in more developed economies. They are likely to receive less rewards for being entrepreneurially oriented.

These circumstances encourage further inquiry into entrepreneurial behaviour in SSA; its purported deficiencies, and, indeed, the environmental forces at play. This is supported by Acosta et al. (2018) who assert that in spite of the burgeoning interest in entrepreneurship, there remains a dearth of academic inquiry into its workings and dimensions in SSA, compared with other geographical areas.

Addressing the myriad of environmental challenges entrepreneurs in SSA face, researchers have pointed to widespread institutional lapses, replete with uncertainty and a certain environmental dynamism (Devine & Kiggundu, 2016; George et al., 2015; Hoskisson et al., 2000; Kolb, 2018). It is acknowledged that these pressures, often embedded in institutions, have posed organizational and developmental challenges for entrepreneurs (Ofori-Dankwa & Julian, 2013). Hence, entrepreneurial firms regularly face regulatory pressures in SSA's often

institutionally hostile environments. Entrepreneurship can be stifled and even repressed through over and/or under-regulation, or encouraged by incentives and institutional transparency (Baumol, 1996). Baumol's study postulates that formal institutions are political and economy-related rules which create or restrict opportunity fields for entrepreneurship.

Scholars continue to view institutional challenges to private enterprise from various perspectives. For example, Hilson et al. (2018) suggest that SSA's governments are preoccupied with tax receipts and have generally overlooked the measures and funding needed to catalyse and ensure the continued viability of formal sector entrepreneurial activity. AfDB et al. (2016) state that "for most, the ability to innovate has been constrained by work environments characterized by weak structural transformation, and an inordinate amount of red tape, the products of deeply-ingrained institutional 'sloth'."

In assessing studies of the institutional environment in which entrepreneurial behaviour occurs, Rosenbusch et al. (2013) comment that there has been a controversy in the literature as to whether uncertainty has a positive or negative effect on entrepreneurial orientation (EO). What is clear is that EO and environmental uncertainty exist in a complicated space. While ample research exists on EO and a firm's task environment, the lack of generally agreed-upon findings suggests that more inquiry remains (Kreiser et al., 2010). One such area of entrepreneurial interest, for reasons of environmental uncertainty, is trade regulation and the import sub-sector in Ghana. Thus, international trade represents a broad context for this case study thesis.

Since its inception in 1995, the multilateral institution of the World Trade Organization (WTO) has featured effectively as the promulgator of global trade rules, as well as its arbiter. Ghana has been a member of the WTO and, its predecessor, the erstwhile General Agreement on Trade & Tariffs (GATT) since 1995 and 1957 respectively. It joined the World Customs Organization (WCO) in 1968 (WCO, 2019). The WTO's primary purpose is to open up trade for the benefit of its membership by setting international trade rules (WTO, 1994). In doing so, it often

collaborates with another pivotal body, the World Customs Organization (WCO), as implementers and disseminators of global trade regulations (Chalfin, 2006; WTO, 2013).

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) is responsible for trade and industrial policy in Ghana. It is, however, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) that principally oversees Customs activities through the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA). The MOF is therefore responsible for the revenue-related WTO and WCO regulations through the implementing agency of the GRA-Customs division (GRA, 2021). Import trade is a particularly important revenue source for developing economies. In fiscal 2020, according to the Ghana Revenue Authority, the Customs division raised approximately one-third of total tax revenue (Mofep, 2022). In addition to Customs duties, almost a dozen other trade-related taxes and charges are calculated on imported merchandise based on Customs valuation assessment (Hennis, 2022). Import valuation, for the context of this study, is a national Customs administrative procedure applied to determine the dutiable or Customs value of imported goods (WTO, 2017). The Customs (dutiable) value is integral to the base and forms the basis to which a pre-determined duty tariff is applied for duty determination. Thus, the Customs value is essential to determine the duty to be paid on an imported good.

It is noteworthy that non-oil merchandise imports into Ghana have declined from USD 10.5 billion in 2018 to USD 9.5 billion in 2023 (9.5% decline) for reasons beyond the scope of this inquiry. It is instructive, however, to appreciate how and /or if this apparent decline in dollar-denominated imports has had any bearing on entrepreneurship, statistically. A cursory look at local manufacturing data, if only as a proxy for entrepreneurship, indicates lackluster results. According to Ghana's latest WTO trade report, manufacturing declined from 12% (2014) to 11% of GDP in 2020 (Index of Economic Freedom, 2023).

A thriving import sector is, however, critical beyond government revenues. There are economic benefits such as employment from associated supply chains, including freight forwarding,

haulage and logistics management. Despite policy efforts to boost domestic production, finished goods still dominate imports with a 67.9% share (Bank of Ghana, 2019).”

It is also noted that, while imported goods are subject to ad valorem duty and taxes based on Customs valuation, sometimes they are exempted by law from such taxes. Customs valuation on imports involves a set of procedures applied by national Customs authorities to ascertain or determine the dutiable value of imported goods (GATT-WTO, 1947). It is an important aspect of international trade facilitation focus (Taylor et al., 2003). According to the WTO, Customs valuation or import duty assessment should be primarily based on the “transaction value” rule. The transaction value is defined as the price actually paid or payable for the imported merchandise (WTO, 2017). The rule ostensibly prohibits discretion in calculating dutiable value or calculating a dutiable value by Customs on the basis of some external standard such as a minimum price or a reference price. (The latter being commonplace in developing countries prior to the adoption of the WTO transaction value rule (Rajkarnikar, 2006).

The genesis of this regulation - the Agreement on Customs Valuation (ACV) - can be traced to the Uruguay Round multilateral trade negotiations, which set the terms and methodology for countries to value imports for duty collection (WCO, 2019; WTO, 2017). Under the auspices of the WTO and the WCO, the ACV is implemented in Ghana by the GRA-Customs division. Accordingly, Customs officials of the GRA are substantially obliged to accept the price stated on the invoice issued by the exporter or shipper (Javorcik & Narciso, 2017; Rajkarnikar, 2006). In ascertaining the “actual value” or “transaction value”, the agreement essentially obliges (or at least encourages) the GRA-Customs officials to accept the purported price on the commercial invoice issued by the exporter, or, as submitted by the importer-declarant to Customs. The WTO-ACV instrument seeks to limit the discretion of Customs officials in assessing import values for duty purposes. Hence, their ability to impede the processing of misrepresented or suspicious import commercial invoices is constrained (Javorcik & Narciso, 2017). Nonetheless,

the basic purpose of the WTO-ACV remains to require member countries to adopt a valuation system that is fair, neutral and uniform and to prevent the use of arbitrary or fictitious values (Rajkarnikar, 2006; WCO, 2015).

A perception survey conducted by Rajkarnikar (2006) identified Customs valuation as one of the major issues of trade facilitation in the developing WTO member country of Nepal. Accordingly, King (2003) questioned the training and preparation of Customs officers, the adequacy of procedures, organizational framework and information systems in place to support the implementation of the “transaction value” rule. Seifu (2009) for his part reports of an internal and sinister threat where declared import values are adjusted higher by officials with a view to extort illegal payments from importers and entrepreneurs.

Yet, the evasion of duty through under-valuation or misdescription of imports is an acute problem for customs administration in developing countries (King et al., 2003). Rajkarnikar, (2006) argues that the widespread under-invoicing of imports in developing countries such as Nepal is indicative of a lack of effective valuation process by Customs administrations. Researchers assert that national Customs administrations, especially in developing countries, continually face difficulties in ascertaining “transaction value” based on commercial invoices importers/exporters (declarants) present. Meanwhile, businesses also complain that there is a lack of transparency, fairness and competency in this area (Rajkarnikar, 2006). Critically, from the entrepreneur’s perspective, duty paid or payable (based on import value assessment) will invariably reflect at retail price points. Pricing impacts a firm’s competitiveness, thus, strategic considerations and opportunity assessments.

The following narrative portrays a certain complicity of a trade regulatory framework in creating an uneven terrain that adversely influences entrepreneurial behaviour in Ghana and perhaps elsewhere. The historical narrative of a trade regime’s impact on a family business featured in the “Daily Graphic” (Bokpe, 2018): it recounted the plight of a 200-workforce mosquito coil plant in the sixties that thrived into the eighties when a liberal trade policy reform

opened up the economy to cheaper imports that would bring down the 20-year-old enterprise managed by the Mahtani family.

Consistent with Baumol (1996), the firm in this instance adapted to the changing regulatory environment by re-assessing environmental opportunities and diversifying to become an import trading company instead. Thus, bringing to a full cycle, the transformation of Peekay Industries Ltd (a former mosquito coil manufacturer) to Pemasu Trading & Industries Limited (a merchandise importer).

In developing settings such as Ghana, entrepreneurship is seen as an avenue for economic revival and poverty reduction through innovation and job creation (Bruton et al., 2013; Chowdhury, 2007; Wennekers & Thurik, 1999). Sub-Saharan African (SSA) governments are increasingly responding positively to calls to support entrepreneurship development through public policy and research (Atiase et al., 2018; Naudé, 2010). According to Baughn and Neupert (2003), supportive government policy is essential for effective entrepreneurial development in Africa. Government policies shape various levels of a sector's institutional framework and have significant power to influence entrepreneurial opportunities and activities (Minniti, 2008). According to (Capelleras et al., 2008; Zhou, 2017), scholars continue to examine, with mixed results, the role of government policies in stimulating or constraining entrepreneurial environments. Thus far, the question of whether government policies are able to affect entrepreneurial activities positively is far from resolved and is of growing interest to researchers.

The GRA-Customs has offices strategically located at all points of entry and exit in the territory of Ghana. These will include the harbours, airports, land borders, parcel posts as well and other inland offices (GRA, n.d). The Customs Technical Services Bureau (CTSB) is a key unit within the division. It is mandated to ascertain import merchandise classification, country of Origin (COO), as well as commercial invoice valuation to assess duty payable on consignments. GRA-Customs, as is true with other national Customs administrations, operationally centralizes

oversight of import classification, COO verification and import valuation to ensure uniformity in the assessment of import duty. Within the CTSB there is a risk unit which profiles import declarations based on certain parameters, including declarant profile, mode of transport and merchandise description. Such profiling may inform the level of scrutiny applied to the clearing process by Customs officials. Also, the unit employs statistical methodologies designed to provide objective monitoring of compliance with Customs regulations.

Finally, the study adopts Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) widely-cited conceptualization of entrepreneurship as an opportunity-based behaviour centered on the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities. From the onset, the firm-level entrepreneurship (FLE) construct has been presented in the literature under different and at times inconsistent labels (Hosseini et al., 2018). This study follows the view that FLE is embedded in, and premised on, perceived environmental opportunity by an organisation. Therefore, FLE will represent an organization-wide strategic allocation of resources to explore and exploit identifiable entrepreneurial opportunities (Ireland et al., 2009). Contemporary literature nonetheless recognises that entrepreneurial behaviour can be better understood within its historical, social and institutional contexts, as these provide individuals and firms with opportunities as well as set boundaries for their actions (Welter & Smallbone, 2011).

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

The focus of the study is the scarcely explored phenomenon of the nexus of Customs import valuation and firm-level entrepreneurship (FLE) in Ghana. Firm-level entrepreneurship is conceptualized as an entrepreneurially-oriented (EO), opportunity-based commercial endeavour. Researchers Kim et al. (2009) and Novikov (2014) argue that when the appropriate institutional framework backs entrepreneurship, it can significantly influence a nation's economic prospects. Accordingly, while firm enterprises remain vulnerable to the exigencies of international trade, entrepreneurial behaviour in developing countries such as Ghana is influenced by a global trade regulatory framework. Highlighting certain regulatory challenges

at the nexus of import trade and entrepreneurship, a former president of the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), in a “Daily Graphic” (national newspaper) article, illuminated how under-valued imports may have led to the demise of local entrepreneurship in years past. (Under-invoicing is defined as a discrepancy between the declared import value on the Bill of Entry (BOE) and the actual invoice value for duty payment purposes (Bhagwati, 1974)). It was reported that the AGI was prepared to present evidence of its claim to GRA-Customs for remedial action, as the phenomenon was hurting members’ ability to compete fairly in the marketplace (Adombila, 2018).

The GRA-Customs division in Ghana is responsible for implementing the WTO Agreement on Customs Valuation (WTO- ACV). The agreement serves as a guide to Customs administrations worldwide for the implementation of import valuation within WTO and World Customs Organisation (WCO) membership. As with any formal institution, stable and transparent structures, practices and processes are a prerequisite for the uniform application of valuation rules by GRA-Customs. Consequently, advancements to FLE in a country would require consistency in the application of Customs valuation rules to merchandise and input importing firm enterprises. Nonetheless, according to the WTO and WCO, Customs import valuation or import duty assessment is to be based primarily on the “transaction value” rule. The transaction value is defined as the price actually paid or payable for the imported merchandise (WTO, 2017). The rule ostensibly prohibits Customs discretion in calculating the dutiable value based on some external standard such as a minimum price or a reference price (Javorcik & Narciso, 2017; WTO, 2017). A Customs administration’s constrained ability to impede the processing of under-invoiced or falsified entries would engender inconsistent import valuation. This, in turn, creates an uneven playing field for importing enterprises of various sectors.

The study acknowledges the common perception of systemic challenges within regulatory institutions such as GRA that present as lack of enterprise support mechanisms. Such perceptions, however, serve to deter a lofty type of entrepreneurship – i.e. firm-level

entrepreneurship (FLE). It is therefore significant that amidst these import valuation challenges to entrepreneurship, specifically, FLE, the area remains inadequately addressed by domain scholarship in Ghana and, indeed, elsewhere. The thesis therefore aims to address that gap in literature by exploring how import valuation practices of the GRA-Customs influence entrepreneurial opportunity perception and entrepreneurial orientation in light of internal and external regulatory pressures.

Knight (1997) characterizes entrepreneurial orientation (EO) manifested in FLE as a fundamental outlook to innovativeness applicable to enterprises of all sizes and varieties in the face of evolving external conditions. In its context, the WTO-ACV ‘rules of the game’ (North, 1990) present as external coercive and normative isomorphic pressures on the GRA-Customs, as the latter would seek clarification of ACV rules, present petitions and experience rewards and sanctions from the pre-eminent global trade arbiter – the WTO. Similarly, the GRA-Customs’ internal ‘rules of the game’ – the institution’s own valuation practices on the ground – shape and conform behaviours and dispositions of importing firm enterprises and/or their agents (freight forwarders) in their mutual bid for survival and legitimacy.

Thus, from a practical perspective, the study explores, broadly, the implications of GRA-Customs’ valuation of approximately USD 9.5 billion worth of annual import merchandise on firm-level entrepreneurship in Ghana (BoG Annual Report, 2023).

1.3 Research Gap

The study explores the influences of the implementation of the WTO-ACV and/or its non-application (as the case may be) on FLE through the lens of institutional theory (IT). In doing so, the key construct of “opportunity” is emphasized in FLE conceptualization (Ireland et al., 2009; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990). The following identified gaps in the literature for this study should shed light on the relevance of the research objectives.

1.3.1 Issue and Context Gaps

- Conceptualizing FLE based on EO alone - a primarily attitudinal construct - may be constraining. While EO has become a cornerstone concept in the field of entrepreneurship (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011; Rauch et al. 2009; Saeed et al. 2014), according to Morris (1998) p. 17), “identifying and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities present both attitudinal and behavioural components”. Hence, in addressing the issue of EO “deficiency” in Ghana, attributions to the dearth of capacity, deferential employees, and cultural conformity, among others, invite further scholarly scrutiny (Amoako, 2019; Quaye & Acheampong, 2013)
- In assessing entrepreneurial disposition in Ghana, Adom et al. (2018) restrain the impact of culture and point to deficiencies in business ideas, capital constraints and, critically, a non-conducive business environment. The paper recommended that future studies focus on factors that hinder entrepreneurship beyond Hofstede’s four cultural dimensions, namely, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity. Similarly, the findings of Quaye and Acheampong (2013) question the EO capability of SME owner-managers in Ghana, and whether they can indeed be described as entrepreneurial. The paper recommends further studies into higher-order entrepreneurship in Ghana. This case study thesis extends the scope of enquiry beyond questioning the EO capacities of SME owner-managers to exploring the often obscure issue of customs import valuation as an impediment to FLE in Ghana
- Kim et al., (2009) and Nobikov (2014) claim that entrepreneurs in emerging economies are vulnerable to trade regulations. This issue-based case study seeks to explore constraints to FLE resulting from the trade regulatory framework in Ghana. According to Rajkarnikar (2006), there are only a few studies in the literature related to Customs valuation. In that study, findings were limited to the WTO-ACV’s impact on trade, price inflation and the state revenue of Nepal. In a similar study on the outcomes of

implementing the WTO-ACV, Javorcik and Narciso's (2017a) report of “unintended consequences” for fifteen non-SSA WTO members studied. One such “unintended consequence” was the inadvertent restraint in the discretion of Customs officials’ assessment of import values or commercial invoices. That study however makes no reference to consequences and/or “unintended consequences” of the WTO-ACV on entrepreneurship or entrepreneurial opportunities.

- Elert et al. (2016) note that whereas some recent studies have investigated the role of entrepreneurs in dealing with institutional constraints, the literature often omits the mechanisms to explain this phenomenon. Again, Sakhdari et al. (2020) suggest an inquiry into features of an institutional framework that provoke agents’ reactions, as well as strategies employed by entrepreneurs to deal with such lapses or situations. Accordingly, this inquiry is about a multilateral trade institutional regulatory framework’s (WTO-ACV) application of valuation rules, while exploring the consequent entrepreneurial perception and behaviour in Ghana.
- Finally, scholars still point out that the debate about the role and impact of government intervention and institutional framework on entrepreneurship is largely inconclusive and requires further inquiry (Aidis et al., 2008; Hall et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2012). The thesis takes up the opportunity to apply a case study approach and shed light on a gap at the nexus of Ghana’s import trade and entrepreneurship literature.

1.3.2 Issue and Level of Analysis Gap

Historically, broader studies on entrepreneurship and/or EO and the institutional environment have generally tended to favour the macro-level over the meso-and micro-levels of analysis, (Su et al., 2017; Galvin, 2010). Thus, this firm-level analysis of entrepreneurship within a trade regulatory framework seeks to contribute knowledge to the discipline.

1.3.3 Theory Gap

Institutional theory has traditionally provided insight into entrepreneurship research and vice-versa. The notion that organisations adopt isomorphic structures and practices to make up for the absence of institutional infrastructure is generally supported by the body of research on the relationship between institutional voids and institutional isomorphism (Khanna & Palepu, 1997). This exploratory case study thesis on how, among others, multilateral agencies exert isomorphic influences on a client GRA-Customs administration's import valuation practices, offers a theoretical extension of how institutional voids are directly created by such influences.

1.3.4 Methodological Gap

This exploratory, issue-based (customs import valuation), multiple-embedded, single-case study on entrepreneurship-customs valuation is novel in its methodological approach. Utilizing a social constructivist/interpretivist approach to the study should yield some originality in descriptively rich and textured contexts for future FLE inquiries (Miller, 2011). While case study designs may not be uncommon in entrepreneurship research, the design components to achieve the objectives of this issue-based, multiple-embedded single case study ought to enrich both the institutional and entrepreneurship literature.

1.4 Objectives and Research Questions

1.4.1 Research Objectives

- i. To explore the influences that bear upon the GRA-Customs' import valuation practices in Ghana.
- ii. To explore how GRA-Customs' import valuation practices influence firm-level opportunity perception.
- iii. To explore how GRA-Customs' import valuation practices influence firm-level entrepreneurial orientation (EO).

1.4.2 Research Questions

- i. How is the GRA-Customs influenced in its import valuation practices in Ghana?
- ii. How do GRA-Customs' import valuation practices influence entrepreneurial opportunity perception in Ghana?
- iii. How do GRA-Customs' import valuation practices influence entrepreneurial orientation (EO) in Ghana?

1.5 Scope of the Study

This thesis is characterised as an issue-based, single-case exploratory study. The issue and phenomenon under study is the GRA-Customs valuation of goods imported by enterprises through the Tema port of Ghana. Hence, the valuation of imports through other ports or inbound overland consignments from neighbouring states is outside the scope of the study.

Yin and Davis (2007) describe a case study as an empirical approach that delves into an important contemporary issue in a real-world situation. The study provides a set of statistical data sourced from GRA-Customs covering the period from January 2020 to March 2023 (see Table 7.12). The period covered in the table is consistent with Yin (2018)'s representation that "contemporary", for a case study, is tantamount to "a fluid rendition of the recent past and the present, not just the present" (p. 10).

Typically, the distinction between a case study context and its corresponding units of analysis is blurred (Yin, 2018). In any event, the embedded units of analysis for this case are three: the GRA-Customs division, a selection of importer-firm enterprises and freight forwarders (Figure 5.1). According to Yin (2018), "sub-units of analyses may be incorporated within the single-case study, thereby creating a more complex (or embedded) design. The sub-units can often add significant opportunities for extensive analysis, enhancing the insights into the single-case" (p. 90).

For the purposes of the study, all referenced participant sub-units are situated in the Greater Accra region, and activities reported from the field transpired within the region. The Integrated Business Establishment Survey (IBES) report GSS (2016) indicates that the Greater Accra region is home to the largest number of business establishments in Ghana. The region therefore broadly embodies the nature of the challenges firm enterprises contend with in Ghana.

While context, units of analysis and the case issue proper (Customs Import Valuation) may overlap in the various respondent narratives and thematic analyses, the Tema Terminal Three port (Meridian Port Services (MPS) is designated as a context for this study. The Terminal Three operational context is however limited to stevedoring, container handling and import processing on a digitized platform complimentary with the GRA's own Integrated Customs Management System (ICUMS) (see Chapter 8.5.1 for details). Subsequently, for the study, the term stevedoring shall integrate the traditional functions of moving containerised merchandise off shipping vessels, container handling and the digitized processing and management of a platform complimentary to, but, independent of the ICUMS at the Tema Terminal Three port.

It is worth noting that certain stakeholders within the import trade ecosystem are outside the scope of this study. Key are the Ghana Shippers Authority (GSA), Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA). Regarding the GRA-Customs division itself, selected respondents, documentary evidence and direct observations occurred primarily within the Customs Technical Services Bureau (CTSB). The Bureau is a specialized unit mandated to oversee import classification, valuation and determination of origin in assessing import duty payable. Nonetheless, the elements of classification and country of origin (COO) that could potentially impact import valuation were excluded from the study.

Assessing the scope and features of this study, what emerges is a logical, non-replication design crafted from multiple sources of evidence in the given contexts. Data evidence is extracted and collated from and across sub-units to achieve effective data triangulation (Yin, 2018) (see Chapter 5.5 for multiple data collection strategy). The non-replicative feature of this single case

exploratory study was amply demonstrated in the field where different guided questionnaires were designed for each sub-unit while remaining consistent within each of the sub-units. Importantly, together, the three sets of sub-unit questionnaires were consistent with the research questions. Hence, the varying respondent perspectives from Customs, freight forwarders and the firm enterprises would either diverge from or reinforce each other on the issue of non-oil import merchandise valuation and its influence on entrepreneurship in Ghana.

For this study, a freight forwarder is a corporate member of an industry-recognised professional association, such as the Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders (GIFF), that acts as an agent in the import logistics network and carries out Customs and other related import documentation on behalf of an importing party (the firm enterprise).

Table 1.1: Overview of Case Respondent Categories

Organisation/ Participant	Unit of Analysis	Respondents Interviewed	Organisations Interviewed
GRA–Customs Division	Yes	8	1
Senior Officers		2	
Focus group		6	
Firm-level Category	Yes	7	6
Manufacturing		4	
Trading Company		3	
Freight Forwarder Group	Yes	4	4
Stevedoring (Context)	No	1	1
Total		20	12

Source: Field Data, 2023

1.6 Rationale for the study

The exploratory case study utilised the lens of institutional theory (IT) to probe how GRA-Customs' import valuation influences entrepreneurial behaviour and opportunity perception in Ghana. Scholarly inquiry into the influences of global trade systems on entrepreneurship in Ghana remains uncommon. Meanwhile, entrepreneurs face a myriad of market and institutional challenges from trade policies often crafted by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the World Customs Organisation (WCO), and implemented by the GRA-Customs division. Zoogah et al. (2015), confirm that institutional environmental variables such as those emanating from the WTO/GRA-Customs cooperation may constrain or enable entrepreneurship. However, the

extent to which these factors influence firm-level entrepreneurship, particularly in developing countries with characteristically high merchandise imports, is under-researched and unclear. Nonetheless, research interest in trade liberalisation and the ramifications of trade governance in developing nations is fairly common in development economics and contemporary anthropology literature. This study appropriately shifts contemporary interest in the influences of multilateral trade institutions (WTO/WCO) on firm enterprises in Ghana to the domain of entrepreneurship scholarship. Hence, its findings should enrich macro-level perspectives on trade liberalisation based on meso-level qualitative insights of this context (Su et al., 2017; Galvin, 2010).

It is noteworthy that Chalfin (2006), chose Ghana Customs, Excise, and Preventive Service (now GRA-Customs Division) as a principal data site for that seminal research. It brought to light the extent of influence the WTO and WCO jointly wield over national governments, particularly Customs administrations. This case study explores the implementation of the WTO Agreement on Customs Valuation (ACV), through GRA-Customs, and its influence on firm-level entrepreneurship (FLE) in Ghana. It aims to bridge an issue gap in the entrepreneurship literature. Additionally, Rajkarnikar (2006) confirms that scholarship on Customs valuation, outside institutions and publishers linked to the World Customs Journal (an affiliate of the WCO/WTO), is limited.

Furthermore, a breakdown of imports by commodity reveals manufactures represent 68% of 2019 (UNCTAD, 2020; WTO, 2019), compared with an export counterpart of a meagre 4% in Ghana. The relevance of this study under entrepreneurship may be narrowed to the inevitable influence of Customs valuation on domestic retail prices. Hence, the study's underlying concern is the repercussions of under-valued (under-invoiced) import merchandise on domestic production, competitiveness, innovativeness, and, thus, entrepreneurial perceptions of environmental opportunities in Ghana. The findings of the study should provide a basis for policymakers, researchers, practitioners, as well as multilateral trade agencies, to re-assess the

influences of today's global trade facilitation regime on entrepreneurship in developing countries such as Ghana.

1.7 Chapter Organization

The study is organized in eight chapters. Chapter One introduces the entire study: the background, problem statement, research objectives, scope, rationale and the organization of the study. Chapter Two provides an extensive review of the context of the study. The third chapter consists of the study's literature review. In the literature review entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation and trade liberalization are covered. Chapter Four reviews the literature on the underlying theory of the study, while chapter five expounds on the methodology and justification for the research design. The sixth chapter presents data collected from contextual, documentary and non-documentary sources, as well as respondents of the three units of analysis. Chapter Seven presents a thematic analysis of the data collected through the various sources. The eighth and final chapter discusses the results, their implications, drawn conclusions and recommendations for future research.

1.8 Chapter Summary

The preceding introductory background sets the stage for the exploratory inquiry into the contemporary issue of Customs import valuation; what drives its processes and practices, and how that may bear upon entrepreneurial behaviour and the perception of environmental opportunities in Ghana. In the subsequent chapters, the study deliberates on the geo-political, as well as the domestic economic contexts in which the case issue's units of analysis function and interact.

CHAPTER TWO

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY – GHANA

2.0 Introduction

A study of import merchandise valuation and how it influences firm-level entrepreneurship requires an appreciation of the environment in which this phenomenon occurs. The previous chapter presented an overview of the study, its aims and objectives, as well as a look at the nature of the inquiry as presented in the statement of problem.

The second chapter presents the context of the case study. The sections cover the national economic, trade and industry profile of this lower-middle developing country, along with related trade and economic indices. There is a glimpse of the manufacturing sector, a key factor in the country's industrialisation policy, as well as its entrepreneurship history. Equally important here is the appreciation of the socio-economic parameters within which entrepreneurial activity for this study is undertaken. Thus, the widely influential trade facilitation agenda and its enforced guidelines by the WTO are presented. This is followed in mid-chapter by a description of the setting within which trade is facilitated, and characterized not least by the port digitization and the national single window (NSW) facilities. Then, the GRA-Customs whose analytical boundaries for this case study are typically blurred with its context, is highlighted along with its import valuation policy.

Finally, local and indeed international stakeholder concerns by the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) and the International Chamber of Commerce illumine both the domestic and international contexts of this study. The chapter ends with a summary of its salient points.

2.1 Country Profile

Ghana in 1957 became the first Sub-Saharan country in colonial Africa to gain independence from Britain. The newly independent country was forged out of a merger of the then Gold Coast and the Togoland Trust territory. The country is located in West Africa on the Gulf of Guinea,

off a fisheries-rich 539-kilometer coastline. It is bordered on the east by Togo and Cote d'Ivoire to its west, while Burkina Faso is situated on its northern border. Ghana has a population of 33.8 million (2023 estimated) and covers an area of 238,533 square kilometers (Owusu-Ansah, 2023). After gaining independence, Ghana's economy faced a challenging period of instability and lackluster growth that lasted for three decades. Political turmoil during this time hindered economic progress until 1993. Particularly, the downturns in the late 1970s and early 1980s pushed Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita to its lowest point in the span of 60 years by 1983. Nonetheless, starting in 1984, there was a consistent, although modest, increase in per capita GDP.

Table 2. 1: Ghana Country Profile

Indicator	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population (total in millions)		19.28	24.78	31.07
Gross Domestic Product (current \$, in	5.89	4.98	32.20	68.53
Gross Domestic Product (% annual		3.37	7.90	0.40
Inflation (annual %)		27.20	16.60	7.10
Contribution of sectors to GDP				
Agriculture (% of GDP)	45.00	35.00	28.00	19.00
Services (% of GDP)	38.08	32.20	49.36	52.24
Industry (% of GDP)	17.00	25.00	18.00	30.00
Exports (% of GDP)		49.00	29.00	32.00
Imports (% of GDP)	26.00	67.00	46.00	36.00
Merchandise trade (% of GDP)	39.00	93.00	59.00	39.00
Foreign Direct Investments (\$ in mil.)	14.80	165.90	2,527.35	3,485.33

Source: World Bank, 2020



Figure 2.1: Map of Ghana showing the 16 regions

2.2 Ghana's Economic Environment

Ghana underwent three distinct phases of economic growth, ranging from moderate to robust, between 2014 and 2022. Nonetheless, it still grapples with challenges in stabilizing its economy. Notably, from 2014 to 2016, Ghana faced a significant economic slowdown, with an average real GDP growth rate of 2.8%, down from the previous average of 6.6% recorded in 2010-2013. This downturn was associated with domestic banking and energy crises.

Subsequently, between 2017 and 2019, after a change in government, Ghana's macroeconomic performance improved. Real GDP growth rebounded, averaging 6.9% annually, inflation was effectively managed, and the government's budgetary situation improved. Remarkably, in 2020, despite the global COVID-19-related lockdowns, business closures, and border restrictions, Ghana's economy fared relatively well, with a GDP growth rate of 0.4% (Abradu-Otoo et al., 2022; Olusola et al., 2022)

2.2.1 Trade Report

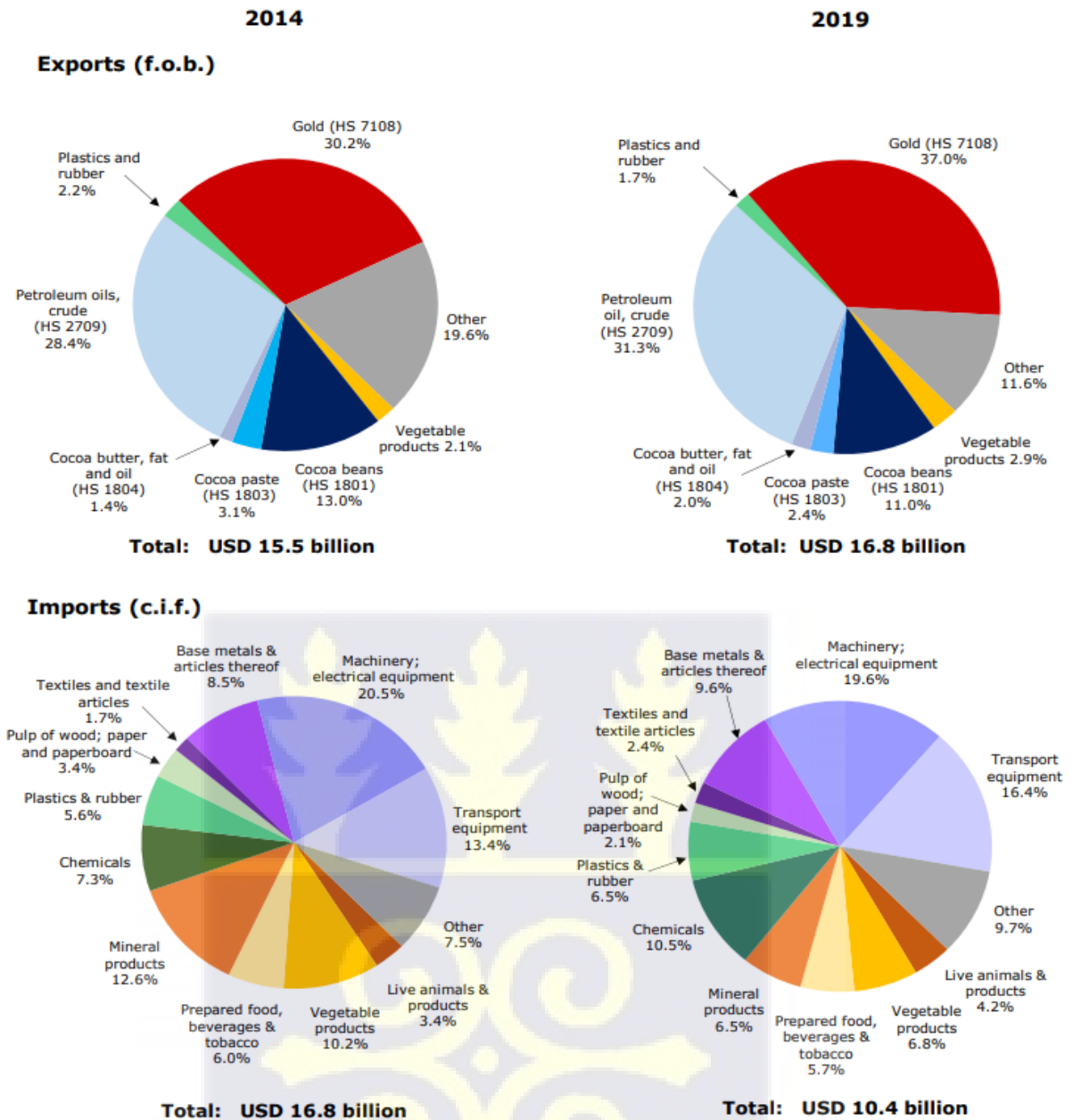
Since achieving independence in 1957, the nation has had a well-established reputation for relying heavily on imported goods to meet its domestic consumption needs. Manufactured products have consistently held the largest share of merchandise imports, averaging around 65% annually during the documented period (Okyere & Jilu, 2020). Following closely are fuel imports at 17%, with all food items making up 6% of the imports (Okyere & Jilu, 2020).

Table 2. 2: Trade Profiles (2019 – 2022)

	2019	2020	2021	2022
	USD	USD	USD	USD
Merchandise Imports (Non-oil)	10,990	10,538	10,909	9,994
Agricultural Products	1,703	n. a	n. a	n. a
Rice	375	n. a	n. a	n. a
Wheat	140	n. a	n. a	n. a
Sugar	139	n. a	n. a	n. a
Palm Oil	137	n. a	n. a	n. a
Cereal Grains	122	n. a	n. a	n. a

Source: BoG Annual Report, 2023

Chart 1.2 Product composition of merchandise trade by main HS section/subheading, 2014 and 2019



Source: WTO Secretariat calculations, based on UN Comtrade.

Figure 2. 2: Product composition of merchandise trade
Source: WTO Secretariat/Comtrade

Imports into Ghana valued at \$3,000 or more (unless an exemption is granted), require destination inspection. The proportion of imports from China has consistently grown to the overall imports, whereas the share of imports from Ghana's African trading partners has decreased. Non-oil merchandise imports to Ghana have been relatively stable since 2017, suggesting the prospect of further decline through appropriate industrial policy for effective

import substitution (BOG, 2017). Ghana's trade-to-GDP ratio averaged 33.4% in 2019-21. Its economy now modestly depends on international trade.

Ghana holds the position of the second-largest gold producer in Africa and possesses significant reserves of diamonds, as well as substantial reserves of oil and natural gas. A substantial portion of its merchandise exports, approximately 85%, is comprised of gold, crude oil, and cocoa-related products, including cocoa beans, cocoa paste, and cocoa butter. Ghana's key export markets are China and the European Union. Both entities also stand as their primary sources of imports. During the five-year period 2018 to 2022, merchandise imports have fluctuated between a high of USD 11 billion in 2019 and a low of USD 9.5 billion in 2023 (BoG Annual Report, 2023). Ghana is also an active participant in both the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). It engages in consultations with members of these organizations regarding matters related to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Table 2. 3: Taxes, Levies and Charges Applied to Imported Goods

Name (date introduced)	Rate	Taxation base
ECOWAS Levy (2003)	0.5%	c.i.f. On imports originating from beyond the ECOWAS region, the value is exclusive of tariffs.
Ghana EXIM Bank Levy (2016)	0.75%	c.i.f. Excluding petroleum products, the value without duties.
Environmental tax (2013)	10%	c.i.f. value excluding duties, plastic items
African Union Levy (2017)	0.2%	c.i.f. For all imports originating from beyond the African Union, the value without tariffs.
National Health Insurance Levy (2021)	3.5%	c.i.f. Within the country, products and services; encompassing import levies, the worth of foreign goods; and service imports.
COVID-19 Health Recovery Levy (2021)	1%	c.i.f. value excluding duties
Ghana Education Fund Levy (2018)	2.5%	c.i.f. value excluding duties
Processing Fee (2002)	1%	c.i.f. Value of items with zero tax, excluding those for education, healthcare, and agriculture.
Destination Inspection fee	1%	c.i.f. value excluding duties, on all imports
ICUMS charge (2020)	0.4%	f.o.b. value of goods, all imports

Source: MOFEP Fiscal Data

Ghana has recently enacted trade remedies legislation for the first time. Several reports of trade violations were submitted to the WTO as a consequence of this. These reports underwent

assessment in 2020. The recently formed Ghana International Trade Commission (GITC) has recommended the imposition of anti-dumping measures on aluminum coils and circles from abroad. At present, there are multiple ongoing anti-dumping investigations initiated by the country.

2.2.2 Agriculture in Ghana

The agricultural sector, as reported by Nyamekye et al. (2021) and Kwakwa et al. (2022), contributes approximately 20% to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Despite Ghana's substantial agricultural potential, it has increasingly become a net importer of food. Starting in 2017, Ghana's crop cultivation has witnessed notable enhancements due to the launch of a fresh agricultural endeavour recognized as "Cultivating for Food and Employment." This initiative is buttressed by subsidies for fertilizers and seeds, as well as offering restricted price backing for key basic crops. The predominant staples within the nation comprise cassava, yams, and plantains, in addition to rice and maize. Ghana's agricultural strategy predominantly centers on guaranteeing food self-sufficiency, with a specific emphasis on curbing food imports, notably concerning rice.

In March 2022, the average Most Favored Nation (MFN) tariff for agricultural products, as defined by the WTO, was recorded at 15.5%. Tariffs were highest for live animals and meat, reaching 24.1%. Notably, a significant portion of meat consumed in Ghana is imported, especially poultry meat. The tariff rate for poultry meat is set at 35%, and incoming shipments are subject to licensing requirements to safeguard domestic production, as reported by Zamani et al., (2022), and Ridley and Shirin (2023).

2.3 Entrepreneurship in Ghana

Ghana's history of entrepreneurship and small business development reveals that the idea of business enterprise existed in Ghanaian society before European settlers arrived there in the fourteenth century (Takyi-Asiedu 1993; Buame 1996). As observed by Chamlee-Wright (1997, p. 103), "long-distance trafficking of salt and fish into the interior was well established when

the Europeans first arrived in Ghana." The evolution of cultural practices and organizations that supported trade expansion was crucial for the growth of both local and long-distance trading (Chamlee-Wright 1997; Buame 1996).

However, since the colonial era, business activity in Africa has grown slowly (Takyi-Asiedu 1993). Government policies (Robson & Obeng, 2008; Rogerson 2001; McPherson 1996; Ninsin 1989), sociocultural issues (Takyi-Asiedu, 1993; Buame, 1996; Kiggundu, 2002), and a shortage of human and financial capital are some of the causes of the slow rise in entrepreneurial activity (Teal, 1998; McGrath & King, 1999). With regards to government policies, the Convention Peoples' Party (CPP) in the late-fifties to mid-sixties, led by Dr Kwame Nkrumah, having assumed political office, did not modify the government's attitude toward small businesses. Its initial ten-year development plan emphasized the growth of large-scale industry because of the increased demand for imported consumer products by Ghanaian consumers. The country's industrialization policy was therefore based primarily on import-substitution industries (Vacu & Odhiambo, 2017). Government initiatives aimed at promoting small enterprises were inadequate. This would have hampered EO and innovativeness in particular. Consequently, entrepreneurial growth and dynamism were adversely affected. According to Essuman (n.d) cited in Malecki (1997, p. 188), "Small company growth in Africa has been particularly challenging because innovation and technology had relied on public and private institutions that could not transfer the discoveries to small enterprises."

It is also worth noting that the perceived bureaucracy and corruption associated with the public sector of many sub-Saharan African countries has also hampered the growth of entrepreneurship in many African nations. Entrepreneurs are not encouraged to grow their businesses in a formal, structured manner when they get accustomed to dealing with government officials privately and often clandestinely (Fadahunsi & Rosa, 2002). In recent years, Ghanaian enterprises have reported less perceived public official corruption (Robson & Obeng, 2008; Transparency International, 2022). However, according to Transparency

International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), Ghana's score of 45 points in 2012 peaked at 48 in 2014 but dropped to 43 points in 2022. The country, once again, is experiencing a negative trend in the corruption perception index. The discussion surrounding the influence of socio-cultural factors on entrepreneurial development in Africa has not reached a consensus (Kiggundu, 2002; Buame, 1996).

In Ghana, the traditional apprenticeship model is the main mechanism for the transfer of specialized technical and entrepreneurial skills for the majority of enterprises (Palmer, 2007; McGrath & King, 1999). However, Adam and Alarifi (2021) noted that traditional apprenticeship in sub-Saharan Africa is associated with low levels of external contacts. Minimal external contacts could result in a low level of innovation and innovativeness by businesses that rely highly on this form of training. The inability of businesses to recruit qualified managerial and technical workers due to inadequate finance also implies that a disposition to innovation in those businesses would be undermined, hence affecting productivity, growth and overall performance (Van Dijk, 1997; Teal et al., 2006; Frazer, 2005)

To position Ghana on the middle-income trajectory, presently the nation's industrial and trade policy is predicated on fostering an environment that is favourable for the growth and development of the nation's private sector (Sriram & Mersha, 2010). The National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (NEIP), an agency of the Ministry of Business Development, was established by the current administration to further foster the development of entrepreneurship in Ghana. NEIP specifically aims to encourage young people to start being entrepreneurial in Ghana. It, however, lacks the necessary research to carry out its objectives fully.

2.4 Manufacturing Sector

Ghana has sought to consolidate growth in the non-oil sector and create economic activity in manufacturing and services; the former of which has been declining in recent years. According to the African Economic Outlook (2012), "the country needs to develop new labour-intensive

economic sectors such as manufacturing and agro-processing to tackle the employment challenge and provide opportunities to rural areas.” This implies a greater and more dynamic role for the domestic private sector. Ghana is unusual in the sub-Saharan African region with its high proportion (22.3%) of domestic entrepreneurs involved in agro-ventures. This is a key area of the economy because it is the main form of economic activity for the population and has been identified by the OECD and the African Development Bank (AfDB), among others, as the sector that holds the key to development and poverty reduction.

UNESCO (2016) confirms that manufacturing in Ghana is dominated by agro-industries, high dependence on imported raw materials coupled with the use of obsolete technology and underdeveloped industry linkages. The report acknowledges that Ghana’s manufacturing sector has been exposed to increased competition as a result of trade liberalization, alongside the high cost of production and high interest rates. It is worth noting further that the Ghanaian manufacturing sector has been and continues to be adversely affected by power shortages. Although the sector is relatively small, it is a significant part of the country’s productive industry capacity and an important contributor to industry. The manufacturing sector in 2020 contributed 11.1% to GDP. Although Ghana possesses a reasonably varied industrial foundation, the manufacturing sector's scale remains relatively small. Key industries encompass agriculture, fisheries, timber processing, aluminium smelting, breweries, cement production, oil refining, textiles, electronics, and pharmaceuticals. In the manufacturing sector, there are presently three state-owned enterprises (SOEs). Furthermore, the government holds a 5% ownership stake in Ghana Cement (GHACEM) Ltd. (WTO, 2022).

In 2020, the average applied import tariff for manufactured goods stood at 12.3%. The tariff rates were notably higher for clothing (20%), textiles (16.3%), and furniture (19.5%), while they were relatively lower for transport equipment (8.8%) and non-electrical machinery (7.0%) (as reported by the WTO Secretariat in 2020). Elevated tariffs on imported agricultural products are not in line to foster agro-industries. Additionally, the practice of tariff escalation and the

resulting high levels of effective protection in sectors like food and beverages, textiles and apparel, chemicals, and non-metallic products can have a detrimental impact on the international and potentially domestic competitiveness of these goods. To address this concern, Ghana, however, allows imports to enter the country either duty-free under bond or within designated free zones.

In Ghana, the industrial policy falls under the purview of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI). The primary policy objectives encompass the following: fostering increased employment opportunities and technological capabilities within the manufacturing sector, advancing agro-based industrial growth, and achieving a more balanced geographical distribution of industries to alleviate poverty and reduce income disparities nationwide. As part of these efforts, the One District One Factory (1D1F) initiative stands out as a significant government program aimed at creating a conducive environment for private sector involvement in establishing at least one industrial enterprise in each municipal district. It is important to note that two or more districts may collaborate to establish a single factory if they share a common resource base. Currently, there are 278 projects registered under this program. The main sector for domestic enterprises, however, remains retail and hospitality (57%), while there are important activities and opportunities in manufacturing and government services.

2.5 WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) came into force on December 7th, 2013 at the WTO Council meeting in Bali with the consent of 159 member states. Ghana ratified the TFA on 4 January 2017. The Trade Facilitation Agreement is concerned with the efficiency of the global trade environment. The WTO trade facilitation protocols were inspired by the difficulties faced by firms moving goods across borders, particularly due to ineffective border control techniques and trade and Customs regulations. According to Staples (2002), such challenges are borne out of difficulties shippers and their transport and logistics service providers experience with the relevant trade and customs procedures (Grainger, 2011).

The phrase "trade facilitation" is a term frequently used to refer to the reduction of red tape in international trade, particularly when it comes to Customs and other border and trade procedures. However, wider definitions of trade facilitation do expand the scope to cover "commercial procedure e.g., to effect payment or arrange for transport as well as the quality of transport infrastructure and wider institutional variables, such as corruption or quality of business support (Karim, et al., 2022; Hanoteau, & Vial, 2020).

The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement is believed to have considerable advantages. To demonstrate how big such gains may be, organizations like the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have released several macroeconomic models. One of these models predicts a USD 377 billion rise in annual global trade in manufactured products (Wilson et al., 2005); a different model predicts a USD 40 billion global gain for every 1% in cost of trade that is saved by actions like those encouraged by the agreement. Thirteen clauses make up the agreement, all of which are related to facilitating international trade (Grainger, 2011).

Table 2.4: Scope of WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

1. Publication and Availability of Information
2. Opportunity to Comment, Information Before Entry into Force and Consultation
3. Advance Rulings
4. Appeal or Review Procedures
5. Other Measures to Enhance Impartiality, No-Discrimination and Transparency
6. Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation
7. Release and Clearance of goods
8. Border Agency Cooperation
9. Movement of Goods under Customs Control Intended for Import
10. Formalities Connected with Importation and Exportation and Transit
11. Freedom of Transit
12. Customs Cooperation
13. Institutional Arrangements

Source: WTO, 2013; Rainger and Andrew, (2015)

Several of these propose practical solutions to recognized trade obstacles, like mandating countries to publish trade and customs prerequisites, as well as customs charges and duty rates, on readily available websites. They could establish domestic inquiry points, release average

processing times, and commit to consulting with the private sector before introducing new regulations. Some of the thirteen articles are more technical, specifying amongst other issues: minimum benefits for trusted traders (Grainger, 2014; Koul & Koul, 2018) such as within the WCO's SAFE Framework of Standards and its Authorized Economic Operator schemes (Grainger, 2014), advance customs rulings (for tariff classification and origin, but also recommended for customs value, duty relief, and quotas; the right to appeal (Grainger, 2014; Koul & Koul, 2018); pre-arrival processing of customs declarations; electronic payment of duties, taxes and fees; the adherence to risk-based controls; post-clearance audits by Customs; the implementation of the special customs procedures, such as Inward Processing and Outward Processing Relief (Grainger, 2014); and expedited clearance for air cargo and perishable goods. Some articles deal extensively with the cooperation among authorities at home as well as with the relevant authorities abroad. This includes provisions for common border procedures and uniform document requirements; the adoption of the single window principle, enabling importers to submit all relevant information for a declaration to the authorities via one single interface; and a mechanism for the exchange of information between Customs administrations - e.g. copies of the import and export declaration as well as supporting documents such as the commercial invoice and shipping documents. The agreement also states that WTO member states shall not introduce the mandatory use of Customs brokers (Grainger, 2014; Juárez Allende, 2022).

2.5.1 A Local Challenge

One of the key challenges for implementing the agreement is that trade facilitation concerns itself with businesses' operational requirements in international trade. Trade diplomats are unlikely to be suitably knowledgeable to provide adequate assessment (Grainger, 2008). A simple tick-box implementation of the agreement's measures is unlikely to yield full trade facilitation benefits. It is the quality and continued review of implementation that counts, and it is the private sector that through research and consultation is best able to advise. Inevitably

interests and views about what measures and how to implement them will differ significantly. One person's savings is likely to be another person's redundancy. Subsequent noise about the costs and benefits of the WTO's advocated measures is likely to be very technical, involving many private sector interest groups – which next to shippers and importers also include shipping lines, transport companies, freight forwarders, port operators, and banks (Grainger, 2014). Article 13 of the agreement thus calls for the creation of a National Trade Facilitation Committee to support domestic coordination and implementation of the agreement (Grainger, 2014). These National Committees are to report to the WTO Committee on Trade Facilitation, which shall also maintain close contact with other international organizations, such as the WCO. The idea for national trade facilitation bodies is nothing new and has been long advocated by international organizations such as the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT, 2001). They ensure that suitable trade facilitation measures are implemented to maximum effect. They also help prevent inevitable conflicts between public and private sector interest groups from becoming stumbling blocks. Surprisingly, the agreement is silent on how such national committees shall involve the private sector; although, according to Grainger (2014), article 2 does specify that regular consultation with the private sector shall, as appropriate, take place. Presently, Trade diplomats have the issue of having to form an opinion regarding the level of trade facilitation in any given country because it is now at the core of contemporary trade policy.

Table 2. 5: Ghana Government Activity in Trade Facilitation

Following the adoption of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in 2017, Ghana submitted notifications for all its TFA commitments to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Additionally, Ghana has sought aid and resources for capacity development to put into effect 23 of the TFA's 36 provisions categorized as "C" measures.

Ghana has formally communicated the exact dates for executing its commitments falling under categories B and C. In the 2022-23 timeframe, a total of 18 provisions are slated for implementation.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) has set up a Technical Working Group to address discrepancies in import-related charges that may not comply with TFA Articles 6.1 and 6.2. This group includes government bodies responsible for border management and trade associations, but their recommendations are currently undisclosed.

Nonetheless, Ghana faces a trade facilitation challenge due to its substantial, albeit decreasing, reliance on import tariffs and levies for fiscal revenue. Additionally, it has been confirmed by authorities that Ghana currently does not adhere to the standard customs procedures outlined in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Customs Code.

The prior assessment highlighted that Ghana has made several adjustments to its transit system since 2007, and this has led to a nearly twofold increase in transit volumes, indicating a swift and positive response from traders to effective trade facilitation measures.

As per official sources, the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) has been actively advocating the advantages for landlocked nations when utilizing Ghana's ports. These advantages encompass enhanced cargo and trucker security, upgraded port infrastructure, a substantial decrease in internal inspection points overseen by law enforcement, customs, and immigration authorities, and the elimination of a \$200 customs levy.

In the year 2018, the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) entered into a partnership with Ghana Link Network Services Ltd (GLNS) to work jointly with the Customs Uni-Pass International Agency originating from the Republic of Korea to offer an all-encompassing national single-window platform geared towards improving trade facilitation. This information is derived from the 2018 report titled "Ghana TATFP Customs Risk Management Rapid Assessment" funded by USAID. *Source:* https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TJR7.pdf

In Ghana, a system employs transponders costing \$50 to monitor the real-time movement of transit trucks, ensuring their tracking. Cameras placed at entry and exit points, along with checkpoints within the country, confirm the legitimacy of both transit vehicles and their cargo. Additionally, a collaborative interagency initiative has been established to combat corruption and harassment, with the aim of eliminating obstacles along the transit routes.

Source: WTO (2013), Rainger and Andrew (2015).

2.6 Port Digitization at the Tema Port

Globally, Customs administrations have embarked on digitalizing operations for efficiency and transparency. In September 2017, the Vice-President of Ghana's office announced the introduction of a paperless port system to facilitate port transactions and international trade. Plans had been afoot to digitalize import clearance since 1998.

The Ghana Community Network (GCNET) Services Limited and their technical colleague West Blue Consulting in 2003, according to Addo and Avgerou (2020) were the exclusive entities entrusted with the digital revenue collection at both of Ghana's seaports. Subsequently, they integrated a majority of the internal operations at Ghana's ports into a unified system, effectively transforming Ghana's ports into a "paperless" operation as of September 1, 2017 (Osei-Owusu & Mahmood, 2020). On 30th May 2020 GCNET, however, closed down its operations at the ports, paving the way for a new company, Ghana Link Network Services Ltd.,

with its digital platform the Integrated Customs Management System (ICUMS) (Aryee & Hansen, 2022). The change in platform service provider was attributed to the rising cost in port transactions, delayed clearance of goods and what the government claimed was a huge leakage in revenue mobilization.

Another challenge stakeholders faced at the time was the use of multiple online platforms in accessing merchandise valuation and classification, risk management and payment; which were jointly managed by the GCNET and West Blue Consulting at the time (Aryee & Hansen, 2022). Thus, ICUMS was reportedly launched to revive the trade sector and came as a direct successor of the previous Pre-Arrival Assessment Report System (PAARS) and the Ghana Customs Management System (GCMS) from West Blue and GCNET respectively. Prior to Ghana Link's ICUMS take-over from GCNET and West Blue Consulting, the expectation from these novel digital applications at the time in 2017, was a seamless, paperless port clearance system where internal Customs' bottlenecks involving human interference, especially regarding import valuation, would be eliminated or drastically minimized.

2.7 Ghana National Single Window

The concept of the Single Window System, which emerged from the UNECE through the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) in 2005, aimed at simplifying, standardizing, and harmonizing international trade procedures. This initiative primarily focused on improving the exchange of information between trade entities and government authorities, as well as streamlining information flow within government systems (UNECE, 2005; GRA, 2016).

Table 2. 6: Procedures to import goods into Ghana

Step 1: Obtain a registration certificate from the Registrar General's Department.

Step 2: The Import Declaration Form can be submitted to MOTI by the importer or their agent, either on paper or electronically, for a fee of GHS 5.

Step 3: In the case of FDA-regulated items, which include specific food products, cosmetics, and drugs, the importer or agent must request registration as an importer from the FDA. They must also register the product they intend to import. This registration is carried out through ICUMS, and it results in the issuance of an FDA import permit, which remains valid for one year. Notably, the previous import permit fee has been replaced by a verification fee, as outlined in L.I. 2386 of 2019. This fee amounts to 0.8% for food, 1.8% for drugs, and 0.5% for cosmetics.

For other agricultural products, the importer or agent must complete registration with the Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate (PPRSD) as an importer. Furthermore, they need to apply for an import permit. Additionally, the PPRSD conducts phytosanitary inspections for all imported plants and plant products, while the Veterinary Services Directorate performs similar inspections for imported animal products.

In the case of other regulated products, importers are required to secure a permit or license from the relevant ministry, agency, or department. It is important to note that a product may fall under both FDA and PPRSD regulations. Importers or agents dealing with other regulated products must also register as importers with the GSA.

Step 4: The importer or agent secures a Tax Clearance Certificate from the GRA, which is issued in the importer's name. Although there were intentions to consolidate this document with the tax identification number (TIN) also issued by the GRA, as of now, both documents remain mandatory.

Step 5: An electronic application for the Bill of Entry (BOE) is submitted by the importer or their representative, and the required documents are uploaded within ICUMS.

Step 6: The shipping company submits the manifest to GRA Customs.

Step 7: Importer/agent submits the Customs Declaration via ICUMS.

Step 8: The importer or their representative submits payments for duties and fees to the authorized dealer bank.

Step 9: The shipment undergoes examination by the GSA, and if necessary, by the FDA or the PPRSD/Veterinary Service Directorate, in addition to being inspected by a Customs Examination Officer and a Customs Chemist Analyst. Notably, starting in 2020, the GSA has ceased inspecting FDA-regulated products, primarily comprising food, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals.

Step 10: Following the payment of all charges, the merchandise is approved for clearance by GRA Customs.

Step 11: The importer/agent pays fees and obtains a vehicle toll pass and a waybill from the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA).

Step 12: Terminal clerk cross-checks and confirms that the correct fees have been paid.

Step 13: Customs Preventive Officers check the documents, and then release the goods.

Step 14: A National Security official examines the documentation to verify that the cargo departs from the port correctly.

Source: GRA

This innovative concept leverages information technology to enable the seamless submission of trade-related data, ensuring that information is entered once and can be reused for processing, while also facilitating the receipt of relevant responses from both government and

private sector entities (Djanitey, 2018, citing WCO, 2012). The UNECE has the "single window" concept defined as a centralized entry point where all participants in trade and transportation can submit standardized information and documents. This streamlines the process of meeting various regulatory requirements associated with imports, exports, and transit. Notably, when information is in electronic form, each specific data element should only need to be entered once (UNECE, 2005).

The UNECE's recommendation for establishing a Single Window System, along with the accompanying guidelines outlined in UNECE Recommendation 33, has emerged as the global standard for the implementation of Single Window systems. This framework has been adopted by more than 70 countries, signifying its widespread recognition and use in enhancing the efficient exchange of information between trade entities and government authorities (GRA, 2016). According to the WTO, Ghana's membership of the body requires it to establish and/or maintain a single Customs administration window, "enabling traders to submit documentation and/or data requirements for importation, exportation, or transit of goods through a single-entry point to the participating authorities or agencies (UNECE, 2015)"

2.8 GRA-Customs Division Valuation Policy

Within the structure of the WTO and the WCO membership, customs import valuation in Ghana finds its basis in the agreement on Customs Valuation (ACV), which is an offshoot of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), with a particular focus on Article VII. This framework is detailed in the Ghanaian Customs Act of 2015 (ACT 891), specifically under sections 67 and 68. Based on the WTO-ACV, under the operational auspices of the WCO, Customs valuation in Ghana relies primarily on Transactional Value. The initial method among the six (6) provided by the WTO for valuation purposes is the primary method. In cases where the value cannot be accurately ascertained using the first method, risk management tools can be utilized to establish the consignment's value, employing Methods 2 to 6 as outlined in the WTO-ACV.

Table 2. 7: Fiscal Revenue, 2014-20 (GHS million)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Tax revenue	17,855	21,455	24,283	30,424	37,784	42,775	44,448
VAT on Imports	2,757	3,489	4,108	4,992	4,912	4,121	3,906
Duty on Imports	2,773	3,078	4,122	5,485	6,102	5,410	5,514
Import exemptions	1,218	2,059	n. a	n. a	n. a	n. a	n. a
Import duties as % of tax revenue	15.5%	14.3%	17.0%	18.0%	16.1%	12.6%	12.4%

Source: MOFEP

2.8.1 Database as a Risk Assessment Tool

The guidelines provided by the WCO (World Customs Organization) pertain to the creation and utilization of a national valuation database. These guidelines emphasize that a national valuation database serves as a tool for assessing risk and can be employed by Customs Administrations alongside other risk assessment tools. Its primary function is to evaluate the potential accuracy of the declared Customs value for imported goods (WCO, n.d). The information contained within this database must consist of recent data, specifically reflecting the Customs value and relevant details of previously imported goods. It is important to note that these database values cannot be used as a sole determinant of Customs value, a substitute for imported goods' values, or a means to establish minimum value thresholds (WCO, n.d). Furthermore, it is recognized that disparities in pricing, including significant fluctuations, are commonplace in international trade. Therefore, the mere difference between the declared value and the database value(s) is not sufficient on its own to reliably indicate a risk concerning the accuracy of the declared value (WCO, n.d). For Customs administrations employing a valuation database, the WCO recommends the establishment of a monitoring mechanism. This mechanism ensures that the database is utilized as a tool for risk assessment and that the data stored within it is regularly updated.

2.8.2 The Benchmark Values Discount (BVD) Policy

In April 2019, in a claim to make the Ghanaian ports competitive, reduce smuggling and boost government revenue, the government of Ghana introduced the Benchmark Value Discount (BVD) Policy. The policy offered a 50% reduction for most imported goods but only gave a 30% discount for vehicles. The GRA-Customs Division suggested that this might entail the use of a reference price list called Benchmark Values (Abrokwah et al., 2021). Goods are purportedly compared to current global prices as a means of managing risk and accurately representing the genuine market conditions for those products. It is important to note that Benchmark Values do not serve as replacements or alternatives to Transactional Values. They come into play only when the criteria for accepting Transactional Values are not satisfied.

2.8.3 Reversal of Benchmark Values Discount (BVD) Policy

Following consultations in March 2022, the Ghana government announced a reduction to the discount offered on the delivery values of imports under the benchmark value discount (BVD) policy. It stated that the discount offered is reduced to 30% (from 50%), and for vehicles, 10% (from 30%) (Daily Guide network, 2022).

In December 2022, the Ministry of Finance, acting through the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA), eliminated the benchmark value policy for import duties at Ghana's ports. This meant that the 30 per cent discount on the import values of general goods and the 10 per cent discount on the value of home-delivered used vehicles would no longer be in effect. Consequently, the valuation of imported goods would return to conforming with the WTO-ACV (Daily Guide Network, 2022).

The Government was said to have lost about GH¢9 billion in revenue from taxes generated on imported goods as a result of the introduction of the benchmark values which resulted in a reduction of duties paid by importers.

2.9 The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Concerns

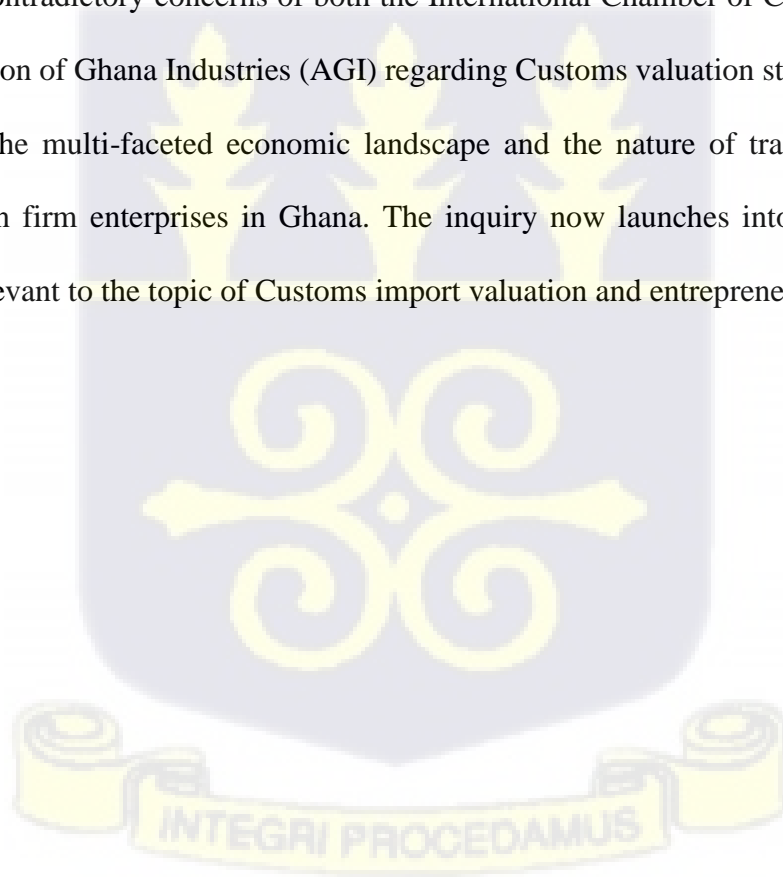
Among the various stakeholder organizations, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is alarmed by the growing trend of countries disregarding WTO regulations by using Customs valuation databases improperly (Desiderio, 2019). The concerns have to do with Customs setting reference or minimum prices for import value declarations, and delays in trade facilitation, thus higher trade costs confronting traders and businesses especially in developing countries and within SSA in particular (Belianska et al., 2022). The ICC, acting as the global representative body for businesses across all industries, advocates for the universal observance of international rules and regulations by both governments and corporations. It underscores the importance of consistent and predictable customs valuation standards to facilitate the smooth flow of trade. Any apparent deviations from these globally agreed-upon rules and regulations could impede trade and economic progress. Specifically, the ICC expresses significant apprehension about the increasing risk associated with the misappropriation of valuation databases and the utilization of forbidden valuation techniques commonly referred to as "reference pricing."

2.10 The Association of Ghana Industries (AGI's) Concerns

The Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) strongly opposes the Benchmark Valuation Discount (BVD) policy, claiming that it has devalued imported goods and reduced the demand for local alternatives, leading to the downfall of domestic manufacturing firms. According to the AGI, while many countries provide export incentives to boost international trade, Ghana's BVD policy offers across-the-board import incentives, primarily promoting imports and distorting both micro and macroeconomic foundations. Aligned with Ghana's broader industrial transformation goals, such as the "one district, one factory" (1D1F) initiative, Planting for Food and Jobs, Fertilizer subsidy, and the nation's export development strategy, the AGI contends that the current BVD policy contradicts the government's agenda for industrialization (Ali et al., 2021; Ampah et al., 2021).

2.11 Chapter Summary

The context chapter delves into various aspects of Ghana's economic landscape and trade environment. It begins with a look at the country profile and provides essential background information. The chapter highlights the entrepreneurship landscape, presenting the growing entrepreneurial spirit and its contribution to the country's economic development. It also sheds light on the manufacturing sector, discussing its growth potential and challenges. Furthermore, a look is taken at the implications of the WTO trade facilitation agreement (TFA) and its relevance to international trade. The discussion also touched on the port digitalization initiative at the Tema Harbour, Ghana National Single Window (GNSW), as well as the complexities surrounding the GRA-Customs division's valuation of imports. It concludes by presenting seemingly contradictory concerns of both the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) regarding Customs valuation standards. This brings to the fore the multi-faceted economic landscape and the nature of trade-related pressures brought upon firm enterprises in Ghana. The inquiry now launches into a broad review of literature relevant to the topic of Customs import valuation and entrepreneurial development.



CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 Introduction

The literature review chapter provides a comprehensive exploration of key themes and concepts that form the foundation of this study. It begins by delving into the realm of entrepreneurship, examining its significance as a driving force behind economic growth and innovation. Entrepreneurial orientation, a critical dimension of entrepreneurial behaviour, is examined to understand its implications for businesses. The chapter also explores the intricacies of identifying and understanding entrepreneurial opportunities, shedding light on how entrepreneurs perceive and pursue potential ventures. Furthermore, it assesses entrepreneurial orientation at the firm-level, examining its impact on organizational strategies and performance. Lastly, the literature probes the topic of trade liberalization, discussing its role in shaping entrepreneurial landscapes and the broader economic environment. The literature review sets the stage for an in-depth look at the themes and concepts of the study.

3.1 Entrepreneurship Explained

According to contemporary literature, Schumpeter in 1934 identified and described the positive role of entrepreneurs in the economy as "revolutionaries of the market" (Schumpeter, 1934; p.130). Prior to the insightful observation, Richard Cantillon, a banker who wrote "Essai sur la nature du commerce en general" (Essay on the Nature of Trade in General), is thought to have improved our comprehension of economic theory (Murphy, 1986). His work depicted the entrepreneur as an undertaker who had a significant role in the markets and circulation of money. Cantillon's contributions gained prominence only in 1977, some twenty-one years after he passed on. Subsequently, over time, the function of the entrepreneur was increasingly acknowledged in the understanding of economic theory, with input from Keynes and Harvey (Murphy, 1986). The term "entrepreneurship" emerged from the entrepreneur's role and has

been defined in various enriching and profound ways throughout the literature. It is described by Shane (2003, p. 4) as the recognition and creation of “new goods, services, ways of organizing market processes and raw materials through efforts that had previously not existed”. Some scholars have found this definition constraining, as entrepreneurs may and do innovatively add value to existing products or services.

Mole and Mole (2010) for their part focused on the agency status of the entrepreneur by referring to entrepreneurship as the interaction between structures of a society and the embedded agents. Stevenson and Sahlman (1989) explored the idea further through the lenses of the functional, the personality and the behavioural perspectives. Collectively, they reinforce the adaptability of the entrepreneurship concept. Nelson (1997) and Bedi (2016) postulate that the process of turning an innovative idea into an added-value product or service, and/or the starting of a new business is termed entrepreneurship. Additionally, to create a sustainable enterprise out of those endeavours, vision, leadership and a good dose of ambition are required. Stevenson and Jarillo (1990) offer that entrepreneurship is the creation of value by people and organizations working together to implement an idea through the application of creativity, drive, and a willingness to take risks. The core task of entrepreneurship, according to Venkatarama (1989) and Kreiser et al. (2013) is to identify and seize environmental opportunities.

The true essence of entrepreneurship lies in the actions that bring innovation to life, specifically the willingness and bravery to take risks when presented with opportunities. It goes beyond merely exploring environmental possibilities, as stated by Vij and Bedi (2016). Through the development of a fresh idea or the enhancement of an existing one, entrepreneurship may include reviving established organizations (Audretsch et al., 2009). “Entrepreneurship is an opportunity-seeking and forward-looking perspective involving introducing new products or services ahead of the competition and acting in anticipation of future demand to create, change and shape the firm’s environment” (Kreiser & Davis, 2010).

3.2 Understanding Entrepreneurial Opportunity

Whilst the opportunity concept has been at the forefront of the majority of entrepreneurship studies, there has been a seeming lack of consensus on what exactly the term means. Shane and Venkataraman (2000) tackle the subject by arguing that an opportunity must have a high demand and potential for high earnings, low capital and opportunity costs, attract moderate competition and a relatively short technology lifetime in order to be worthwhile for exploitation. According to Short et al. (2010), an opportunity is "an idea or dream that is discovered or developed by an entrepreneurial entity and that is revealed through investigation over time to be potentially valuable." Entrepreneurship involves the coming together of potentially lucrative opportunities and individuals and/or firms disposed to explore and exploit such opportunities. (Venkataraman, 1997). Thus, the field of entrepreneurship may be viewed as a scholarly quest into "how, by whom, and with what effects opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated, and exploited" (Venkataraman, 1997). As a result, the field includes the study of opportunity sources, the processes of discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities, as well as those that engage in these activities.

3.2.1 Opportunity Exploration Described

Exploration involves actions directed at identifying, searching for, and nurturing opportunities, which are subsequently utilized in the exploitation phase to attain specific market outcomes and advantages. Exploration tends to be more subjective and imaginative, emphasizing creativity and the introduction of innovative solutions. On the other hand, exploitation is more objective, rational, and analytical, involving the initiation and growth of business endeavours through the commercialization of the opportunities discovered. Several researchers (Benitez et al., 2018; Osiyevskyy et al., 2020; Billinger et al., 2021) have put forth various models for the exploration and exploitation of opportunities. These models, by directly linking opportunities with entrepreneurial activities, offer a range of suggestions for enhancing entrepreneurial

inventiveness. Consequently, two primary approaches to exploration and exploitation revolve around the discovery and creation of opportunities.

The discovery approach highlights the belief that opportunities exist objectively in the environment, waiting to be uncovered and exploited by entrepreneurs seeking potential gains. In this perspective, identifying opportunities relies heavily on recognizing existing challenges, established behavioural patterns, past experiences, intuition, and contemporary problem-solving techniques. On the other hand, the creation approach views opportunities subjectively, as they are formed through the entrepreneurial activities themselves. Creating opportunities involves heuristic information processing, which means creatively attributing meaning to the world around them, engaging in discussions, reinterpreting events, and experimenting through trial and error.

Based on the literature review, five phases of opportunity exploration in the development of firm innovativeness can be proposed.

3.2.1.1 The Preparation Phase

This phase concerns the intrinsic qualities of entrepreneurs, company leaders, and workforce members, encompassing their reservoir of understanding, educational background, familial environment, societal connections, passions, and life encounters. Frequently, this phase unfolds organically in the course of individuals' lives, wielding an influence on their predisposition to initiate a venture, partake in undertakings, welcome change, assume risks, and harness cognitive aptitude and inventive capacity. These distinctive traits play a pivotal role in shaping individuals' interpretations of external circumstances and their apprehension of prospects (Werbel, 2000).

3.2.1.2 The Imagination Phase

This stage connects opportunity-driven strategies with high-level management and reflects a company's ambition to gain a competitive advantage through innovation and the implementation of novel market strategies (Dimov, 2007).

3.2.1.3 The Amplification Phase

This phase encompasses the groundwork related to resources and the organizational readiness for the forthcoming exploration and exploitation of opportunities. The company's strategic intents and blueprints concerning the streamlining of procedures and the judicious allocation of its internal resources, as well as the formulation of protocols for obtaining external resources, emerge as pivotal considerations (Matejun, 2018). The strategic allocation of organizational resources augments the company's adaptability and bolsters the impetus for the subsequent exploitation of opportunities. Concurrently, in this stage, the territory of opportunities, conceived as the realm or dimension of the environment where the company will chance upon or generate events that hold the potential as opportunities, must also be delineated and expanded (Matejun, 2018).

3.2.1.4 The Generation Phase

This stage revolves around the surveillance of the opportunity landscape with the objective of identifying or fabricating events that bear semblance to opportunities, oftentimes culminating in their obsolescence. The organization can traverse diverse avenues and employ various methodologies in the quest for opportunity generation. These pathways may encompass systematic exploration, historical lineage, a reaction elicited by past failures, as well as a more passive, case-driven, or inventive approach (Matejun, 2018).

3.2.1.5 The Screening Phase

During this phase, the entrepreneur's focus is keenly fixed on the meticulous selection of a specific opportunity. This selection is guided by a set of distinct criteria, which encompass aspects like legality, the adequacy of resources required for the opportunity's pursuit, and the

prospective attainment of specific tangible or intangible advantages. These criteria are highly personalized, subject to individual perspectives, and adjusted with respect to the time allocated for their continuous monitoring and screening. The entrepreneur also conducts a thorough assessment of the potential utility, benefits, costs, and risks entailed in the process of opportunity exploitation. Upon completion of this phase, the enterprise proceeds into the subsequent opportunity exploitation stage in the progression of enterprise development, which may encompass a series of five distinct phases (Matejun, 2018).

3.2.2 Opportunity Exploitation Described

3.2.2.1 *The Formation Phase*

During this phase, additional cultivation and enhancement of chosen prospects occur, facilitated by the assistance of research and development, external advisory services, input from social networks, a well-structured business blueprint, and comprehensive market assessments. Through this process, the entrepreneur assembles the absent data and crafts a more sophisticated depiction of the forthcoming venture's configuration within a specified market niche and in alignment with the requisites of the clientele (Mirvahedi & Morrish, 2017).

3.2.2.2 *The Evaluation Phase*

At this stage, the final decision on the possible exploitation of a given opportunity in the company's entrepreneurial activity is made. The evaluation standards may encompass considerations related to the attractiveness and viability of the specific pioneering endeavor, originating from the recognized opportunity. In this context, certain critical factors carry significance: an earnest and unbiased evaluation of the potential resources requisite for realizing the innovation, alongside tempered optimism that stems from an objective scrutiny of the actuality and the judiciousness of choices (Greene et al., 2010).

3.2.2.3 *The Operational Phase*

This pertains to the formulation, maturation, and market deployment of efficacious innovations that are engendered through the exploitation of opportune moments. The operational phase is

fixated on the attainment of specific palpable and intangible gains. It is imperative to maintain vigilance during this stage since, notwithstanding the preliminary assessment of opportunities, unforeseen adversities may surface, linked to shifts in both internal and external circumstances (Baumbach et al., 2020).

3.2.2.4 The Updating Phase

This phase entails a combination of proactive and responsive measures directed towards preserving the market viability of a specific innovation. Such measures encompass alterations to the product or service, venturing into unexplored market domains, corporate reorganization, and harnessing the latent possibilities arising from novel market prospects (Carsten, 2007).

3.2.2.5 The Accumulation Phase

This phase involves undertaking activities directed towards safeguarding knowledge, resources, skills, procedures, and organizational strategies. These elements collectively empower the effective pursuit and utilization of opportunities to bolster a company's strengths. It forms the foundational element of the iterative nature of the entire process and aligns with the nurturing of organizational wisdom. Although the outlined process may appear to follow a linear path, it is important to note that the stages are often carried out in a non-uniform sequence or simultaneously (Spitzer, 2011). This framework allows for transitions between phases; for example, negative findings during the screening or assessment phase can lead to a return to earlier stages like preparation, enhancement, or inception. The proposed approach is also characterized by its cyclical nature, as the accumulation of knowledge serves as the bedrock for exploring and harnessing future opportunities. The comprehensive nature of this process and the potential for utilizing a variety of routes and methodologies enhance flexibility, enabling tailoring to the specific needs and capabilities of a given company. This adaptability, in turn, contributes to the development of a company's innovative potential (Spitzer, 2011).

3.3 Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO): A Critical Assessment

Entrepreneurial Orientation is a firm-level concept that measures how much a company emphasizes innovativeness, shows proactiveness and favours taking risks. Although the concept of entrepreneurship was initially developed at the individual level and refers to an individual's behaviour, as entrepreneurship research has progressed, the focus has transitioned from the examination of personal conduct to the scrutiny of corporate-level analysis, or from delving into the essence of entrepreneurship to deciphering its procedural aspects. Individual conduct is often perceived as capricious and resistant to control, whereas corporate behaviour appears amenable to modification (Kilmann & Covin, 1988). Management practitioners have increasingly found it expedient and pragmatic to gauge the impact of divergent strategic stances on a company's performance by effecting alterations in various organizational policies and tactics (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991). Consequently, a corporate-level conceptualization of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) emerges as the linchpin providing entrepreneurs with the requisite tools for translating their company's vision and objectives into practical reality.

In the 1990s, research on entrepreneurial endeavours primarily fixated on the correlation between Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) and Business Performance (BP), recognizing EO as an indispensable factor in achieving business triumph (Dess et al., 1997; Kraus et al., 2012). Entrepreneurial orientation was acknowledged for equipping businesses with the tools necessary to distinguish their products and services in the competitive landscape, thus gaining a unique competitive advantage (Kreiser & Davis, 2010). Knight (1997) contributed the insight that EO constitutes a fundamental disposition of importance for strategic innovation, particularly in the face of evolving external conditions, and is applicable to enterprises of all sizes and varieties. Jogaratnam (2002) pointed out the continuous surveillance of their surroundings by entrepreneurial entities, uncovering potential opportunities, and swiftly seizing them as they manifest, thereby yielding a robust business performance. According to Zahra and Covin (1993), "enterprises exhibiting a high level of EO can target premium market segments, set higher prices, and preempt the market ahead of their rivals. The main focus of

entrepreneurship study is the alignment of business strategy, structure and environment (Huang & Wang, 2013). Importantly, the fortunes of any business are determined by the suitability of environmental factors for entrepreneurial endeavours, rather than either firm strategy or environmental conditions (Aldrich, 1990).

An organizational and industrial environment may temper the relationship between EO and business outcomes. Richard et al. (2004) showcased that, the performance of a firm is impacted by the interaction between the focus dimensions of EO and cultural diversity. The interplay between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and business results may undergo modulation within the context of an organizational and industrial milieu (Dimitratos et al., 2004). As posited by Richard et al. (2004), a firm's performance is shaped by the interplay of EO's focal dimensions and the mosaic of cultural diversity. Brookshire (2009) contends that the dimensions of a firm's scale affect the connection between firm-level entrepreneurship (FLE) and business effectiveness, with a discernible amplification in influence observed as the firm's size diminishes. It has been suggested that both organizational dimensions like scale and the prevailing ethos are influential factors in steering entrepreneurship at the corporate level (Rauch et al., 2009). Entrepreneurial orientation is a product of its environment. According to Lumpkin and Dess (1996), the relationship between EO and firm performance may be more complex than previously assumed and the magnitude of this relationship is contingent upon various attributes of the external and internal environment of a firm.

Scholars underline the role of ecological conditions, encompassing elements like dynamism, intricacies, and antagonism (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006); the structural framework factors, including formalization and decentralization (Grande et al., 2011; Gupta & Pandit, 2012); intrinsic organizational factors such as scale, longevity, ethos, and firm type (Rauch et al., 2009), among others, which might shape the extent to which entrepreneurial orientation exerts its influence on business outcomes. Whilst the concept of entrepreneurship has drawn considerable attention from scholars, studies reveal the need for additional research. According to Covin and Slevin (1989), "EO is the summation of the extent to which top managers are

inclined to take the business-related risk to favour change and innovation in order to obtain a competitive advantage for their firm and to compete aggressively with other firms”. However, according to Lumpkin and Dess (1996), an inherent limitation of this approach is the assumption of uni-dimensionality. Their contention posits that EO constitutes a multi-dimensional construct encompassing unique attributes encompassing ingenuity, forward-thinking, embracing risk, competitive dynamism, and self-governance. Each EO dimension makes a distinct contribution to company performance. In theory, a firm should consider all five dimensions, but in practice, just a fraction of them may be important, and the makeup of this subset may change over time depending on the environment in which the firm works. The distinctive contributions of each dimension of entrepreneurship to business success may be hidden by the aggregated measurements of EO. Deconstructing the EO construct is therefore important so that organizational decision-makers can concentrate only on those aspects of the construct that have a substantial impact on company performance rather than on all of its aspects.

3.3.1 Discussing the Dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation

3.3.1.1 *Autonomy*

Entrepreneurship can take place within organizations if individuals and teams are given the opportunity to use their creativity and support is offered to innovative ideas. A spirit of autonomy is required to advance new companies, thus a key driver of new-entry activity. Autonomy often refers to the capacity and desire to pursue possibilities on one's own. In an organizational setting, it describes action conducted by individuals without undue constraint or organizational impediments. Contemporary literature postulates that granting staff independence of thought and action in an organization is likely to boost performance-enhancing behaviour and entrepreneurial growth. According to Lumpkin and Dess (1996), autonomy, which refers to the ability and determination to be self-directed in the pursuit of opportunities is an entrepreneurial act.

A firm's size, management style or ownership may affect the manifestation of autonomy within it. For instance, autonomy is implicit in ownership rights in a company where the owner/manager is the key decision-maker. The amount of centralization or delegation as well as the size of the organization, may influence how much autonomy is really exercised in a situation. Researchers have examined the kind and degree of autonomous behaviour in studies of small organizations by examining how centralized the leadership is, how frequently managers delegate authority and how much they rely on technical expertise. According to Miller (1983), the most entrepreneurial firms had leaders who were the most independent. That is to say, in small enterprises, high levels of entrepreneurial activity were linked to CEOs who held strong central authority and served as the company's knowledge leader by staying abreast of new markets and technologies. Shrivastava and Grant (1985) showed that 10 out of the 32 Indian enterprises studied in which a single key manager served as the principal decision-making agent had a similar heavy reliance on managerial autocracy. Eight of these ten businesses fell under the "entrepreneurial" category, according to the research.

Many large companies have changed their organizational structure by flattening hierarchies and giving operating units more power to encourage intrapreneurship (Pinchot, 1985). Although these actions aim to promote independence, the actual process of organizational autonomy takes more than just a change in design. Businesses must genuinely support organizational actors' use of autonomy by granting it openly (Quinn, 1979). In some companies, the process involves championing entrepreneurial activity from the top, by protecting the creators of new ventures from organizational norms or resource limitations that could lead to new initiatives being stalled. Shane (1994a) discovered that seasoned organizational leaders valued attempts to foster autonomy through behaviours such as flouting the law, skipping budgetary requirements, and breaking norms.

3.3.1.2 Proactiveness

Scholars since Schumpeter's day have emphasized the importance of initiative in the entrepreneurial process. According to Penrose (1959), entrepreneurial managers are crucial to

the expansion of businesses because they offer the creativity and vision needed for opportunistic growth. First-mover advantage was underscored as strategic for seizing a market opportunity (Lieberman & Montgomery, 1988). Being proactive reflects a strategic opportunity-seeking mindset backed by a pursuit of attractive goals (Kropp, Lindsay, & Shoham, 2004; Feise & Mensmann, 2016).

An organization that is proactive endeavours to introduce new products or services to the industry. They tend to do so ahead of the competition and are pace-setters in their own right. They are the firms who initiate new methods, goods or services, not necessarily reacting to their competitors (Covin & Slevin, 1986, 1989, 1991; Miller, 1983; Lumpkin & Dess, 2001). This is indicative of opportunity recognition and an awareness of market cues over competition (Hughes & Morgan, 2007; Kropp et al., 2008; Kusumawardhani et al., 2009). Therefore, taking the initiative by anticipating, seeking and participating in new opportunities as well as emerging markets has also come to be associated with entrepreneurship. The word "proactiveness" is frequently used to describe this entrepreneurship trait.

Webster (1999) defines proactiveness as "acting in anticipation of future problems, needs or changes." Consequently, demonstrating proactiveness may be a prerequisite for cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset, as it conveys a forward-thinking orientation coupled with pioneering or novel pursuit of opportunities. Miller and Friesen (1978) proposed in an early version that a firm's proactiveness can be gauged by the response to the question, "Does it shape the environment (high score) by introducing new products, technologies, administrative techniques, or does it merely react?". Later, the term proactiveness was used to describe a company that was the first to create and launch new goods or services. Miller's (1983) claim that an entrepreneurial firm is one that is "first to come up with 'proactive' ideas" hints at this. Although anticipating future demand is a key element of entrepreneurship, the concept of being the first to market has a fairly limited definition. A business can be innovative, quick, and rapid without always being the first. For instance, Miller and Camp (1985) showed that the second firm to join a new market was equally as innovative as the first entrant and just as likely to

succeed through proactiveness. This was based on their examination of 84 Small Business Units (SBUs). The investigation aligns with Venkatraman's characterization of forward-looking actions, a stance harmonious with Miller and Friesen's (1978) prior delineation. Venkatraman (1989) proposed that proactiveness pertains to the procedures oriented toward predicting and addressing forthcoming demands through proactive measures, involving seeking new opportunities which may or may not be related to the present line of operations, introduction of new products and brands ahead of competition, strategically eliminating operations which are in the mature or declining stages of life cycle.

3.3.1.3 Innovativeness

One pioneering scholar to emphasize the importance of innovation in the entrepreneurial process was the economist Schumpeter (1934, 1942). He described an economic process termed "creative destruction", whereby wealth could be produced through the introduction of new products or services that diverted resources away from current businesses and stimulated the growth of new ones. Entrepreneurship was essential to this cycle of activity because it allowed for the competitive entry of creative "new combinations," which fueled the economy's rapid evolution (Schumpeter, 1934). As a result, "innovativeness" became a crucial characteristic of entrepreneurship. It is a measure of a company's propensity to support and engage in new ideas, creative processes, experimentation and activities that could lead to the development of new goods, services or technological advancements. Although innovations might range in "radicalness" (Hage, 1980), innovativeness refers to a fundamental disposition to move away from established assistive devices or methodologies with the aim to propel the forefront of knowledge (Kimberly, 1981).

A myriad of approaches exists for categorizing pioneering developments (Downs & Mohr, 1976). One pragmatic distinction is between technological innovation and product-market innovation. Up until recently, the majority of studies on innovation in technology were concentrated on developing new products and processes, doing engineering research, and emphasizing technical proficiency and the compendium of sectoral insights (Maidique & Patch,

1982). Miller and Friesen (1978) and Scherer (1980) accentuate a focus on the domains of product configurational craftsmanship, market elucidation, and the orchestration of promotional endeavours as suggested by product-market innovativeness. Even this broad classification may be difficult to define because innovation frequently involves a blending and overlap of product-market and technological innovation, as in the case of advanced new products created to satisfy a particular market niche. Innovativeness is a crucial component of EO in either scenario since it illustrates a key strategy used by businesses or individuals to pursue new prospects.

In sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), a creative context may entail an openness toward novel products, services, administration and/or technical suggestions. Although they may not be absolutely novel such ideas ought to be novel enough to the target audience, market and setting (West & Farr, 1990). While empowered work teams, for instance, tend to be common in Western firms, in SSA settings where patriarchy, power distance and traditionalism are prevalent, they are uncommon (Gebert, 1992). Hence, such teams by themselves may be considered innovative in that context. Therefore, levels of innovation in SSA tend to be lower than, say, in the West (Oyugi, 1996; Kiggundu, 1988). It has been suggested that pervasive traditionalism in Africa discourages customary deviation and encourages imitation as individuals and firms adhere to societal norms. This engenders lower linkages of learning orientation, autonomy orientation, competitive aggressiveness and innovative orientation with respect to a firm or individual performance. Callaghan and Venter (2011) report the linkage between a specific human capital ascertained by testing of sampled South African inner-city traders that was predictive of innovativeness. The research reveals that the South African urban environment has a conceivable influence on the ingenuity of traders by virtue of cultural dynamics (Hagan 1962). Perseverance contentment seems to exert an adverse impact on creativity, as those who are comparatively discontented are inclined towards greater innovation. Nonetheless, it was also observed that innovative traders experienced dissatisfaction themselves, implying that they, too, grappled with a measure of frustration due to inadequate compensation. The presence of inherent incentives for inventive behaviour within this industry may be scant, or the cumulative

effect of dissatisfaction stemming from the absence of external rewards might overshadow any potential intrinsic contentment in such contexts.

3.3.1.4 Competitive Aggressiveness

A key component of entrepreneurial orientation according to Miller's (1983) definition of an entrepreneurial organization is competitive aggressiveness. The construct dimension embodies the specific idea of "beating competitors to the punch." It encapsulates the degree of intensity and competitive posturing that new competitors often require to compete with established firms. In a study that compared businesses in low and high-risk contexts in Eastern Europe (Dean et al., 1993), the Commonwealth of Independent States and the United States, using public risk rankings, competitive aggressiveness was substantially connected with entrepreneurship across all risk categories. In the EO literature, competitive aggressiveness and proactiveness have been used interchangeably and are said to be closely related.

Lumpkin and Dess (1996) characterize competitive aggressiveness as the degree of responsiveness of a firm or individual in terms of confrontation or reactivity. It also "refers to a firm's propensity to directly and intensely challenge its competitors to achieve entry or improve position." Competitive aggressiveness, according to Lumpkin and Dess (1996) contrasts proactiveness, which pertains to market opportunities, and refers to how businesses "relate to competitors" and "react to trends and demands that already exist in the marketplace." In contrast, competitive aggressiveness pertains to the way companies engage with competitors, meaning how businesses respond to shifts in market dynamics and consumer demands. Porter (1985) proposed that because the market serves as the playing field for rivalry and competition, the two concepts are related. However, while competitive aggressiveness is focused on competing for demand, proactiveness is primarily concerned with meeting demand.

According to Stinchcombe (1965), emerging enterprises would proactively seek to establish credibility and impact in their interactions with suppliers, customers, and competing entities. This becomes imperative due to a heightened susceptibility to inherent challenges with the early stages, often referred to as the "liability of newness." Numerous scholars have proposed that a

proactive and competitive approach, characterized by assertive actions and vigorous competition, is pivotal for the prosperity and longevity of newcomers. This is particularly crucial given their elevated risk of failure compared to established corporations, as indicated in studies by MacMillan (1982) and Porter (1985). The literature typically refers to competitive aggressiveness as the fifth dimension of entrepreneurship. Competitive aggressiveness also displays a desire to use innovative strategies rather than rely on conventional ones. Examples of this available to new entrants include unconventional strategies to challenge industry leaders (Cooper et al., 1986), identifying and taking advantage of a rival's weaknesses (Macmillan & Jones, 1984) and concentrating on high-value-added products while closely monitoring discretionary expenditures (Woo & Cooper, 1981). Similarly, Porter (1985) suggested three strategies for aggressively pursuing existing firms aggressively, namely: "doing things differently", which refers to reconfiguration; changing the context, which refers to the redefinition of the product or service and its market channels or scope; and outspending the industry leader.

Entrepreneurial enterprises tend to be assertive, keen competitors and strive for success (Kirzner, 1997; Schumpeter, 1934). According to the EO literature (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996), a disposition marked by a strong competitive drive is a foundational characteristic of prosperous entrepreneurial endeavours. However, hostile economic circumstances may influence a business owner's competitive aggressiveness. Anecdotal evidence from the Southern Africa study by Krauss et al., (2005) posits that within specific economic conditions, individuals may perceive their competitors less as adversaries and more as potential collaborators. In the research, entrepreneurs frequently indicated a reluctance to adopt excessively aggressive strategies towards their competitors, as they recognized the potential need for their competitors' assistance in the future. As an example, they mentioned their willingness to delegate orders they couldn't fulfil independently to competing businesses. Although that meant decreasing profit margins, it helped satisfy the needs of customers for the prospect of subsequent repeat orders. Owners of informal businesses encounter multiple

challenges, including a lack of legal protection, restricted financial support, advertising limitations, and difficulties in establishing secure connections with suppliers and customers (Jansson & Sedaca, 2000; Mambula, 2002). In quasi-formal environments, entrepreneurs may find it crucial to form cooperative partnerships with competitors to ensure the sustainability of their businesses. The Southern African EO Study shows that competitive aggressiveness may not necessarily be a part of EO in specific contexts. The construct dimension may not be adequately represented in quasi-formal environments.

3.3.1.5 Risk-Taking

Early entrepreneurship literature linked the construct with self-employment (i.e., seeking self-employment rather than paid employment with another party) (Cantillon, 1734; Shane, 1994b). The idea of taking personal risks came with this proposition of self-employment. Cantillon (1734), who coined the term "entrepreneurship," maintained that the uncertainty and danger of self-employment was what most distinguished entrepreneurs from employed workers. As a result, taking risks is a characteristic frequently associated with entrepreneurship. Depending on the circumstances, the term "risk" might indicate different things. Baird and Thomas (1985) categorized strategic risk into three areas within the field of strategic management literature: (a) "venturing into the unknown," (b) "committing a substantial portion of assets," and (c) "heavy borrowing." The first concept, "venturing into the unknown," implies an element of uncertainty and can be broadly applicable to various risk types often discussed in entrepreneurship literature, including personal risk, social risk, and psychological risk, as elucidated by Gasse (1982). In financial analysis, risk specifically refers to the likelihood of experiencing losses or unfavourable outcomes, operating within the well-established risk-return trade-off framework. Miller and Friesen's definition of risk-taking revolves around the extent to which managers are willing to make significant and risky commitments of resources—those with a reasonable chance of costly failures.

In this context, risk-taking is synonymous with high leverage, involving borrowing and significant resource allocation. As a result, businesses with an entrepreneurial orientation tend

to engage in risk-taking behaviours, such as taking on debt and making substantial investments in resources, to exploit market opportunities and boost profitability. In the EO scale risk-taking is a very important component of entrepreneurial orientation and a distinctive facet of entrepreneurial behavior (Lee & Peterson, 2000). Thus, an operator who is not disposed to take risks may not be described as entrepreneurial after all. This is because risk-taking relates fundamentally to choices associated with uncertain outcomes and organizational risks which entail volatile income streams. Forlani and Mullins (2000) describe entrepreneurs' perception of risk as the "uncertainty and potential losses associated with the outcomes which may follow from a given set of behaviors" These are a critical part of the Schumpeterian school's definition of entrepreneurship. Studies of SME owner-managers in Ghana's agro-processing sector, for example, showed that they take a higher risk than, say, merchandise traders. This may be explained by the viability of agro-business being unduly subject to the exigencies of weather patterns in Ghana. Such volatility makes the sector more prone to financial loss. Merchandise traders dealing in tangible commodities are however less prone to such forces of nature, thus diminishing the likelihood of capital loss and risky outcomes.

3.4 Firm-Level Entrepreneurship (FLE)

The past decade-and-a-half has witnessed a rise, as well as a recent tapering off, in interest in the area of firm-level entrepreneurship (FLE). The construct has nonetheless been successfully integrated into the entrepreneurship and strategic management literature.

According to Saeed et al. (2014), various meta-analyses have been conducted (e.g. Rauch et al. 2009; Saeed et al. 2014) to synthesize the results of several FLE inquiries. It is noted that there is sufficient conceptual and empirical research suggesting that FLE fosters corporate performance. Later studies revealed that smaller businesses can gain from employing such entrepreneurial tactics as their larger counterparts, contrary to the initial corporate-focus findings of FLE research (Antoncic & Hisrich 2004). Hosseini et al., (2018) in their international firm performance research, point out that the majority of FLE research has concentrated on domestic activities, whilst often overlooking international business

endeavours. The study points to the dearth of FLE international firm performance research, especially in developing country contexts, despite pervasive liberalization and globalization of trade.

Firm-level entrepreneurship research in sub-Saharan Africa has been limited in scope. It has followed the hitherto mentioned traditional trajectory of domestic performance assessments. This study considers the gaps in FLE research in the sub-region. The focus of this exploratory, issue-based study is the nexus of international trade regulation and domestic firms' perception of entrepreneurial opportunities.

3.4.1 Definition of Concept

From the outset, a lack of consensus on how to define and measure the FLE construct has been a recurring challenge. This ambiguity has caused researchers over the decades to apply various terms and definitions to the concept. Amongst the many are entrepreneurship (Miller 1983), entrepreneurial posture (Covin & Slevin 1991), entrepreneurial orientation (Lumpkin & Dess 1996; Stambaugh et al. 2017), corporate entrepreneurship (Burgelman 1983; Zahra 1991), and intrapreneurship (Pinchot 1985; Antoncic 2007; Menzeletal. 2007). Whilst diverse labels have been applied to the FLE construct, they often signify different concepts or aspects of the same. This perpetuates confusion and can produce conflicting results in empirical investigations. Among the various terms and labels in the FLE studies, the terms entrepreneurial orientation (EO), corporate entrepreneurship (CE), intrapreneurship and entrepreneurial management (EM) have received the most attention. These conceptions were divided into three types by Covin and Miles (1999): (1) employees who are entrepreneurs (for example, intrapreneurship), 2) entrepreneurship as a whole philosophy or orientation (such as EO and EM), and 3) entrepreneurship as new entries (e.g., CE). This division offers a solid foundation for distinguishing different dimensions of FLE. The topic of intrapreneurship focuses on the human traits of intrapreneurs or individuals who present and carry out creative ideas within their firms (Antoncic et al. 2004). While that may constrain the focus on entrepreneurial employees, it is also open to the individual level of analysis.

Firm-level entrepreneurship (FLE) is essentially an all-encompassing organizational philosophy or a broad approach that is not reserved for any categories within the organisation. It comes from every division, moves through the entire structure, and develops in a harmonious coordination of organizational activities. It is also broadly viewed as a management style or orientation. It has been widely acceptable in the literature to define FLE as an orientation, disposition or posture of an organisation. The overall finding compiled from numerous meta-analyses of relevant studies indicates the FLE is most commonly assessed using EO (e.g., Rauch et al. 2009; Saeed et al. 2014). This study also follows Stevenson and Jarillo (1990), who are often cited for an opportunity-based definition of entrepreneurship rather than its proposed measurement of FLE (Kuhn et al. 2010). The thesis will however rely on EO to capture the tendency of a company toward entrepreneurial opportunity, in order to be consistent with the present literature and to avoid the complexity of analysis. Whilst EO is a widely accepted concept, conceptualizing a higher-order construct such as FLE based on orientation alone, is constraining as that covers attitudinal aspects and not behavioral components (Morris 1998). Furthermore, as indicated earlier, the act of exploring and exploiting new opportunities is a common definition of entrepreneurship (Shane & Venkataraman 2000).

The study adopts Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) widely-cited conceptualization of entrepreneurship, as an opportunity-based behaviour centered on the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities. The study follows the view that FLE is embedded in, and premised on, perceived environmental opportunity by an organisation. Therefore, FLE will represent an organization-wide strategic allocation of resources to explore and exploit identifiable entrepreneurial opportunities (Ireland et al., 2009). Extant literature nonetheless recognizes that entrepreneurial behaviour, and even disposition, can be better understood within its historical, social and institutional contexts, as these provide individuals and firms with opportunities as well as set boundaries for their actions (Welter & Smallbone, 2011).

3.4.2 A Conceptual framework and focus of the study

The nature of the hierarchical flow of influence in the conceptual framework is derived mostly from the literature review. The narrative to the key elements of WTO/WCO exerting normative/mimetic and coercive pressures on the client Customs administration – the GRA-Customs Division – is covered in the subsequent section 3.5 (Global Customs Regimes). Chalfin (2006); Rajkarnikar (2006) and Javorcik and Narciso (2017).

Beyond the external institutional influences, government policy exerts pressures on the Customs administration that are channelled down to the FLE construct as indicated in the literature review.



Customs Import Valuation & Firm-level Entrepreneurship: An Institutional Perspective

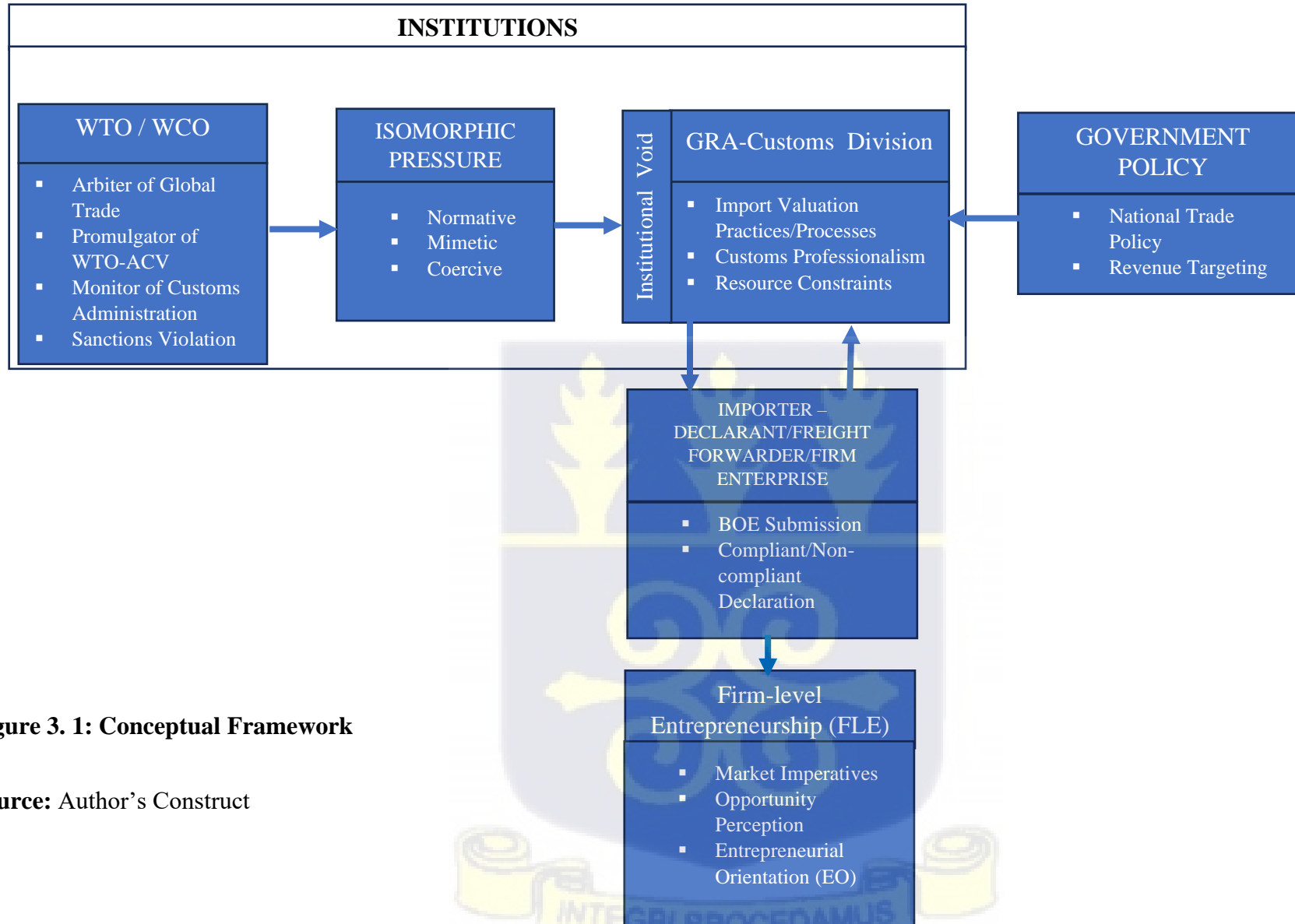


Figure 3. 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's Construct

3.5 Global Customs Regimes - A Historical Perspective

Globally, as governments engage in trade reforms in response to the emergence of multilateral entities like the WTO, transnational businesses and even threats to national security, Customs policies have emerged as major spheres for the formation of new standards of “statehood” and, arguably, forms of sovereignty (Chalfin, 2006). In the context of a developing economy like Ghana, it is significant that these adopted worldwide standards are developed and regulated by two important international organizations that collaborate and, according to Chalfin (2006), serve neoliberal economic agendas, which are “a cover for changes in the expression and distribution of state authority on a worldwide scale.”

Although Customs may, technically, impact an area of economic activity in a nation, the nature and direction of Customs operations have significant implications for governments worldwide, given a growing reliance on cross-border trade. As other forms of state administration deteriorate in the face of neoliberal reform, Customs may be viewed as the dominant "edge" of state-based governance (Robinson 2004). Historically, imperial governments in colonial regions began with the formation of Customs administrations. The implementation of customs laws came before the full and official entrenchment of British control in North America in the late seventeenth century and West Africa in the middle of the nineteenth century (Barrow 1967; Anim-Asante 1988). Reinforcing this notion, and pointing out the mercantilist roots of modern and colonial state formation, the paper asserts that at the foundation of the colonial project in South Asia, the oversight of trade was initially through the East India Company and later through the expanding bureaucratic web of Customs administrations (Arasaratnum, 1998; Sen, 2002). Considering these instances, it becomes clear that the Customs were at the forefront of the development and modification of the contemporary state structure. National customs authorities are crucial at this historical juncture for upholding and establishing the rules of

global political and economic order, in addition to maintaining the fiscal and territorial integrity of individual states.

The structure and operations of national customs administrations in the late-modern age exhibit a remarkable degree of consistency and coordination across the broad range of current policies. While certain borders and border controls are being removed by the protocols of the European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement, Mercosur, the Southern African Development Community, the Association of South-East Asian Nations and other international alliances, a related process of commercial acceleration combined with the post-9/11 security frenzy intensifies the standardization and surveillance of the movement of people and goods, for which states are responsible. Customs officials refer to this convergence as "harmonization". It has been observed over the past 50 years in all major political systems worldwide.

In 2005, national Customs authorities were present in 98% of the states recognized by the globe (based on UN membership). A high percentage (upwards of 85%) of Customs administrations follow standard operating procedures. Global standards of customs work are implemented, developed and disseminated by a single international agency. The World Customs Organisation (WCO). With 159 independent states as members, in addition to several overseas territories and administrative regions, the WCO is a formidable multilateral agency and ally of the WTO. Established in 1952 as the Customs Collaboration Council (CCC), the WCO promotes cooperation between the Customs sectors of various states by offering assistance and advice to Customs administrations (WCO, 2002). The WCO's main goal is to provide "Customs instruments" that are universally used to promote standardization in Customs procedures. When new conventions are negotiated and formalized, there are periods of proliferation and convergence as a result of the episodic process of creating WCO instruments. All WCO members are urged to acknowledge and abide by these principles whenever instruments are created, and they are also becoming more and more obligated to do so.

Although business and the media have given Customs security and surveillance an excessive amount of attention since 9/11 (Journal of Commerce, 2003; Saccamano, 2003), these developments are based on much older and more firmly established conventions of Customs work, the purported goal of which is to facilitate and speed up cross-border transactions rather than to outlaw or undermine them. There are standardized terms and procedures for Customs classification, valuation, and taxation, including a Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (commonly referred to as HS), Harmonized Rules of Origin, and shared standards of valuation. They are encapsulated in several instruments created and/or endorsed by the WCO's large membership. These are thorough organizing procedures that, like the widely imitated classificatory and mapping systems described by Scott (1998), play a crucial, if largely undetected, role in establishing the administrative rationalities of contemporary statehood and the nature of the late capitalist economic order. The administrative rationalities put into motion by the WCO, however mundane, serve as a potent tool by which states come to know and thereby control themselves and their subjects. These administrative rationalities provide the terms by which goods are categorized, importers and exporters are taxed, consumer preferences are tracked, and the productivity of countries and corporations is assessed. They produce standardized forms of practice and act as a common language of understanding amongst states. These bureaucratic modalities continue to serve as points of reference even when a government's declared allegiance to WCO standards is only partially fulfilled, as is frequently the case in an administrative arena in which state capacities and commitments vary widely. These rationalities thus represent, at least in part, the parameters of contemporary sovereignty since they show how nations communicate their reach to both their citizens and to one another.

3.6 Trade Liberalisation

Broadly, trade liberalization is the process of reducing and/or eliminating obstacles to the free exchange of products and services amongst consenting nations. Traditionally, such obstacles

have included tariffs, levies and non-tariff barriers like import or export quotas and licensing requirements (Quartey et al., 2007). The majority of economists espouse the removal and relaxation of trade barriers as a positive step towards promoting free trade. It remains a contentious topic, particularly in developing countries like Ghana, primarily because of the surge in cheaper imported goods flooding the local market. Detractors of trade liberalization contend that this approach could lead to domestic job losses. They argue that these imported products might be of lower quality and have inferior safety standards compared to similar domestic goods subjected to more rigorous quality and safety checks. Meanwhile, advocates of trade liberalization argue that it ultimately reduces consumer costs, enhances productivity, and stimulates economic growth. In contrast to trade liberalization, protectionism involves imposing strict trade barriers and exerting control over the market. Globalization is the outcome of trade liberalization and the subsequent economic integration of willing nations.

Since 2000, there has been an increasing number of preferential trade agreements between nations, while global trade liberalization efforts under the World Trade Organization (WTO) have encountered obstacles (Spilker et al., 2018). According to Nwafor et al. (2007), economic benefits attributable to trade liberalization may not trickle down to mitigate poverty. Rather, trade openness might augment income disparities in developing countries. Hence, concerted inclusive interventions with incentives, especially for the export-oriented sector must be considered for domestic production and human capacity development. The jury in the literature is out on the impact of trade openness on poverty in developing countries.

3.6.1 International Trade & Sub-Saharan Africa

While global trade has fluctuated throughout history, it has also seen rapid growth in recent times. This boost in trade has however recorded significant differences in region, pattern and nature of merchandise traded globally. Thus, international trade has played to the advantage of some and to the disadvantage of other nations (Kose et al., 2012). For most sub-Saharan African (SSA) nations, the importation of high-value capital items for infrastructure development,

alongside the exportation of predominantly primary and intermediate commodities, trade is seen as unfavourable overall. Sub-Saharan African uncompetitiveness is exacerbated by capital and infrastructural constraints amongst several others. Even within their own domestic markets, African countries reel from competition with imported merchandise from more industrially developed countries. This is in part due to the continent's focus and reliance on the exportation of basic commodities such as mineral fuels, iron ores, gold and cocoa beans, hampered by fluctuating world prices. Beyond commodities, cross-border trade in financial, and non-financial services and exchanges in human resources over the past sixty years have been major forces behind socio-economic and political globalization.

Economists and academics see international trade as a catalyst for socio-economic progress in developing nations. Some have argued that cross-border trade delivers a wide range of products and services that give consumers in participating nations more options. Trade helps to some extent maintain steady demand and supply that permits effective transactions that promote economic development (Nair et al., 2021). Additionally, due to the uneven distribution of natural resources and the varying climatic conditions, trade has become inevitable for nations that must complement or supplement domestic production.

3.7 Chapter Summary

The literature review chapter offers an examination of key concepts and themes central to the study. It explores the essence of entrepreneurship, elucidating on its pivotal role in fostering economic growth and innovation. Subsequently, the focus shifts to entrepreneurial orientation, dissecting its multifaceted dimensions and its implications for business performance and strategy. The chapter also throws light on the intricacies of recognising entrepreneurial opportunities, providing insight into how entrepreneurs identify and exploit potential ventures. It assesses entrepreneurial orientation (EO) from a strategic perspective and weighs its influence on firm enterprises.

Lastly, the literature review delves into the area of Customs regimes and trade liberalisation, shedding light on its complex relationship with entrepreneurship, and how it shapes entrepreneurial landscapes and economic environments. The review serves as the groundwork for an in-depth look at the themes of the study, offering valuable insights into the intersections of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, and trade liberalization. The theoretical foundation of the study is next.



CHAPTER FOUR

THEORETICAL REVIEW

4.0 Introduction

The fourth chapter presents the theoretical foundations of this exploratory case study. The case issue entails a study of how a global multilateral trade regulatory framework can influence entrepreneurial perception and behaviour in Ghana through the lenses of Institutional theory. It begins with an overview of the theory of institutions and institutional theory. It concludes with the justification for the use of the theory in this study and a summary of the chapter.

4.1 The Theoretical Context

A rising body of research has sought to contextualize entrepreneurial phenomenon by inquiring into how institutional frameworks support and constrain entrepreneurial activity (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994; Bruton et al., 2010). Modern literature (Bruton et al., 2010) acknowledges the close connection between entrepreneurial perception and behaviour and the specific institutional context in which these activities take place. Institutions encompass social and cultural interaction, the legal and regulatory system, tradition, and history, as well as economic imperatives (Greenman, 2013). The concept of institutional embeddedness offers those contemporary values, regulations, expectations, and physical infrastructure in a given setting, simultaneously providing individuals and firms with entrepreneurial opportunities while setting boundaries for their actions (Tolbert & Haitt, 2010).

Institutional theory applied to the discipline of entrepreneurship theorizes principally that entrepreneurs must conform to certain “rules of the game” (Lesage, 2004) to secure the endorsement, credibility, and necessary resources from relevant parties (Greenman, 2013; Jain & Sharma, 2013). This line of scholarly inquiry has grown in recent times with studies trying to unravel the complex and endogenous effects of institutions (Su et al., 2017). This has led to broad findings at the micro-level that disguise otherwise fine-grained personal narratives of

actors in and around the firm in challenging institutional environments. According to Wicks (2001), institutional theory, considered and applied as a micro-level variable influencing entrepreneurial behaviour presents a fertile area of inquiry to connect macro-micro (institutional- entrepreneurial behaviour) dimensions.

4.2 Understanding the Theoretical Foundation of the Study

Theories are useful tools formulated to guide research and to help researchers organize thoughts and ideas to explain, predict, and understand the outcomes and objectives of phenomena. Hence, this exploratory case study adopts institutional theory to understand firm-level entrepreneurship within the context of trade regulatory pressures in Ghana.

4.2.1 Institutions

The commonly referred to "rules of the game", universally govern social interactions. Both the rules and how they are applied can be formal or informal. Institutions are defined as the set of guidelines that participants in these interactions are supposed to abide by North (1990). Institutions, by making certain behaviours unacceptable and others unthinkable, elucidate what is suitable and unsuitable in an objective manner (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). Czarniawska (2009, p. 423) offers a straightforward definition of institutions as "an observable pattern of collective action, justified by a corresponding norm." According to Ostrom (1990), institutions are "sets of working rules that are used to determine who is eligible to make decisions in some arena, what actions are allowed or constrained, what aggregation rules will be used, what procedures must be followed, what information must or must not be provided, and what payoffs will be assigned to individuals based on their actions". Suggestively, the prevailing institutions in which people and organizations function have a substantial impact on their decisions and behaviours (Bruton et al., 2010; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Scott (2014) introduced a categorization of formal and informal institutional pressures into three distinct categories, which he referred to as "pillars," building upon the framework (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). The regulative pillar, the normative pillar, and the cognitive pillar were among them. The

"conducive pillar," is what Stenholm et al. (2013) described as a new pillar of the institutional environment. It was considered a fourth pillar of the institutional environment in this study. The institutional pillars are covered in more detail in the next section.

4.2.2 Institutional Theory Explained

Institutional analysis has a lengthy history and solid theoretical underpinnings in a variety of academic disciplines, especially in the social sciences. These fields of study have given rise to numerous theorists, each presenting diverse theories concerning the emergence of institutions in society and how institutional factors influence human behaviours and activities (Scott, 2014). Merton's research on bureaucracy and organizations' ingrained behaviours also played a significant role in drawing important parallels. Selznick's (1996) "natural systems model" provided a clear explanation of the influence of institutions on organizational behaviour, which had a significant impact on the sociological perspective of institutions.

The theory examines how institutions influence organizational values, emphasizing the role of normative structures in shaping operational behaviours when integrating organizational values into society. The very legitimacy of organizations is underpinned by societal normative structures. Consequently, businesses operating within diverse normative contexts are subject to distinct normative codes, which may lead to the adoption of various adaptive behaviours and approaches, as suggested by Suchman (1995).

Selznick's (1996) thesis proposes that firm enterprises function within intricate social environments, indicating that a more profound comprehension of social structures can enhance our understanding of their organizational structures. This viewpoint is aligned with the ideas put forth by Zucker (1983), who emphasized the importance of culture and cognition in the analysis of institutions. These contributions from the 1970s marked the emergence of a novel perspective on institutional analysis. Meyer and Rowan (1977) underlined the importance of modernization in the isomorphism of organizational formal structures from a macro perspective through simplifying accepted rules. Meyer and Rowan's focus on isomorphism was expanded

by DiMaggio and Powell (1991) to include organizational fields. DiMaggio and Powell's (1991) method significantly increased the analysis of empirical research because of their emphasis on normative, coercive, and mimetic causes of isomorphism.

The concept of "new institutionalism," according to Tolbert and Zucker (1983), is linked to a shift away from using logic as the primary rationale for organizational structure. Instead, it emphasizes legitimacy as the basis for the survival and success of organizations, moving away from efficiency as the sole justification. This theory challenges the traditional notion of the "rational economic man," stating that economic activities can stem from institutional factors rather than being solely driven by rational decision-making, as argued by Parto et al. (2005). The function of institutions in lowering transaction costs involved in initiating, managing, and concluding various types of economic transactions, is the central focus of this aspect of institutional theory (Rao, 2014).

Talcott Parsons (1919) groundbreaking research in sociology, dating back to 1919, delved into cultural-institutional theory. It focused on the intricate connection between organizations and their institutional surroundings, exploring how affiliations with the "primary institutional patterns" of an organization's external environment function to validate its value system. According to Parsons' theory, an organization functions as a part of a larger social structure that provides legitimacy, meaning, and greater levels of support. This suggests further that an organization's ability to succeed depends, in part, on whether it obtains the appropriate backing from the larger institutional framework.

The new institutional theory, significantly influenced by North (1992), centers on the concept of the "rules of the game." These rules can either constrain or incentivize business owners to transition from unproductive to productive entrepreneurial endeavours thereby enhancing a society's overall economic well-being, a concept illustrated in North's 1990 and 1992 research. Institutional theory, as recognized by Bruton et al. (2010), has provided a robust theoretical foundation for investigating various research areas in different fields and has proven to be

highly beneficial in the realm of entrepreneurial research. However, the precise mechanisms through which institutions influence the behaviour and operations of individuals and organizations remain uncertain, as highlighted by inquiries made by Garud et al. (2007), and Roxas and Chadee (2013).

Growing discontent with theories that exalt efficiency but minimize social considerations as motivators of organizational activity has given institutional perspective's use in entrepreneurship and small business studies significant status (Bruton et al., 2010). The discussion surrounding entrepreneurship and organization analysis is covered in the section that follows.

4.2.3 Institutional Theory in “entrepreneurship and organizational studies”

Institutional theory has gained prominence in the fields of entrepreneurship and organizational analysis, as acknowledged by Bruton et al. (2010). Previous studies frequently associated entrepreneurship with the individual traits of business leaders, such as in Davis et al. (2010), or disparities in firm resources, like in the case of Wiklund and Shepherd (2003), there is a growing recognition that the institutional environment plays a central role in shaping firms' entrepreneurial behaviour and performance (Rosenbusch et al., 2013). Institutions are responsible for establishing the norms and standards governing appropriate actions and behaviours within a specific context, as articulated by DiMaggio and Powell (1991).

Heugens and Lander (2009) highlight that proponents of the institutional theory are critical of the limited perspective offered by neoclassical economists and rational choice political scientists, who often overlook the impact of social factors on organizational decisions and behaviours. Institutional theorists, as described by Scott (1995, 2014), view the institutional environment as a multifaceted context shaped by political, social, and cultural factors. This environment plays a pivotal role in shaping the decision-making processes and actions of organizations. One of the most contentious divisions among institutional theorists is the dichotomy between the perspectives that adhere to institutional norms and those that seek to

alter them, commonly referred to as the "structure versus agency debate" (Battilana, 2006; Heugens & Lander, 2009; Hirsch & Lounsbury, 1997).

Meyer (2007) underscores the perspective of structuralist scholars, who contend that a firm's actions are primarily moulded by its institutional surroundings instead of being solely propelled by autonomous decision-making processes. Aldrich (2010) further elaborates on this viewpoint, illustrating how institutions influence entrepreneurial firms in two key ways. Firstly, institutions significantly shape the business environment, impacting the operational methods and resource accessibility of firms by moulding their learning processes, which subsequently affect their entrepreneurial practices. Secondly, institutions assume a critical role in guiding entrepreneurs, policymakers, and other stakeholders in defining the core nature of entrepreneurship and its importance within a specific context.

Brixiova (2010) highlighted that evolving societal norms and values have a profound impact on entrepreneurial activities and resource accessibility in different settings. The institutional perspective, as supported by Fang (2010) and Scott (2014), underscores the significance of rules, beliefs, and social norms. These factors can vary significantly and play a pivotal role in shaping the behaviours of firms and their members. These studies collectively demonstrate that institutions can either facilitate or hinder firm behaviours, providing valuable insights into the diverse entrepreneurial practices found among firms operating within the same institutional environment.

The importance of legitimacy in the business world is often compared to the vital role of oxygen, becoming noticeable only when it is lacking (Scott, 2014). However, there are opposing viewpoints, such as the institutions-altering or institutional entrepreneurship perspective, aligned with the "agency" viewpoint. Proponents of this perspective challenge the deterministic nature of structuralists and highlight what they call the "paradox of embedded agency." This paradox arises when organizations bring about changes in the institutions that influence them. This proactive effort to alter established institutional settings is referred to as

"institutional entrepreneurship" (Bruton et al., 2010). Institutional entrepreneurship encompasses the collaboration of individuals and organizations through interactions, competition, and cooperation to shape institutions (Aldrich, 2011). Academics promoting institutional entrepreneurship argue that organizations possess the capacity to influence their responses to institutional pressures, which can, in turn, stimulate institutional-level entrepreneurship when these pressures become deeply ingrained (Heugens & Lander, 2009). Those advocating for institutional entrepreneurship suggest that factors such as social and political positions influence the inclination of entrepreneurs and organizations to engage in it (Battilana, 2006; Garud et al., 2007). Institutional entrepreneurs, individuals or organizations interested in specific institutional contexts, actively work to modify or reform existing institutions by mobilizing resources and collaborating with like-minded counterparts (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). While institutional entrepreneurship is frequently considered a compelling explanation for the influence of organizations and individuals in initiating change within their institutional surroundings, neo-institutional theorists raise doubts about the capacity of actors to strategically navigate institutional pressures when they are deeply entrenched in these institutions (Battilana, 2006).

4.2.4 Institutions and the Nature of Entrepreneurial Activities

The debate became even more intricate with Baumol's (1990) argument that institutions not only influence the extent of entrepreneurial actions by firms but also the nature of those entrepreneurial practices. Firms may choose to engage in activities that vary in their productivity, considering the returns they can generate from these activities.

Baumol (1990, 1993) distinguished productive and unproductive entrepreneurial endeavours, assessing their influence on the welfare of society and the economy. Productive entrepreneurship involves actions that, whether directly or indirectly, increase the overall economic production or the capacity to generate additional output (Baumol, 1993). Entrepreneurial contributions are typically considered productive when they engage in

innovation by identifying new opportunities that stimulate production and enhance surplus (Foss & Foss, 2002).

Nevertheless, not all entrepreneurial undertakings possess inherent productivity. An entrepreneur might not contribute value to the economy and society and in some cases, their actions can even be unproductive, potentially harming other businesses in the market or the market itself (Baumol, 1990). Unproductive entrepreneurship can manifest in various ways, whether legal or illegal. Baumol (1993) described it as the "allocation of resources with the intent of gaining economic benefits through methods that do not explicitly violate societal norms". This type of entrepreneurship encompasses activities such as tax evasion, buyouts, monopolistic pursuits, and manipulating the legal system. Predominantly, unproductive entrepreneurship involves practices like corruption, seeking economic rents, and networking (Baumol, 1990: 1993). While such activities may enhance a firm's profitability or expansion, they typically contribute little, if anything, of value to the broader economy.

Looking at it from the standpoint of developing nations, prior studies indicate that many firms, irrespective of their scale, are involved in a combination of productive and unproductive actions. They are involved in what is known as "grey business practices," which involve a mixture of legal and illegal activities (Cravo et al., 2012). In areas where well-established and sophisticated institutions are absent, illicit business activities such as tax evasion might be viewed as essential for the survival and advancement of companies, enabling them to make a considerable, or at least some, contribution to the economy (Welter & Smallbone, 2011).

4.2.5 Institutional Environment and Entrepreneurial Orientation of Firms

Entrepreneurship if well-thought-out is a powerful avenue for shaping a country's economic prospects. Nonetheless, contemporary research indicates that the entrepreneurial orientation (EO) of companies is substantially shaped by the external institutional surroundings (Lindsay et al., 2014). A methodical examination of this phenomenon can augment our understanding of entrepreneurial actions and their susceptibility to diverse institutional contexts (Kiss et al.,

2012). Scholars following institutional theory contend that the entrepreneurial conduct of firms can be elucidated by the degree of support offered by the institutional framework within which they function (Acs, 2010; Aldrich, 2010). In line with this perspective, Steier (2009) discovered that institutions significantly impact firm governance and entrepreneurial practices. This is likely because a country's institutional arrangements can either foster or hinder firm entrepreneurship (Aldrich, 2010). Elaborating on this perspective, Yuan et al. (2014) argue that institutions have a vital function in diminishing uncertainty and reducing the expenses associated with business operations.

This suggests that companies tend to embrace an entrepreneurial orientation (EO) when the institutional environment offers an equitable and just platform for all participants, as could be exemplified in the assessment of imports and competition. Their study revealed that the potential for innovation in emerging economies like Russia has suffered due to the lack of market-oriented institutions that safeguard and foster commodities. In the context of developing countries, Michailova et al. (2013) contend that in cases where the business environment is viewed as favourable, businesses are more inclined to demonstrate innovation, efficiency, and fair competition. Additionally, a study carried out by Brixiova et al. (2015) in Swaziland found that entrepreneurs tend to be more proactive in seizing perceived opportunities when the regulatory business environment operates effectively.

Conversely, other studies indicate that insufficient institutional factors in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) present significant hurdles for companies aiming to adopt an entrepreneurial orientation and establish sustainable, growth-oriented enterprises (Ahmed & Nwankwo, 2013; Gatt, 2012). This case study investigates how the "rules of the game" concerning import valuation in Ghana influence firms' perceptions of environmental opportunities and, consequently, their entrepreneurial orientation.

4.3 Contrasting Regulative Environment and EO

The set of regulations governing the operational procedures of companies is commonly seen as the institutional element exerting the most substantial impact on the conduct and strategic choices of firms (Bowen & De Clercq, 2008). Considering its primary goal of establishing order and legitimacy, the perceived regulatory framework sets the parameters that provide security to businesses and determines the degree to which legal obligations are upheld, thus affecting their, entrepreneurial activities (Ahn & York, 2011).

In a society where the rule of law is robustly upheld, we find comprehensive political structures, mechanisms for smooth transitions of power, and crucially, the involvement of a variety of stakeholders, including businesses and individual citizens who are willing to abide by and operate within these established institutions (Lu et al., 2008).

When policymakers create favourable regulatory frameworks, which may encompass tax incentives, a fair competitive landscape, effective penalties, and support for business growth, they pave the way for new companies to emerge and thrive (Stenholm et al., 2013). Peng (2002) observed that a company's perception of its institutional environment and the trust it places in the legitimacy of business transactions significantly impact entrepreneurial activities. This includes characteristics like innovation, risk-taking, and proactivity. Trust in transactions hinges on the firm's belief in the consistent adherence of all relevant parties to the rule of law, as demonstrated by the effectiveness of the legal and judicial system.

The way legal systems work, which involves rules concerning intellectual property rights, registering companies, and financial reporting, have a material effect on how much red tape businesses have to deal with. As demonstrated by Edoho (2015), using Nigeria as an illustrative case, the perception of the significant expenses linked to adhering to burdensome regulations and high tax rates can hinder existing businesses from effectively handling their operations and growing to generate additional employment opportunities. While many scholars in the fields of institutions and entrepreneurship generally agree that economically developed nations have

more effective law enforcement compared to economically poor ones, a study by La Porta et al. (1999) revealed that some civil law countries in France exhibit poor legal enforcement when it comes to safeguarding property rights, contracts, and investment protection for businesses. On the flip side, in developing nations where the rules and regulations are often seen as not quite up-to-date or not well-established, the lack of regulatory maturity might discourage companies from taking on entrepreneurial ventures (Aidis et al., 2008). However, this situation can also present opportunities for businesses to challenge the existing norms and become more creative and entrepreneurial in the process (Tracey et al., 2011).

Entrepreneurial companies usually follow a strategic approach that prioritizes riskier and more innovative actions. These businesses embrace and actively pursue entrepreneurial orientation (EO) when they are confident that the regulatory system can legitimize their business transactions. This, in turn, safeguards them from opportunistic actions by competing firms, such as dishonesty and failure to meet agreed contractual terms. Considering these factors related to companies' confidence in their regulatory environment and the expectation that their strategic behaviour is influenced by this belief, this study seeks to explore how the firms involved view fairness and consistency in the application of import merchandise valuation rules.

4.4 Normative Environment and EO

The normative aspect involves the societal standards, values, and beliefs that act as guiding principles and mandatory guidelines for how businesses operate and behave (Busenitz et al., 2000; Scott, 2014). In essence, these normative institutions require that businesses and entrepreneurs align themselves with the values and norms upheld by society and exhibit behaviours that are considered socially acceptable (Roy, 1999). It is expected that entrepreneurial companies and their members will conform to the established societal expectations, as deviating from these accepted norms can result in social disapproval or penalties (Bruton et al., 2010; Schein, 2009). Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) has been both theoretically and empirically connected to social constructs, such as social norms, values, and

culture, across different levels of analysis. At the organizational level, Morris, Davis and Allen (1994)'s research has indicated a relationship between a firm's EO and the concept of individualism-collectivism, with an inverse U-shaped association.

In their study, it was observed that among the companies from the United States and South Africa in their dataset, the most conspicuous entrepreneurial orientation (EO) was evident, indicating a harmonious emphasis on both individualistic and collectivistic aspects. A review of the literature conducted strongly asserted that national culture has a significant influence on the individual EO (Hayton et al., 2002). McGrath et al. (1992) arrived at a similar conclusion in their examination of EO across ten different countries. It was resolved that “among many factors that contribute to entrepreneurship, perhaps the most critical is a set of social and cultural values along with the appropriate social, economic and political institutions that legitimize and encourage the pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunity” (Reynolds et al., 1999). Of particular relevance to the present study, an examination of research exploring the connection between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and culture at different levels is worth noting. Fayolle et al. (2010) ended up that “national culture can influence EO at the region/country level or can orientate attitudes within a firm.” Stenholm et al. (2013) contended the fact that the normative environment “influences the relative societal desirability of entrepreneurship as an occupational choice.” Correspondingly, it observed that there is a positive connection between an increase in the social approval of entrepreneurship and the prevalence of self-employment (Thai & Hjorts 2015). Thourunroje (2010) emphasized a strong and favourable connection between the normative context and the extent of entrepreneurial orientation (EO). Looking at it from a different angle, but still with a similar line of thought, Auriol (2013) highlighted that the fear of failure and negative societal attitudes are significant factors contributing to the limited entrepreneurial orientation (EO) of small businesses in several Sub-Saharan African nations. So, these studies collectively emphasize that the normative environment in a society can both present challenges and offer incentives for entrepreneurial orientation in companies.

In many cases, businesses and entrepreneurs build strong connections with their local communities, sharing the same social values and norms (Roxas & Coetzer, 2012). Some societies embrace norms that support entrepreneurial activities and their financing, while others discourage entrepreneurship by undermining the entrepreneurial process and the accomplishments of entrepreneurs (Baumol et al., 2007). Aremu and Adeyemi (2011) found that in Nigeria, unfavourable social attitudes toward small businesses significantly affect the survival rates of firms, as it limits their ability to identify opportunities and secure resources, especially investments.

Consequently, when societal beliefs and the resulting norms do not support entrepreneurship or enterprising endeavours, entrepreneurs may face both financial and social hurdles. This implies that departing from established social norms may not be socially accepted, whether at the individual or company level. Nonetheless, entrepreneurial enterprises are renowned for their inventive, transformative, daring, and opportunistic initiatives and conduct. Such initiatives and behaviours may not conform to the established social norms' expectations and prerequisites. Consequently, it is reasonable to conclude that in societies with a collectivist nature that actively guides and shapes individual and firm behaviour, firms may perceive entrepreneurial orientation (EO) as less legitimate as a strategic approach.

4.5 Cognitive Environment and EO

Discussing the cognitive aspect of the institutional environment means delving into the mental aspects. This includes things like knowledge and what individuals expect. It is all about how businesses use this knowledge and understanding to interpret the information they gather about their business environment (Scott, 2014). To boost their knowledge and skills, companies often tap into various resources. These could be formal, like educational institutions such as universities and business schools, but also informal opportunities for learning (Baugh et al., 2006). The way companies see these cognitive aspects of institutions shape the choices they make when thinking about how to gain legitimacy (Gupta et al., 2014). It is a bit like what

Baron (2007) mentioned – the thought patterns that take shape within entrepreneurs or companies can have a big impact on their ability to spot new opportunities and gain a competitive edge. These fresh opportunities can become more credible based on how companies evaluate the knowledge and skills needed to start new businesses and get involved in entrepreneurial activities (Busenitz et al., 2000). So, it is not just about finding opportunities but also about being prepared to make the most of them.

When it comes to the leaders of companies, it is mainly about how they see themselves and what they believe. This includes how confident they are in their ability to spot opportunities and how sure they are that they can make the most of those opportunities once they identify them. And here is the interesting part – there is a positive link between these beliefs and how involved the company is in entrepreneurial activities (Arenius & Minniti, 2005).

So, it is safe to say that how entrepreneurs view the value of their knowledge and skills affects their ability to find and make the most of opportunities (Madhoushi et al., 2011). It also influences the kind of entrepreneurial mindset that their companies adopt under their leadership (Messersmith & Wales, 2013). However, it is worth noting that research findings on how the cognitive environment influences entrepreneurship are not always consistent.

In contrast, Bowen and De Clercq (2008) show that when people receive specific training and education that encourages entrepreneurship, they tend to have a strong inclination toward pursuing high-growth entrepreneurial ventures. On the flip side, Stenholm et al. (2013) noticed that there is a reverse relationship between how often people engage in entrepreneurial activities and the cognitive environment they are in. Meanwhile, Urbano et al. (2011) did not identify a significant link between the cognitive environment and entrepreneurial orientation.

In a nutshell, when we look at the world of entrepreneurship, we find that what an entrepreneur already knows, influenced by the existing institutions, is crucial in spotting opportunities (Koppl & Minniti, 2010). This, in a way, kickstarts the creation of new knowledge. It all points

to the fact that the cognitive aspects of the institutional environment, including the development of entrepreneurial skills and expertise, can boost a company's entrepreneurial spirit.

4.6 Conducive Environment and EO

The conducive pillar signifies how the institutional setting offers assistance and eases the availability of assets, including financial resources, technological capabilities, a proficient workforce, technological expertise, and proximity to esteemed universities. These elements are considered crucial for the entrepreneurial endeavours of companies. Additionally, DiMaggio and Powell (1991), in their work, suggest that even within a favourable entrepreneurial environment, institutional factors can either further bolster or impede the success of entrepreneurial activities within firms. Both government and non-governmental organizations offer a range of supportive aid and incentives for businesses, as highlighted by Chaudhry and Garner (2007). Government-led business support initiatives provide companies with access to essential resources required to pursue their business goals; filling gaps that might otherwise remain unaddressed (Doh & Kim, 2014). These kinds of programs are often created to help reduce environmental risks for new and growing businesses or to give established companies a way to get more resources (Busenitz et al., 2000). There is been a bunch of research showing that public support can have a positive impact on how entrepreneurial companies are in developing countries (Arinaitwe, 2006).

Bowen and De Clercq (2008) shared data that tells us companies tend to be pretty keen on growing when they can get their hands on financial resources meant to boost entrepreneurship. So, when businesses see government policies and support programs as things that help them, it motivates them to take on specific initiatives like enhancing their entrepreneurial mindset. Moreover, firms' confidence in government support can foster increased competition in the market and boost productivity among well-established companies. Programs initiated by the government, which create environments favourable to entrepreneurship, can also function as catalysts for technological advancements and the dissemination of new knowledge. This

highlights the concept that businesses don't only derive direct benefits from regulations and cognitive frameworks but also demonstrate a greater entrepreneurial orientation and increased business activity due to their perception of an environment that supports their success (Aidis et al., 2008).

4.7 Isomorphism

Emerging organizational fields or industries would initially display diversity and dynamism, individually, amongst firms. Over time, however, relevant institutions exert constraining influences over organizations termed isomorphism. A phenomenon that forces firms in the same industry or field to demonstrate common characteristics as they face the same set of environmental conditions (Hawley, 1968).

DiMaggio and Powell (1991) describe a corporate tendency or move towards homogeneity. This process of homogenization has also been described as isomorphism. Burch (2007) defined structural isomorphism as “the convergence in policies and practices among organizations operating in a similar environment or competing for the same goods” (p. 85). For this study, isomorphism is the process by which institutions within the same organizational field become more similar or homogeneous.

4.7.1 Types of Isomorphism

DiMaggio and Powell (1991) outlined three processes that lead to institutional similarity: coercive isomorphism, mimetic isomorphism, and normative isomorphism. Although these forms of isomorphism are not always entirely separate, they stem from distinct circumstances and typically lead to somewhat distinct results.

➤ Coercive isomorphism

Coercive isomorphism refers to pressure from entities who have resources on which an organization may depend. It may come from “both formal and informal pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are dependent and by cultural

expectations in the society within which organizations function” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991, p. 67). For example, government mandates and common legal environments shape organizational fields, whereas market pressures and societal expectations can impact other fields.

➤ Mimetic isomorphism

Mimetic isomorphism refers to the imitation or copying of other successful organizations when an organization is uncertain about what to do. It is often a response to uncertainty within an organizational field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). If a firm or organization encounters a novel challenge without clear guidelines on resolution, it may opt for effective solutions from within its organizational field and follow steps modelled by a successful competitor in dealing with a particular issue. Mimetic isomorphism may manifest in varied ways. DiMaggio and Powell (1991) suggested that “models may be diffused unintentionally, indirectly through employee transfer or turnover, or explicitly by organizations such as consulting firms or industry trade associations”. Organizations tend to emulate those in the same field whom they consider more reputable or accomplished (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). While the models or methods they adopt may not always result in increased efficiency, the prevalence of a specific model also brings with it an inherent sense of legitimacy within the industry or organizational sphere.

➤ Normative Isomorphism

A third type of isomorphism is normative isomorphism, which refers to members of an organizational field duly pursuing or adhering to relevant professional standards and practices established by education and training methods, professional networks, and also movement of employees among firms within an industry. Normative isomorphism refers to following professional standards and practices established by education and training methods, professional networks, and the movement of employees among firms. Formal education and the validation of professionals take place within professional colleges and universities, where they disseminate normative rules, procedures, models, and beliefs. Furthermore, professional and trade associations play a role in promoting normative similarity by emphasizing ongoing

professional development, adherence to specific codes of conduct, and the diffusion of strategies and conceptual knowledge (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). The screening of personnel through recruitment, retention, and promotion practices also plays a part in the process of normative similarity (Dimaggio & Powell, 1991). As a result, organizations can be influenced by various forms of isomorphic pressures that contribute to maintaining institutional stability rather than prompting institutional change. However, institutions can change, typically in response to pressures from the political or economic environment.

4.8 Institutional Voids

A developed institutional environment with restrictive regulation can hamper entrepreneurial activity (Mair & Marti, 2009; Gurses & Ozcan, 2015). In developing country settings such as Ghana, entrepreneurial activities may be facilitated through informal mechanisms, such as establishing relationships with relevant government agents and other managerial ties (Peng, 2003; Peng & Luo, 2000), even if they are not legally recognized. However, these ties can also be expensive and hinder the development of new ventures (Klapper et al., 2006).

In light of this, a study of institutionally embedded entrepreneurial action enables academics to understand better the connections between entrepreneurship and the institutional contexts in which it occurs (Watson, 2012). While institutions are designed to create a shared perception of social reality by organizing the attention and behaviour of entrepreneurs (Thornton et al., 2011), insufficient progress in institutional development can create complications in the establishment of new ventures in a setting. Studies have shown that local networks and informal associations may help to fill in the "institutional voids" left by a deficient formal institutional infrastructure (Khanna & Palepu, 1997). The instrumental functioning of institutional environments varies considerably across the broad spectrum of societies at various stages of development. Acknowledging this wide variation, the concept of institutional voids defined as a lack or a failure of existing institutions to support efficient and effective market transactions (Khanna & Palepu, 1997; Mair et al., 2012) helps to identify the relative levels of institutional

support that fosters development progress within a society. While the concept of formal institutional voids has served as the basis for a significant stream of research concerning entrepreneurship, scholars have placed less effort into understanding how informal institutions support or constrain enterprise pursuits (exceptions include Khoury & Prasad, 2016; Light & Dana, 2013; Mair et al., 2012; Shantz, Kistruck et al., 2018) and the roles that informal institutions can play alongside formal institutions.

Addressing this key gap at the societal level, Davidsson (2016) explores how both formal and informal institutional voids affect the productivity of entrepreneurship. Institutional voids exist when there is a misalignment between what is considered legitimate by a society's formal (regulatory) institutions (e.g., its laws and regulations) and its informal (normative and cultural-cognitive) institutions (e.g. norms, values and beliefs). In terms of formal institutions, these can be defined as the rules and regulations which are written down or formally accepted, giving guidance to the economic and legal framework of a society. In contrast, informal institutions are the traditions, customs, societal norms, culture and unwritten codes of conduct. These norms and values are passed from one generation to the next and tend to be resistant to change (Bruton et al., 2008)

Across the Sub-Saharan African region, the existence of regulatory ineffectiveness has created institutional voids within formal settings (Mair & Marti, 2009) that act as impediments to inclusive market participation in both formal and informal economies. As a result, this imposes administrative hurdles and financial burdens, which increase the costs and time taken to comply with regulations, thus leading to increased activity in the informal sector (Irwin, 2008; Khavul et al., 2009), corrupt practices within the private sector, and high poverty and inequality levels (World Bank, 2017). Although these are not unique to the Sub-Saharan African region, they feature prominently in the region's institutional political and economic context because of the common weak governance institutions, structures and regulations that impede full market participation (Easterly, 2001).

In Ghana, formal Institutions such as the GRA are often underdeveloped, compared to their counterparts elsewhere and are characterized by inconsistency in the application of rules, thus creating voids usually filled by informal ones. In these settings, entrepreneurs experience greater levels of unpredictability and jeopardy compared to their counterparts in more advanced economies. (McCarthy et al., 2018) suggest that in such environments, a complete shift towards entrepreneurs relying solely on formal institutions might not happen smoothly, primarily because informal institutions are deeply ingrained. Instead, these nations and their entrepreneurs may establish distinctive equilibrium points between informal and formal institutions that are better suited to their specific conditions. Baumol, (1990) notes that there could be a “dark side” to evolve from formal institutional voids. He cites the risk of the emergence of a destructive kind of entrepreneurship resulting from an environment that supports piratical behaviour, from which piratical organizations will evolve (North, 1990). The uncertain circumstances described here exemplify the challenges encountered by entrepreneurs in developing economies as a result of the deficiencies in formal institutions. In developed economies, the institutional framework for entrepreneurs plays a pivotal role in fostering wealth generation and expansion. However, in developing contexts, robust, supportive formal institutions are often inadequate in these respects (Golenkova & Igitkhanian, 2008; Meyer, 2001).

Several scholars have proposed that the challenging conditions faced by entrepreneurs in developing regions like Ghana could potentially catalyze the most innovative forms of entrepreneurship, as these entrepreneurs strive to generate value in exceptionally difficult circumstances. Therefore, their utilization of informal institutions should not be perceived as an unconventional entrepreneurial practice, but rather as a suitable and intelligent adjustment in transitioning economies, provided it adheres to ethical and legal standards.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter lays out and explains foundational principles for the case study by probing its theoretical underpinnings. It presents a review of the theoretical context with a focus on institutional theory as the cornerstone lens for the research. Additionally, it includes an analysis of various tenets of institutional theory. The chapter looks at the institutional environment and the entrepreneurial orientation of firms, both concepts playing pivotal roles in this research. It applies isomorphism, a phenomenon that compels firms within the same industry or field to exhibit common characteristics when facing similar environmental conditions. The varying aspects of isomorphism were probed to strengthen the study's clarity. Finally, the chapter concludes with a review of the role of institutional voids, thus offering valuable insights pertinent to the study.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses how the research was designed to answer the research questions using a guiding philosophical framework. This in turn informed the choice of inquiry strategy adopted on the field to gather primary and secondary data. A description of the data collection and sorting process is presented here. Its analyses, interpretation and ensuing discussion are presented in subsequent chapters. How the preceding activities are conducted, based on the research plan, would affect the anticipated findings (Creswell, 2009).

The decision for a case study approach - an empirical technique for an in-depth inquiry into a current phenomenon within a real-world context – to the issue of Customs import valuation and entrepreneurship is supported in the literature (e.g., Yin & Davis, 2007). Furthermore, the blurred lines between the core issue of Customs valuation, its sub-units of analysis and context add to the complexity of this entrepreneurship inquiry. According to Bruyat and Julien (2000), entrepreneurship is seen as a complicated field within the social sciences. To bolster its conclusions, the study draws on a variety of academic fields, including sociology, psychology, and, last but not least, contemporary anthropology.

5.1 Philosophies of Research

Two principal methodologies in social science inquiry are the quantitative and qualitative approaches. Some researchers apply mixed methods that combine elements of both. Each comes with its own merits and demerits. Hence, a researcher's choice of key assumptions for an inquiry into a phenomenon reflects a certain worldview and adopted philosophical stance. This, in turn, influences the strategy and methods selected for the inquiry (Saunders et al., 2009). According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), and Creswell (2009) a worldview reflects a set of beliefs that guide a researcher's actions.

A worldview comes with assumptions "about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up, and how these units interact with each other (Flowers, 2009). This is often referred to as an ontology in a scientific inquiry. It has been regarded as the lens through which a researcher views the world (Bhattacharjee, 2012,). In contemporary literature, widely accepted worldviews include positivism, interpretivism and social constructivism. There are many other subsidiaries and overlapping variants of paradigms acknowledged in the literature. The following are some major ones, as well as relevant contrasting paradigms.

5.1.1 The Positivist Worldview

Positivism as a lens for scientific research has been the dominant worldview in all fields, as well as in the social sciences until the mid-20th century. A key assumption of the positivist paradigm is the belief that inquiry into objective truth is attainable. It presupposes that objective truth exists and is accessible via scientific methods by systematically quantifying variables and measuring the relationships between them (Cassell & Symon, 1994). Similarly, Kauber (1986) supports the assertion that with quantitative approaches the research design is premised on controlling and measuring variables, as well as the testing of hypothesis. This rigidity of a scientific view of reality constrained knowledge to what was observable and measurable. In the process, less value was placed on input from human thought and emotion less amenable to empirical measurements (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Quantitative methods soon became associated with the positivist approach to scientific research.

Over time, researchers like Waitzin (1990) began to critique quantitative methods for not adequately dealing with the complexities of discourse over phenomenon. He suggests that effectively understanding such complexities requires in-depth interpretive analyses. This, he claims, can be best accomplished through qualitative approaches. In a similar vein, Binks and Vale (1990) point out the boundaries of economic theory in understanding the human, sociological and psychological dimensions of entrepreneurship. Reinforcing, Spinoso et al.

(1997) suggest the need to traverse positivist approaches to inquiries of entrepreneurial behaviour, to better learn the human processes involved.

Critiquing further, Gable (1994) suggests that for a quantitative survey to be effective in revealing causal relationships or even generating descriptive statistics, it demands a high level of consistency with questions asked of participants. This represents a constraining inflexibility generally unfavourable to textured and heavily contextual research circumstances. It has been observed over time that the hitherto dominant positivist methodologies lacked the benefits of qualitative triangulation, amongst others. Such that, say, “while the problems may have been adequately quantified, there is little real understanding of their context and nature, or of the underlying issues that need to be addressed” (Styles & Seymour, 2006, p. 103).

Positivism often overlooks contextual meanings, forms and purposes informing the behaviour of the human actors. The ensuing frustration with the positivist lens resulted in what has come to be known as post-positivism towards the mid-twentieth century (Bhattacharjee, 2012). This shift and adjustment in worldview, leading to one such as Realism, has allowed scholars to study phenomena through a combination of quantitative methods and logical reasoning (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

5.1.2 Realism

The philosophical worldview of realism postulates that concerning a known or perceived object of human knowledge, a state of being is independent of the researcher’s views (Sobh & Perry, 2006; Saunders et al., 2009). It makes the claim of independent existence for perceived material objects with their characteristics. In assessing the issue of perception, philosophers consider two principal interpretations of Direct and Critical Realism (Saunders et al., 2009, p.114-115). “Direct realism says that what you see is what you get: what we experience through our senses portrays the world accurately. Critical realists however argue that what we experience are sensations; the images of things in the real world and not the things directly. Accordingly, critical realists argue that there are constraints to using a particular inquiry method. Thus,

evaluating reality must be considered from multiple approaches. Researchers of this view would therefore tend to employ mixed methods approaches (combining qualitative and quantitative research designs) and other triangulated methodologies in their work for validation (Sobh & Perry, 2006). Such approaches are better suited for theory postulations than widely applicable generalizations (Yin, 2009).

Mole and Mole (2010) have challenged from a critical realist's perspective the appropriateness of Giddens's interpretivism structure theory as a methodological approach to studying entrepreneurial phenomena (Sarason et al., 2010). Their paper concurs that the nexus of entrepreneurship and opportunity occurs within the context of social systems and the individual agency of the entrepreneur. However, structuration removes a vital analytical device to view the distinct interaction between agency and structure. The paper asserts that "it is because individuals and structure are separable and emergent over time, that we need to distinguish between them at an analytical level" (Sarason et al., 2006). The structuration approach is said to circumscribe other methodological tools available. Hitherto, Shane and Venkataraman (2000) commended a combination of both subjective and objective approaches to entrepreneurship research since entrepreneurial actions (the subjective view) move in tandem with the interpretation of emerging opportunities (the objective view). Over time, other worldviews employed by researchers of the discipline have included anti-positivism, functionalism, pragmatism, interpretivism and social constructivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2009; Saunders et al., 2009; Bhattacharjee, 2012).

5.1.3 The Interpretivist Worldview

The interpretive paradigm, as described by Yanow (2007), is a broad term that includes various schools of thought such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical theory, symbolic interaction, and ethnomethodology. According to Dean (2018), it is more challenging to grasp interpretivism than it is to appreciate what it is not. The hard sciences and other positivist approaches are often contrasted with the social sciences to shed light on interpretivism. The

words post-positivism, qualitative research, naturalistic paradigm, and constructivism are frequently used interchangeably with the interpretivist paradigm.

During the paradigm wars of the 1980s, there evolved a movement to undermine positivism. In the process, post-positivists and constructivists initiated qualitative research methodologies to promote a more naturalistic yet legitimate scientific inquiry in the empirical social sciences. Thus, the term “the interpretive turn” came to be identified with research methods that prioritize human meaning-making. An indication of moving away from a de-sensitized, objective research toward contextual and reflective approaches to knowledge claims (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2014). Researchers who hold this philosophical view claim that adopting a positivist worldview results in the loss of valuable insights into often complicated reality.

Interpretivism, however, offers a textured way to comprehend disparities between human actors and agencies (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman, 2001). Consequently, the onus is on the researcher to interact with their research subjects on a social level in order to understand what it is they see as their reality (Schwandt, 2007, p.191). Hence, an interpretivist worldview places less emphasis on the generalizability of its findings because people's interpretations of life situations vary and are ever-evolving (Saunders et al., 2009). Rather, the researcher strives to make sense of what they observe and hear and work towards theory construction through interpretive analysis (Creswell, 2009).

5.1.4 The Social Constructivist Worldview

This paradigm was proposed by academics like Berger and Lukeman (1967), and Lincoln and Guba (1985). In sociology and communication theory, social constructivism looks at the knowledge and individual understandings of the world that are created collaboratively by social actors (Amineh & Asl, 2015). It is frequently paired with interpretivism, but in contrast, moves beyond the meanings that social actors ascribe to their experiences (Creswell, 2009). Rather, it aims for consensus while remaining receptive to new interpretations when new data arrives, and sophistication improves (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The paper notes that people make

subjective interpretations out of their numerous, diverse experiences and desire knowledge of the environment they live in. This necessitates the researcher's reliance on the individual's perspectives on the subject under investigation, and for the former to recognize the complexity of these opinions (Creswell, 2009). Hence attention is placed on the settings of the people while utilizing their interactive processes as well as considering the historical and cultural contexts. This is clarified by Schwandt (2007, p. 197) as follows: "constructivism means that human beings do not find or discover knowledge, so much as we construct or make it (Schwandt, 1994). We do not construct our interpretations in isolation but against a backdrop of shared understandings, practices, language and so forth." Social constructivism posits that comprehension, importance and meaning are created in collaboration with other people. The crucial components of this theory are, first, the notion that people model the social world and how it works to make sense of their own experiences. Second, is the view that language is the primary means through which people create reality (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009).

According to Vygotsky (1978), cognitive development first takes place on a social level before it may happen within an individual. Knowledge is created at a social level that enables learners to relate to situations and improve their understanding of people (Roth, 2000). The sources of people's knowledge, according to Roth, can be found in their interactions with others and their environment before knowledge is internalized by humans. Derry (1999) and McMahon (1997) contend that context and culture are important in interpreting societal events and social constructivism emphasizes the creation of knowledge based on this understanding. Social constructivism is founded on specific assumptions about reality, knowledge, and learning, according to Kim (2001). These assumptions are expounded as follows:

- Reality - the basic tenet of social constructivism is that reality is formed using human interactions rather than existing beforehand. According to Kukla (2000), a community or its membership collectively (and not an individual) creates the characteristics of its world. Additionally, social constructivism maintains that since reality is not formed

prior to a degree of social consensus and convergence, it can scarcely be discovered individually or independently.

- Knowledge - according to the theory, social constructivism is a human creation that is shaped by social and cultural factors. When people connect and interact with each other and their surroundings, over time, meaning evolves and becomes recognizable (Prat & Floden, 1994; Gredler, 1997; Ernest, 1999; referenced in Kim, 2001).
- Learning – the tenet emphasizes the social nature of learning. Offering that learning does not happen or develop passively because of external factors outside the person (McMahon, 1997). According to social constructivists, when people participate in social activities like interaction and teamwork, they tend to learn more purposefully.

Hence, to commence an explorative case study on how the issue of Customs import merchandise valuation influences entrepreneurial perception and behaviour in Ghana, the thesis applies an interpretivist/social constructivist perspective as its methodology paradigm. Yin (2003) encourages the use of a constructivist paradigm in case studies because it recognizes the diversity of reality, from the view of the numerous subjects being observed who can share their perspectives as they go through them. The close cooperation and interdependence between the participant and the researcher allow the latter to comprehend specific activities made by participants and other actors (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Spinosa et al. (1997) highlight the necessity of moving past positivist approaches to entrepreneurship, in order to comprehend the critical human processes. Binks and Vale (1990) shed light on the limitations of economic theory in comprehending the human, sociological and psychological aspects and features of entrepreneurial behaviour. The study thus engages with individuals within named respondent categories on their experiences of GRA-Customs import valuation practices and processes in the Ghanaian setting.

5.2 Qualitative Methods

This issue-based topic of Customs valuation and firm-level entrepreneurship, in context, is uncommon in entrepreneurship research. Hence, it warrants in-depth views from operating firm enterprises; thus, justifying the preference for a qualitative approach to the inquiry rather than a hypothesis-based quantitative option (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Qualitative research endeavours to understand phenomena in their natural setting. In contrast to positivist methods, it typically emphasizes that reality is socially constructed. In that natural setting, researchers interpret their observations based on the meaning(s) society assigns to them. It is characterized by careful observation and direct participation of the researcher in the environment where the investigation is being conducted. This method debunks the notion that the social world can only be understood in terms of causal relationships as held by positivists. The latter's view, according to interpretivists, tends to overlook the values, interests, goals, and beliefs of the parties involved in causal relationships. Consequently, from this vantage point, one perspective is that every individual creates and experiences their own reality. This is a subjective reality that can be examined through the researcher's viewpoint.

This study seeks to explore what meaning(s) key stakeholders of the import valuation process make of its influence on entrepreneurial opportunity perception and behaviour in Ghana. The inquiry also aims to shed light on the influences that bear upon the GRA-Customs Division in implementing its import valuation mandate. The qualitative researcher must have belief in what individuals know and perceive to be true about a world that is constructed socially through the interactions of people over time in specific and evolving contexts.

As Cassell and Symon (1994) explain, there are certain assumptions underlying the qualitative research method. Some of these assumptions are summarized as follows:

Table 5. 1: Assumptions of Qualitative Research Methodology

-
- that there is nothing like agreed or established truth.
 - that qualitative researchers are concerned with attempting to decode the meaning and different interpretations of a phenomenon by the social actor
 - concern with understanding the individual's 'lifeworld'
 - they argue that generally qualitative research can take place in a naturalistic setting
 - tends to take a holistic view of situations – where context and behaviour are interdependent.
 - recognizes the active role of the researcher and the researched making the research process 'transparent'
-

Source: (Cassell & Symon, 1994)

5.2.1 Critique of Qualitative Methods

Scholars broadly acknowledge that any research technique, whether quantitative or qualitative designs, has merits and demerits. Some criticisms of the qualitative approach are discussed here. Bryman and Bell (2007) describe qualitative research methods as overly dependent on the level of intimacy developed between researcher and respondent. It is described as overly impressionistic and subjective since it significantly relies on the researcher's unsystematic beliefs about what is. Waitzkin (1990) asserts that when conducting qualitative research, with the use of discourse, it is often difficult to assess the quality of qualitative interpretation. Such challenges tend to hurt generalization and dependability (Waitzkin, 1990). For instance, when unstructured interviews or participant observation are used in an area of few people, it is difficult to discern how the results can be repeated or generalized for different circumstances (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

According to Waitzkin (1990), 'theory that is grounded in empirical observation does not develop easily from an unsystematic account of a few cases'. According to Cassell and Symon (1994), most authors also believe that qualitative procedures are substantially more and take a longer time to gather data and analyze it. However, for this issue-based multiple-embedded

single case study thesis, mixed-methods research, as an alternative, is deemed unsuitable at the exploratory phase. Also, the advantage of methodological triangulation through mixed methods is mitigated by data triangulation obtained from the embedded subunits of analysis of this case thesis (Hesse-Biber, 2016). The next section discusses the research design for this study.

5.3 Methodological Framework Summary

While scholars may have individual preferences for a particular research approach, a robust design must align with research objectives and the stated questions to be addressed by the inquiry. According to Patton (2002), determining the purpose of a study is key to its design. The principal purpose of this study is to explore, for further future research, the influences that bear upon Customs import valuation at the nexus of entrepreneurial behaviour in Ghana. To meet the research objectives the study employs an interpretivist/constructivist research philosophy which embraces the case study design.

5.4 Inquiry Strategy - Application of the Case Study Approach

In its real-world context, a case study is an empirical approach employed to investigate a contemporary phenomenon, known as the "case," especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not immediately clear (Runeson & Höst, 2009). These case studies, taking a naturalistic perspective and being sensitive to the complexities and interactions within a specific context (Stake, 1995), primarily aim to unravel intricate relationships and processes within a given situation (Denscombe, 1998). Hence, this thesis opted for a case study design to explore issues emanating from the processes and practices of Customs import valuation.

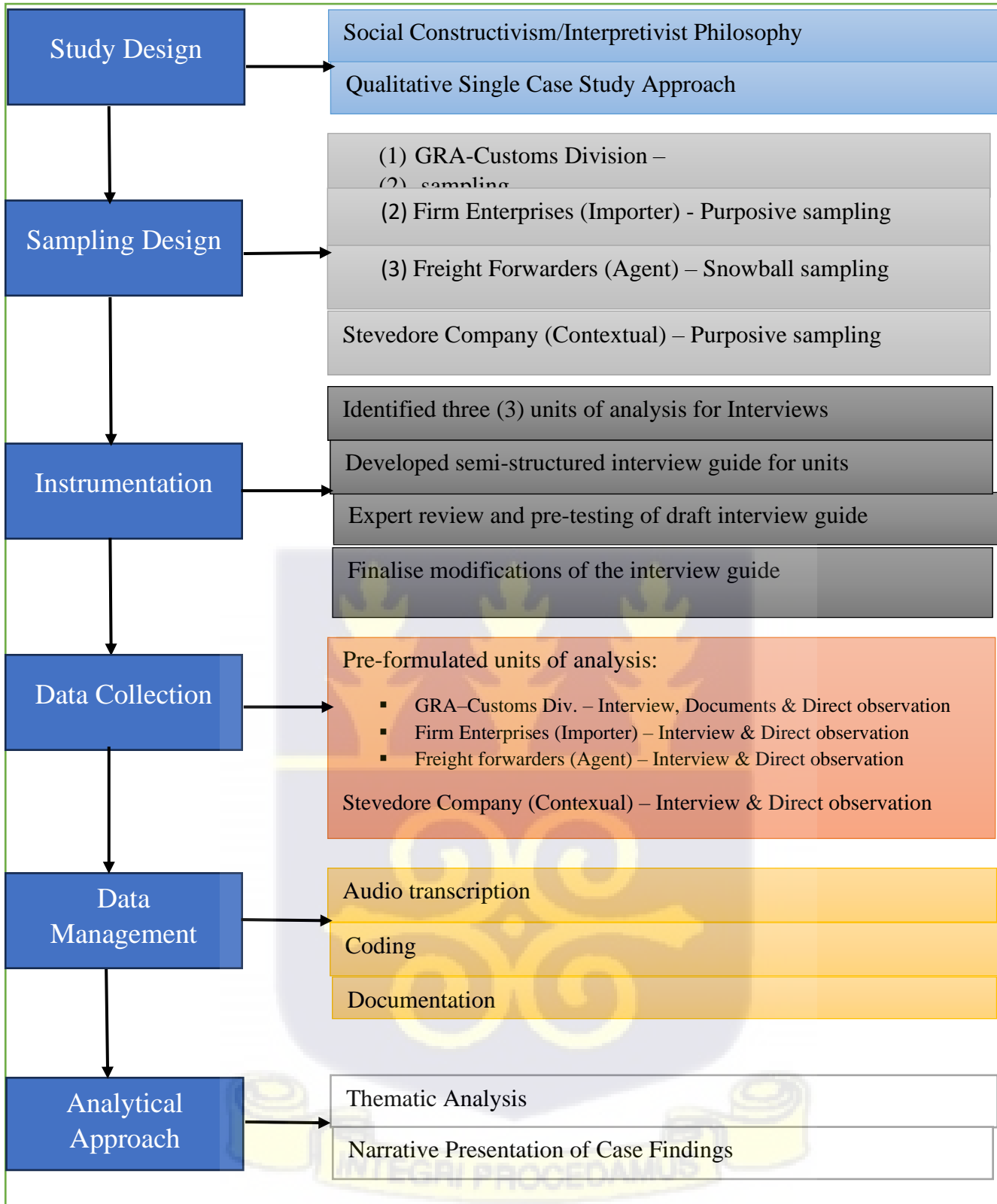


Figure 5. 1: Methodological Framework Summary

Source: Author’s construct

5.5 Inquiry Strategy - Application of the Case Study Approach

A case study is an empirical approach employed to investigate a contemporary phenomenon known as the "case," especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its real-world context are not immediately clear (Runeson & Höst, 2009). Case studies take a naturalistic perspective, thus, sensitive to the complexities and interactions within a specific context (Stake, 1995). Its primary aim is to unravel intricate relationships and processes within a given situation (Denscombe, 1998). Hence, the thesis opted for a case study design to explore issues emanating from the processes and practices of import merchandise valuation by the GRA-Customs that influence entrepreneurial perceptions and behaviour in Ghana. This approach is adopted with the assumption that there are significant contextual factors relevant to the case issue. Hence, how the GRA-Customs itself is influenced in its practices and processes of import merchandise valuation by external factors is core to the inquiry.

Ghana is a bona fide member of the global multilateral system, the WTO, and its rule-enforcing affiliate, the WCO. The international import valuation rules and practices adopted by the GRA-Customs division are both under the auspices of the WTO/WCO, as well as the trade policy of the government of Ghana. The choice of a case study approach to the policy issue of import valuation is backed by literature. Howlett and Ramesh (2003) point out that the policy literature is composed mostly of the study of individual cases, comparisons between cases, and of one or many stages of the policy process in particular cases. The inquiry, thus, comprises exploration of the joint influence of the WTO in tandem with the WCO on the national Customs administration of Ghana – GRA-Customs division.

Merriam (1998) notes that a case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of a situation and its meaning(s) for those involved. The interests, as in this case, are more in the process(es) than outcomes; in the context than in specific variables, and, importantly, in the discovery than in confirmation. Insights gleaned from this case study can influence trade policy, Customs import valuation practice and future entrepreneurship research. The

instrumental/exploratory study looks into how merchandise values declared on BOEs by firm enterprises are validated or overruled for duty payment purposes (Stakes, 2005). Yin (2003) argues that “case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed” in an inquiry. Additionally, Stake (2005) notes that qualitative researchers have strong expectations that the reality perceived by people inside and outside the case will be social, cultural, situational and contextual and they want the interactivity of functions and contexts as well described as possible.

A key element of the research design is the delimitation of the object of study or the case (Merriam, 1998). Each case is complex and is embedded within a number of contexts that need to be considered in the research (Stake, 1995). The paper points out that case study research investigates bounded systems. The bounded characteristics of this study’s design are depicted in Figure 5.1 (below) where its multiple-embedded, single-case features are delineated in the diagram. Further elaboration on boundary characteristics follows in subsequent sections on the choice of site, participant sampling techniques, sources of evidence, etc. Thus, the case issue of how external and internal pressures converge to impact import valuation, in a manner that influences FLE prospects in Ghana is explicit in its boundaries. The findings of this exploratory inquiry could serve as a basis for trade policy review to further firm-level entrepreneurship.

A framework is employed to sort the data and organize the information into five categories, namely:

- i. Import Merchandise Valuation - The issue
- ii. GRA-Customs Division – Sub-unit
- iii. Firm-level Enterprises – Sub-unit
- iv. Freight Forwarders – Sub-unit
- v. Stevedore/Port Operations - Context

The categories listed above represent key data points for the embedded single-case design with multiple units of analysis. Additionally, the framework informed decisions around defining

priorities for data categorization. Yin (2003) argues that a case study should employ a broad analytical approach to aid in establishing key analysis priorities. The writings of Yin (2003), Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) extensively explore the procedures of data categorization, and the creation of themes through coding.

Case Study Research Design Type

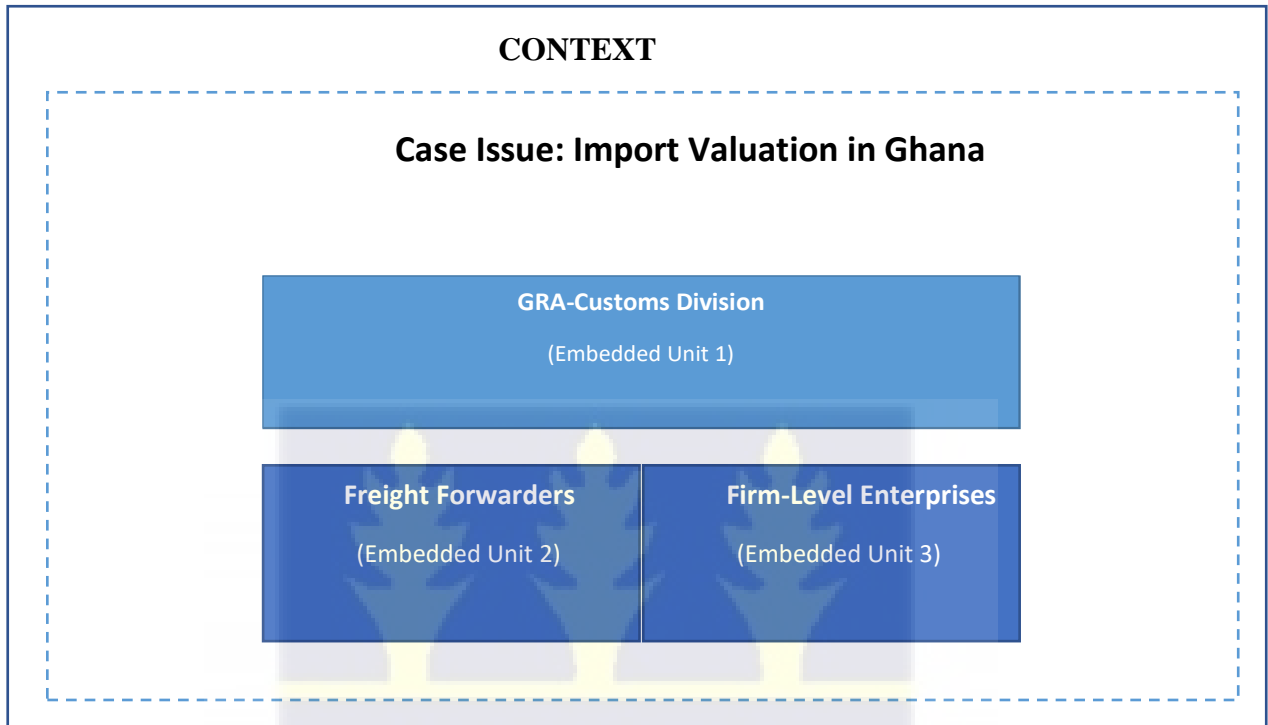


Figure 5. 2: An Embedded Multiple Units Single-Case Design

Source: Adopted from Cosmos Corporation (Yin et al., 1985)

5.5.1 An Embedded Multiple Units Single-Case Design.

The researcher did more than focus on the main issue of valuation (the first level). Attention was paid to the subunits (the second level), as well as the study context. In this exploratory study of Customs import valuation, the embedded units of analysis are (1) the GRA-Customs Division; (2) a group of firm enterprises; and (3) a collection of freight forwarding companies. The description of this “case” as issue-based, as well as the delineation of embedded sub-units, appropriately set inquiry limits and effectively bound the case study. It is worth noting that while the selected respondents across the three units are all involved in the Customs valuation process, the design does not follow a replication logic as with multiple-case designs. The

instruments were not designed as such, either. Rather, the purposive sampling technique applied, prioritized triangulation of data sources for a robust single-case study.

Amongst the five common single-case rationales - critical, unusual, common, revelatory/instrumental or longitudinal case — the most appropriate would be instrumental as it offers a research opportunity into an entrepreneurial phenomenon hitherto unresearched in Ghana (Whyte, 1943,1993).

5.6 Data Generation and Collection Method

The methods used to acquire qualitative data have numerous benefits. First of all, because qualitative data is collected in a situation where events are organically developing, it conveys a level of "richness and holism" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10). The distinct advantage of a case study is its capacity to manage a wide range of evidence types, encompassing documents, artefacts, interviews, firsthand observations, and participant observations (Merriam, 1998). After making the case for an issue-based exploratory study, the next stage is the data collection process. Merriam (1998) points out that, "rarely, however, are all strategies used equally. One or two methods of data collection often predominate; the other(s) play a supporting role in gaining an in-depth understanding of the case". Stake (1995, 2005) and Yin (2003) all note that, the use of multiple data sources is essential in case study research. This study relies heavily on semi-structured interviews and is supported by documents and some direct observations from the field.

5.6.1 Choosing the Sites

In deciding to pursue this case study, alternative data collection sites were considered in line with Stake (2005). He emphasizes that researchers need to consider "the logistics, the potential reception, the resources and additional characteristics of relevance" in choosing the case, and "that may mean taking the one most accessible or the one we can spend the most time with".

Logistically, sites for data collection were considered for the amount of time required for finding information and securing interviews for this inquiry. Through such logistical considerations, the grounds were laid for a greater appreciation of the case issue and its often blurred context. According to Yin (2012), “the ability to appreciate any such blurring as part of a case study is considered a strength of case study research.” All the sites selected for data gathering, across the three respondent units, were in the Greater Accra region of Ghana, including a tour of the stevedoring/port terminal operations situated on the premises of the main Tema Harbour. The Freight forwarding companies interviewed were based in Tema, most within a five-mile radius of the Tema port. Interviews were conducted in office spaces or at operational sites in and around the Tema harbour. The choice of sites and the decision to conduct the interviews there presented opportunities for direct observational, supplementary findings.

5.6.2 Rationale for Employing Interviews as the Main Method for Collecting Data

The face-to-face interview is considered ideal for this study due to the perceived sensitivity of the subject of Customs valuation, which is a pre-condition for import duty assessment and payment by the importing firm enterprises. With qualitative research interviews, the researcher has an opportunity to dig out new information, expand the scope of a problem and obtain vivid, inclusive first-hand narratives (Burgess, 1982). The primary goal is to increase comprehension of the respondents' "world" and how they interpret and make sense of their operational environment (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991).

For this study, twenty (20) participants across twelve (12) organisations, grouped into three (3) units, namely: (1) Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA-Customs division); (2) Firm Enterprises; and (3) Freight Forwarders, took part in semi-structured interviews. Additionally, a senior staff of a stevedoring/port management operations at a Tema container terminal was interviewed for insight into the case context.

5.6.3 Sampling for the Interviews

The approach was to use one's best judgement, as a researcher, to select respondents for each unit of analysis most useful to the research objectives. Hence, to gain detailed knowledge from the GRA-Customs division regarding internal and external influences on the processes and practices of import valuation, the Customs Technical Services Bureau (CTSB) staff were targeted and six Customs valuation officers were organized for a focus group discussion on their premises using a semi-structured interview guide. Further, two senior officers with specialized training and exposure to WTO-ACV protocols were approached and scheduled for one-on-one semi-structured interviews.

Similarly, a purposive sampling approach was planned and executed for the selection of six firm enterprises from diverse industries that were engaged in importation as an integral part of their business. There was, however, one exception, a local rice miller, who was not necessarily a regular importer. The firm was a relative start-up that was nonetheless impacted by imported rice competition. The other five respondent firm enterprises were pre-screened for import valuation experience.

The selection of the freight forwarders, the third unit of analysis for the study was by the snowball technique, operationalized through the Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders (GIFF). In applying this technique (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003), four key informants were identified and interviewed on their office premises. McMillan (2008) points out that, "in snowball sampling (also called network sampling), the researcher begins with a few participants and then requests nomination or recommendation of others who are known to have profiles, attributes or characteristics desired" (p. 121) for the study.

It is worth noting that while all four selected freight forwarding firms are based in the metropolis of Tema, there are no individual professional or client affiliations between respondents, across the sub-units for this study. The selection process and confidentiality precaution effectively eliminated the possibility of conflict of interest or bias in disclosure within and across the unit

groups. On the contrary, data triangulation was enhanced for these same reasons. For all three units of analysis, there were no inclusion or exclusion criteria per se. Rather, a robust approach was pursued towards data triangulation. It would be observed that triangulation occurs within the units represented by participants, and, collectively, by the narratives of the embedded units of analysis.

5.6.3.1 Interviewing the GRA-Customs Division

The interviews were audio recorded. Participant consent forms were read before and signed after the interview, as part of the ethical institutional requirements of the study. The duration of the three (two individuals and a focus group) interactions with Customs personnel lasted about an hour per session. It entailed posing itemized open-ended questions to participants, and enjoining them to follow-ups, as required. Stake (1995) suggests that “perhaps the most difficult task of the researcher is to design good questions; research questions that will direct the looking and the thinking enough and not too much” (p. 15). In addition, “good research questions are especially important for case studies because case and context are infinitely complex and the phenomena are fluid and elusive” (p. 33).

Thus, the interview technique was strengthened by a pilot interview with a senior Customs officer conversant with import valuation processes and practices. The interviewee had worked as a supervisor at the Tema Port container terminal several years prior. However, the pilot interview did not count for data collection, even though insights were gained. In that interview, more questions were fielded and feedback was sought and received that led to edits and rewordings for subsequent interviews and interactions in the field proper.

Merriam (1998) suggests that conducting pilot interviews is essential for testing your interview questions. This process not only provides you with valuable experience in the interviewing process but also helps you identify questions that may be unclear and require rephrasing, those that result in unbeneficial data, and questions suggested by your interviewees that you may have overlooked initially. While no second interviews were conducted with any participant in the

field, clarification for certain details were sought through email correspondence. At the end of each session, the participants, having read through prior, were requested to sign the consent forms.

5.6.3.2 Interviewing Freight Forwarder Group

In obtaining participant consent, interviewees were informed that the initial face-to-face interview would be scheduled at their convenience and would not exceed an hour without their consent. Interview questions were not given out in advance. Also, interviewees were informed that follow-up interviews by phone, email or in person may be requested for further clarification. The open-ended questions with follow-ups provided form to the semi-structured interview process. As McMillan (2008) notes, “semi-structured questions do not have predetermined, structured choices. Rather the question is open-ended yet specific in intent, allowing individual responses” (p. 177).

Worthy of note is the freight forwarders unit’s critical contribution to a robust methodology through data triangulation. Due to their intermediary role as agents while simultaneously pursuing commercial interests in their day-to-day operations, freight forwarder input through the interviews was an organic source of corroboration of narratives from the other two units – GRA-Customs and firm enterprises. This opportunity particularly enriched case and context insight, given that they were the last set to be interviewed.

5.6.3.3 Interviewing Firm-Level Enterprise Group

Except for one interview meeting, all seven scripted open-ended interviews took place on business premises with senior management and/or business owners.

Table 5. 2: Firm Enterprise (Importer/declarant) Group by Sector

SECTOR	Import	Location	Interviewee	Number Interviewed
Manufacturing				
Agro-business (Start-up)	Non-specific	Adaklu-Tsriefe, Ho	Business Owner	1
Aluminum Hollow-ware (Importer & Exporter)	Raw/intermediate material	Spintex Road, Accra	Managing Director	1
Electrical Cables & Conductors (Importer & Exporter)	Raw/intermediate material	Industrial Area, Tema	i. Managing Director ii. Head of Procurement	1 1
Trading				
FMCG – Foods (Fast Moving Consumer Goods)	Merchandise	Okaishie, Accra	Business Owner	1
FMCG - Electrical goods	Merchandise	Cow Lane, Accra	Business Owner	1
Agro-Chemicals (Wholesaler)	Merchandise	Weija, Accra	Managing Director	1
Total				7

Source Field Data, 2023

The diversity and scope of this purposively sampled group (Table 5.2) of firm enterprises sought to provide a quasi-representation to a cross-section of Ghanaian industries facing import competition. The findings, as excerpted in Figure 6.6 and Table 6.3 seek to portray the extent of relevance of the phenomenon under study – the nexus of Customs import valuation and firm-level entrepreneurship - across industries in Ghana.

5.6.3.4 Stevedore Operations (Tema Port)

The stevedore operations role for this case study was to obtain contextual input from the container port terminal regarding the issue of import valuation. The interview with a senior executive took place in a vehicle on the parking lot of the container terminal, soon after a facility tour which lasted for less than an hour. The semi-structured interview was based on a scripted questionnaire, as well as the interactions that had taken place with the stevedore’s personnel and on-duty Customs officers during the tour.

5.6.3.5 Determining Saturation Point

The final sample size of twenty (20) respondents (see Chapter 6: table 6.1), across the three embedded units of analysis and a stevedore operator was determined at a saturation point. Creswell (2007) defines that as the point where no new information is found that adds to the understanding of the phenomenon under study. For this case issue, when the interviews for each respondent category led to the duplicity of information gathered, the saturation point was determined. Any use of sample logic in case study research would be inappropriate, claims Yin (2018). The most effective way to determine the prevalence of a phenomenon is not through exploratory issue-based case studies.

5.6.4 Direct Observations

Deliberate observations took place and provided a degree of insight that stimulated fresh inquiries and/or offered supplementary information to enhance the analytical process (Kvale, 1997).

All twenty (20) participant interviews, except for one, took place on the business or operational sites of the interviewees. These on-site appointments offered unique opportunities for the researcher's direct observations of the marketplace, business owners and their interactions with and amongst their staff in a real-life environment as favoured by case studies. The observation opportunities across the respondent groups threw light on the often-blurred issue-context lines of the import valuation phenomena.

5.6.5 Documents

Following Yin (1980, p. 63), the researcher sought further corroboration of interview sources from direct observations and reviewed respondent documents. For this study, documents refer to written artefacts "produced by organizational employees for record-keeping and dissemination purposes such as memos, newsletters, files" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 58). Stake (1995) claimed that "quite often, documents serve as substitutes for records of activity

that the researcher could not observe directly” (p. 68). This study includes policy documents in that category of sources.

5.6.5.1 Policy Documents

The inquiry accessed copies of key documents on import valuation from the trade governing institutions of the WTO and WCO, as well as Ghana’s current trade policy document. Locally, internally generated documents by the GRA-Customs and newspaper clippings on the issue of import valuation were reviewed for case illumination and contextual insight.

Multilateral trade policies are formalized acts that have pre-agreed objectives and are “approved or sanctioned by an institutional body or authority” (Delaney, 2002, p. 15). Pal (2006) proposed that every policy has three key elements: “the first is the definition of the problem, the second is the goals that are to be achieved, and the third is the instruments or means whereby the problem is to be addressed and the goals achieved” (p. 7). Key policy instruments on import valuation in Ghana that serve to influence GRA’s policies are the WTO Agreement on Customs Valuation (WTO-ACV) and concomitant Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), among others. The WCO plays the roles of implementor, advisory and technical arm with respect to the aforementioned trade instruments (see Chapter 6: Fig 6.1& 6.2).

5.6.5.2 Newsprint Source

Other sources of documentary evidence on GRA-Customs’ valuation activities are national newspaper announcements, bulletins, and commentaries on import merchandise valuation policy. For example, the widespread public interest in the subject of Customs’ “benchmark import values”, as portrayed in the print media in recent times, points to the relevance of this data source. The government and the GRA-Customs often use national newspapers to disseminate new policy directives on import valuation and related matters of public interest. The researcher acknowledges potential biases in such reportage on contemporary issues relating to import valuation in Ghana. Nonetheless, newsprint commentary, to some degree, also serves

as a corroboratory source for interviews and other documents. This case study is thus guided by Yin (1998) not to take accuracy and bias for granted from secondary sources.

Overall, the search for documentary evidence yielded a wide range of choices from which the most relevant were utilized. Some of the documents were provided by GRA interview participants who had attended professional workshops and conferences at various times on the subject of Customs valuation. The contemporary nature of the import valuation challenge on businesses in Ghana reinforces the corroborating relevance of national newspapers as a data source. Also, the recurrence of the subject matter in the public domain underscores the relevance of the case study.

5.7 The Analysis Process

A qualitative research analysis process is not limited to post-data collection but begins to evolve at an earlier stage in the process. Hence, as data was being collected analysis began simultaneously (Stake, 2005). In this study, multiple perspectives on import valuation are gathered through documents, direct observation, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with twenty participants across various industries and sub-sector categories.

5.6.1 Coding Themes

Coding for the study began with tabular presentations of emerging sub-themes from respondent interview transcripts. However, before data collection commenced, ideas on how to organize the information and develop initial categories and themes were considered. Stake (2005) believed that, for instrumental/exploratory case studies such as this, initial coding schemes can be developed and utilized. “Because the critical issues are more likely to be known in advance and to follow disciplinary expectations, such a design can take greater advantage of already-designed instruments and preconceived coding schemes” (Stake, 2005).

For this case study, instruments were pre-designed and some coding categories were pre-conceived based on literature review and the research problem that informed the study in the

first place. Hence, for example, in considering preliminary factors that influence Customs valuation practices, external and internal factors emerge naturally as categories for coding. Following Creswell (2009), the study's analyses are based on a combination of emerging and predetermined codes. During this iterative process, thematic categories were formulated, developed and revised. This is also consistent with Stake (2005) in suggesting that while a researcher requires a plan, the "caseworker needs to anticipate the need to recognize and develop late-emerging issues" (p. 453).

In seeking meaning from interviewees' perspectives on Customs valuation, for example, categories of "consistency", "transparency" and "diligence" in GRA practices and processes emerge from firm enterprises and freight forwarders alike. These categories, among others, were merged into a key theme of "Perception of Customs Professionalism" in import valuation. Similar iterative processes are applied to GRA-Customs' narratives on the conduct of firm enterprises and freight forwarders in the valuation process. Here, too, several sub-themes emerge based on interview transcripts to create the theme "Importer Compliance", for instance. Thomas (2006) contends that in analyzing qualitative data, an inductive analysis approach is needed to make meaning of the data. These approaches "primarily use detailed readings of raw data to arrive at concepts, themes or a model through interpretations made from the raw data by an evaluator or researcher" (Thomas, 2006, p. 238). The process described above, for this study, involved identifying key phrases and sections of transcript texts, documents and direct observations that suggest a particular category. Subsequent passages that support or add to those categories are identified through further reading. The data is then coded according to the emerging or prescribed categories.

Merriam (1998), proffer that coding identifies "information about the data and interpretive constructs related to analysis" (p. 164). She characterized coding as "nothing more than assigning some sort of short-hand designation to various aspects of your data so that you can easily retrieve specific pieces of the data" (Merriam, 1998, p. 164). While highlighted transcript

texts may be relevant to the issue of import merchandise valuation and its impact on entrepreneurial behaviour in Ghana, coded texts are specifically pertinent to the sub-units of the GRA-Customs Division, importer-enterprises and the freight forwarding firms interviewed. Input and evidence from the context of this study, while often blurred with the boundaries of the case issue itself, are also considered in the emerging themes.

5.7 Ensuring Quality and Trustworthiness

Scholars often debate the trustworthiness of the case study approach because data collection, analysis and interpretation are subjective (Sturman, 1999). In this case study, a particular phenomenon - the process and practice of import valuation in Ghana - is undertaken as exploratory. The perspectives of individuals from the public sector and various commercial backgrounds, across different respondent groups (sub-units of analysis) are highlighted throughout the presentation of the data. The study is guided by Bogdan and Biklen (2003) suggestion that “qualitative researchers tend to view reliability as a fit between what they record as data and what occurs in the setting under study, rather than the literal consistency across different observations” (p. 36).

To augment the study’s reliability, policy instruments and documents as data sources are used to back the semi-structured interviews. Although rare, when questions about the data arose, respondents were requested to clarify the issues and/or answer outstanding questions by email. Through such thoroughness, a high degree of reliability was pursued.

Since case studies such as this are contextually bound, some scholars have suggested that transferability and generalizability become issues. Stake (2005) however notes that “the purpose of a case report is not to represent the world but to represent the case. The utility of case research to practitioners and policy-makers is in its extension of experience” (Stake, 2005). The primary aim of a case study is to cultivate a profound comprehension of a chosen case or cases, placing a strong emphasis on the surrounding context. Due to this central objective, concerns related to generalizability and transferability should be down-played. This case study

constitutes data sources through interviews, documents and direct observation from three distinct respondent groups embedded as sub-units of analysis. They are the GRA-Customs division, firm enterprises and freight forwarders. In aggregate, they have provided adequate data to formulate a detailed description of the case issue.

5.8 Confidentiality and Ethics

Any discussion or inquiry into taxes, import valuation or duties of business enterprises in or outside Ghana may be deemed sensitive or a discrete exercise. The study on import valuation is ultimately about tax and duty liabilities of commercial enterprises. Therefore, to assure respondents of the scholarly nature of the inquiry, in exchange for forthrightness, the structured face-to-face interview was deemed to be optimal for this case study. This is the case as by establishing a rapport with participants through personal interactions, the openness promotes data gathering, response rates are augmented and misunderstandings are minimized (Evans & Mathur, 2005 p. 195-219).

Throughout the research, the general ethics procedures outlined by the University of Ghana's Ethical Committee for the Humanities (ECH) were followed. These instructions encompassed the implementation of participant consent documents and privacy protocols. Participants were explicitly notified that their involvement was optional and that they could opt out of the study at any point. They were also given chances to provide feedback both during and after the interviews. In the final report, the actual names of the concerned entities and their representatives were not disclosed to safeguard participant confidentiality. Nonetheless, participants were duly informed, through the consent forms and discussions, that some identifying information might be included in the case study.

5.9 Limitations of the Case Study Approach

While the case study design is appropriate for an exploratory inquiry into the contemporary phenomenon of import valuation and its influence on entrepreneurship in Ghana, it is also acknowledged that it provides limited opportunity to generalize its findings. As disclosed

earlier, there is a blurring of lines between the case issue of import valuation and its context. Additionally, the researcher's pre-conceptions regarding the case issue cannot be overlooked in terms of researcher bias (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Madichie et al., 2013). There is also the recognition that due to the sensitivity of the valuation topic and its direct association with Customs duty payment, any expectation of full disclosure from respondents from any unit of analysis during interviews would be unrealistic. However, by design, the robustness accruing from data triangulation is sufficient to build conceptual foundations for further research on this contemporary topic.

5.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the general methodology employed in the study is expounded. The case issue concerning import valuation and its consequential influence on entrepreneurship in Ghana is discussed here in some depth. The specific research methods utilised, encompassing data collection and data analysis processes are presented. Furthermore, the pertinent issues of transferability and generalizability in qualitative case study research, explaining their applicability and significance, are addressed in the research context. It is imperative to underscore that throughout the course of this study, strict adherence to ethical research guidelines has been maintained, ensuring the integrity and credibility of the research process.



CASE DATA PRESENTATION

6.0 Introduction

The case study's findings are presented in a descriptive narrative form, consistent with an interpretivist style for easy comprehension and comparisons (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The study's findings are derived and structured from three main categories of data sources, namely, interviews, documentary sources and direct observations. There are three respondent units of analysis (see Chapter 5: Fig 5.2) and a non-unit of analysis (for contextual input) that feed the data categories. The respondent units of analysis comprise the GRA-Customs, freight forwarder and firm enterprise categories. Together, from their unique perspectives, they provide rich narratives of the import valuation process and practices therein, as expected of an issue-based case study (Yin, 2018).

A total of twenty participants from twelve organisations, across the three units of analysis, including a non-unit of analysis, have contributed to the selected excerpts presented below. For the GRA-Customs division, two senior officers were engaged in one-on-one, semi-structured interview sessions, while a mix of senior and schedule officers participated in a focus group discussion on similar themes. Concerning, the second and third units of analysis, namely, freight forwarders and firm enterprises, it was mostly owners and heads of organisations who were interviewed. In one instance, though, two personnel from an organisation were interviewed to highlight, separately, different aspects of the research questions. Therefore, the findings from the various data sources, units of analysis, and, ultimately, individual respondents, present benefits derived from data triangulation at different stages of data gathering leading to robust findings.

6.1 Interview Sources

Table 6. 1: Respondent Group Particulars

Respondent Code	Respondent Group	No. of Participants	Sector
GRA	GRA- Customs Division	8	Revenue Authority
GRA-1	Senior Officer (1)	1	
GRA-2	Senior Officer (2)	1	
GRA-FG	Focus Group	6	
FF	Freight Forwarders	4	Logistics
FF-1	GIFF Member	1	
FF-2	“	1	
FF-3	“	1	
FF-4	“	1	
FL	Firm-level Enterprises	7	
FL-1	Electrical Cable & Conductors	2	Manufacturing/Export
FL-2	Aluminum Cooking Utensils	1	“
FL-3	Rice Milling	1	Miller/Wholesaler
FL-4	Agro-Chemicals	1	Wholesaler/Retailer
FL-5	FMCG - Electrical Merchandise	1	“
FL-6	FMCG – Packaged Foods	1	“
SD	Stevedore Company	1	Port Management Services
	Total	20	

Source: Field data, 2023

6.1.1 GRA-Customs Interview Excerpts

6.1.1.1 GRA-1 (Senior Customs Officer)

➤ Background:

- i. A member of the Customs Technical Service Bureau (CTSB) management team
- ii. Attended numerous World Customs Organization (WCO) workshops/conferences on valuation for professional development.
- ii. The interview took place at the officer’s office at the GRA-Customs Head office in Accra.

➤ On the functions of the CTSB Unit of GRA-Customs:

The GRA-Customs’ endeavours to maintain uniformity in the value assessment of imports. The functions of (1) Merchandise Classification; (2) Country of Origin (COO) verification and; (3)

Value Assessment for duty payment are centrally managed by the CTSB at the Accra-Central head office.

“My schedule is basically on origin [country of origin] issues.....but before then we were supervising the valuation, classification, and even origin. But now I'm focusing only on origin issues, but I have a speciality in customs valuation.”

Officer's emphasis on CTSB function:

“When you talk of issues of revenue in Customs, then what we call the trilogy of Customs functions comes in, namely, classification, valuation, and determination of origin. These are the three main things that can go into determining the value of the revenue that is generated from customs and that is done over here in this facility [CTSBS]”

➤ On CTSB's function in the context of the WTO Trade Facilitation initiatives:

“... For trade facilitation purposes, the government has provided facilities that the valuation of your goods can be determined before the goods arrive.....and so many people take advantage of the pre-valuation facility before the goods arrive. Hence a determination would be made on your [merchandise import value] or the duties that you have to pay on the goods before the goods arrive on our shores.”

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) is mandated to oversee the execution of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) by the GRA-Customs. The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) collaborates with the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) to guarantee the prompt and effective Customs clearance and transportation of commodities.

6.1.1.2 GRA-2 (Senior Customs Officer)

➤ Background:

- i. A recently retired member of the (CTSBS) management team.
- ii. Officer's professional experience spans sales tax administration of local manufacturers; Classification and Valuation duties at the Kotoka International Airport (KIA), and digitization of port clearance procedures.

- iii. Officer was transferred to the Compliance Unit at the Tema Port where they vetted FCVRs (final classification and valuation report) issued by Destination Inspection Companies (DICs)¹
- iv. The scheduled interview took place at a private location. Officer mentioned the role of [erstwhile] DICs in the import merchandise valuation process and went on to explain how external factors influence or even constrain the Customs valuation regime in Ghana.

“..... the WCO came out with a ruling that all [Customs] administrations wear themselves from the [former] DICs and do their own valuation and classification. So Customs administration at the time decided that they will establish a unit: Customs Technical Services Bureau (CTSB), for that unit to take over the functions of the Destination Inspection Companies (DICs) so that classification, valuation and origin determination will be done by Customs itself.”

A follow-up question on the motivation behind the WCO’s ruling against government contracting DICs for merchandise import valuation elicited the following response:

“We [Customs] had a number of issues with them [DICs] that’s why the WCO said that they preferred Customs did their own classification and valuation. For example, people [freight forwarders/business entities] were “shopping” around because it [the DIC contract] was divided into [geographic] zones so they [importers] would change [forge] the origin and get to a different company to get lower [import] values it was not fair so other people [business entities] were getting added advantage over the others which is not good for valuation because according to the principles, there should be fairness and equity.”

Respondent describes how the WTO-ACV to which Ghana is a signatory may influence GRA-Custom's import valuation for business entities:

¹ Destination Inspection Companies (DICs) – are firms engaged by a host country to operate an import inspection scheme at the port of clearance. In September 2015 the GRA took over all such processes at Ghana’s ports.

“Yes, we are supposed to implement all the twenty-four articles of the WTO-ACV (Agreement on Customs Valuation), even though developing countries were given a five-year delay to be able to resolve all their issues, but as developing countries, when the agreement was being put together, we didn’t show any interest at the time or we didn’t have the opportunity to make any inputs so it looks like the agreement favours the developed countries the more than we developing countries.”

6.1.2 Freight Forwarder Interview Excerpts

6.1.2.1 Freight Forwarding Company (FF-1)

➤ Background:

- i. The respondent is also an executive of the Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders (GIFF).
- ii. The freight forwarding firm is a member of GIFF.
- iii. Respondent is a retired former Customs officer with fifteen years of experience, thus, quite familiar with the technical aspects of the import valuation practices of the GRA-Customs.
- iv. The interview took place at the respondent’s office on the premises of GIFF in Tema

The respondent shares with the interviewer the challenges they [freight forwarders] face with regard to import valuation by the GRA-Customs Division.

“There are a lot of problems when it comes to valuation. You see, because value is what determines the duty you have to pay, nobody would want to pay more duty. People would want to evade duty. So, there are different ways where people would want to manipulate the system. For example, you have an invoice value from China for this book. You can decide that you are going to tamper with that value. Of course, we have people who are honest enough and would not want to tamper with the original invoice value. But the Customs have a database which has the value there. So, they would now look at the value you have brought. If the value you declare, they check and they realize that it is not correct, they will increase it.”

Agent explains further:

“First, normally, what they [GRA-Customs] do is that when you bring the invoice value, they will raise it. When they raise the value, they benchmark [BVD] it at the rate of

thirty per cent. Then when they do that, they will use it to calculate the duty that you have to pay.”

Asked about his view of the benchmarking system that leads to lower valuation and thus duty payment, he responds as follows:

“From our client’s [firm enterprise] point of view, they think it is good because it has reduced the duty that they pay. But apart from the importing community, we have the AGI [Association of Ghana Industries]. They are also thinking that once you bring in the raw materials, it becomes difficult for them to compete with imports.”

6.1.2.1 Freight Forwarding Company (FF-2)

➤ Background:

- i. The respondent is accountable for the daily operations of the company.
- ii. Has acquired fifteen years of experience in the managerial role after under-studying her father, the founder of the freight forwarding company
- iii. The scheduled meeting took place at the firm’s office in the Tema business district.

Asked about any recurring merchandise valuation challenge for their clients at the Tema Port, she responds as follows:

“..... And so there is some extra vigilance when dealing with the freight forwarder because, one, they [Customs] think we are stealing for the clients - we are helping clients not to fully value or declare their cargo and all those things, so there is that mistrust. So, Customs always want to go the extra mile to put a barrier there so that they think they are actually helping get revenue by putting us in a tight fit, let me just say”

Agent raises the issue of Customs’ professionalism:

“... after you know, you’ve been dealing with them [Customs] for some time, they get to know you then they let their guard down.....and that is dangerous! Because right now I know you so when I come you don’t even look through my documents properly, you just make it go. Maybe that is the day that I might have done something wrong that you need to actually look and assess.”

The agent recommends that:

“I think if they just put in a process, and then they decided that, regardless, this is how it should go, whether I am familiar with you or not, everybody follows that stringent process. But then there is a case of whom you know.....I can actually bypasswhat you would go and pay two, I will come and pay one because I know you and I know that you can actually do something for me.”

6.1.3 Firm Enterprises Interview Excerpts

6.1.3.1 Electrical Cable & Conductors Company (FL-1A)

The respondent is the Managing Director (MD) of a Tema-based electrical cables and conductor manufacturer.

He shares the firm’s vision:

“.... is around the aspiration to build an industrial giant in Africa. We hope to achieve that by using the best of talent, an integrated local value chain in terms of how we get our inputs into our production, and by being extremely innovative in finding ways in which we can adapt to use world best practices within the African context.”

On being entrepreneurially oriented as a firm and a manager:

“We have to do both [innovative for product and operations infrastructure], in fact, we have to do both all the time.... The beauty of being in Africa is that the opportunities for innovation are numerous. On the product side, we have always... Africa in general has always managed with the basics. So, if I talk about our industry, for example, they’ll say a cable is a cable and whatever is produced here is what we manage to use. But there are other ways. I can even give a practical example. There are ways by which, for example, you can build a cable that will treble the carrying capacity of our existing power networks. So, all those [electricity] pylons you see, if we use the traditional cables you will have to use similar pylons - three times three times to get a trebling of the capacity. But with this cable manufacturing technology, we can do it on the same [current] pathways and treble it by restringing a new conductor. So, it is just an example of innovation at the product end which is on-going.”

He concludes the topic with:

“Yes, we are on the verge of concluding an arrangement to manufacture that type of conductor under license from an American company”

On more innovation, innovativeness and proactiveness:

“We are innovating, partnering with people; bringing in technology from outside on all fronts. We are doing what we [presently] have the capacity to do today. It is all what we call ‘low-voltage’. But low- voltage is relative to what we use to distribute power long distances which is medium voltage. Today, nobody manufactures medium-voltage cables in Ghana. It is all imported. We are about to start medium-voltage production at the plant. We are about to start working on some backward integration and that moves us to another level of innovation or the innovativeness that you talk about. Product innovation will always happen...the process of innovation is key”

6.1.3.1 Electrical Cable & Conductors Company (FL-1B)

➤ Background:

- i. The interview takes place in a meeting room at the plant location in the Tema industrial area.
- ii. The respondent is in charge of logistics management at this manufacturing firm.

He shares the following on his duties:

“I do sourcing of the various materials and various items, spare parts and then do the various means of getting them here [the plant]. So, whether it is by airfreight or by sea freight.....then when it gets here, we have third-party people we deal with in terms of clearing it..... basically, in terms of the actual clearing, it is outsourced.”

Asked to share his company’s views on the degree of transparency in the processes and practices pertaining to import valuation in Ghana:

“I think I’ll describe the system as umm, a Blackbox kind of system. Because for the same kind of products, the system has been ‘designed’ to capture various values. So, then it means that it gives the person [Customs officer] who is doing the valuation the option to choose what [value] to use. So, if it is umm, a ton of let’s say calcium zinc... there are various grades. So, you are bringing in a grade that suits your purpose. Somebody is also bringing a grade that suits their purpose. But the HS code [Customs

harmonized System Codes] doesn't capture the details of the different grades. So, you have a certain HS code [for valuation] and there are about five different grades to assess..... It is not transparent."

Continuing with the company's experience with the valuation process of merchandise import:

"And when you go for appeal [i.e. Official petition of Customs assessed value] before they will say Oh ok, [mentions name of his company here], you cleared 'one' last year and this was the value.... so, it makes sense for this value to be used again..... most of the time, they use what is in the system already."

6.1.3.2 Agri-business (Rice Milling) Company (FL-3)

The scheduled interview with the business owner took place at a private location.

He describes his business as follows: *"We run a holding company with a number of businesses in there. There is an agri-business start-up company and we have some tech-focused firms as well. So, the company is originally a 'tripartite' undertaking where we are doing Agri-cultivation in the planting and all that. Processing to also give the farmers an assured off-take.... then the third was Agro-tourism."*

On the subject of the government Benchmark Value Discount (BVD) policy and its impact on business, the respondent (also a member of the Ghana Rice Millers' Association - GRMA) commented as follows:

"So, they wanted to scrap it [the BVD policy] then the GUTA (Ghana Union of Traders Association) came back to have the government reinstate it.....it created an imbalance in the marketplace. Right now, we are not even getting the kind of support that the exporting countries give their farmers. And we need a lot more support to achieve this.... but with what we are doing, we are making imports way cheaper than the cost of local production. So, we [GRMA] showed them the revenue loss and the weak investment in developing our own rice industry."

Asked about whether the GRMA was consulted on the BVD policy:

"We were not consulted..... it came as a surprise but, I must admit, as an entrepreneur, at the time I was focused on the structures of the start-up business. I mean when it was raised, I didn't bother, not because it was of no value but because I needed to get my

operations dynamic up because I was still in the test-run mode trying to understand what works at the factory. But we were not consulted at all, if they [Policy makers] had consulted us, we would have possibly given constructive input.”

6.1.3.3 Agro-Chemicals (Wholesaler/Retailer) Company (FL-4)

The interview took place at the respondent business owner’s office premises at a location off the Accra – Weija road enroute to Kasoa.

Asked about the nature of his business, he shares as follows:

“We import and distribute urea-formaldehyde and it is basically for the manufacturing of plywood. So, we deal with the timber industries, mainly. The product comes bagged in powder form. We represent two countries out there; we do their business for them here. We’ve been in existence since 1998.”

The following is the respondent’s response to the open-ended question on his company’s experiences with Customs import valuation:

“Customs valuation issues come up often. We transact all our imports through the bank. So, one would expect that once it is [documentation] coming through the bank, at least, it is enough to guarantee Customs to know that oh these transactions are all bank transactions and that there is no way that you would be manipulating commercial invoice or that sort of thing..... but no, it doesn’t work that way.”

He continues:

“Most of the time you put in your request for valuation, they’ve increased the FOB (Free-on-board) or the freight values. And for us, knowing that, I always tell my agent [freight forwarder] that you see, I’m not illiterate and I don’t want any of these young Customs officers to come talk to me as if I don’t know what I am about. So, let’s always do the right thing. I’m not interested in making, you know, ill-gotten profit”

Respondent re-asserts that:

“We are always sure that if you [Customs] ‘inflate’ or increase the price [assessed value] for us, you know, because of how sure we are, we’ll fight it [petition].....but the valuation has been a challenge.

6.1.4 Stevedore Company Interview Excerpts

The tour of the Tema container port covered the control room from where shipping containers on flat-bed articulated trucks about to exit the port facility, are electronically scanned and monitored on colour screens.

The port operator's systems are operationally linked to the ICUMS (Integrated Customs Management System) - the core GRA-Customs digital platform – and controlled by mutual validation procedures concerning import consignment clearance from the terminal. Other stakeholders involved in the process of cargo clearance and trade facilitation such as the Ghana's Shippers Authority and licensed freight forwarders are also linked to the system.

The port operator oversees a total of six drive-through container scanners at the terminal. The scanners are encased in concrete walls but can be seen physically from the centralized control room where Customs officers do their screen monitoring. The monitoring officers at the container port may liaise with the CTSB at the Customs head office in Accra on consignments that are yellow or red-flagged, signalling irregularities and/or inconsistencies of electronic BOE declarations from scan results. Such situations usually call for the suspicious cargo to undergo intrusive inspection at the port terminal for resolution. While one could see from the control room area what appeared to be a handful of cargo trucks in queues for flagged inspection, due to security restrictions, access and photographs are not permitted within that port terminal

6.1.4.1 Stevedore Company

➤ Background

- i. The interview took place at the parking lot of the Container Terminal in the Tema Port, after a site tour of the facility
- ii. The respondent, just retired, was a department head and also a pioneer of the management team of the corporate group.

Respondent explained as follows:

“The ICUMS [Integrated Customs Management. System] is the core digital platform where the stevedore’s own operations and other stakeholder portals interface to process electronically submitted BOEs. It comes with an embedded validation system.

Offers an overview of the company’s operations:

“ICUMS is like the gospel. A classic example is when what is declared [the import declaration] in ICUMS is different from what is declared in the port operator’s [Stevedore] system, there will be a flag for an intrusive inspection to be done. Sometimes, such occurrences and inconsistencies are detected in the imported consignments.”

He continues:

“For example, a Shipper ships in twenty containers of rice but just before they seal the container, people add other items like car spare parts etc. and push it into the rice containers for export to Ghana. This changes the content of the container. Bear in mind it was flagged green before it was sealed and left the export country. When the container gets to Ghana, our affiliate company scans the container at the port and finds out there are strange objects other than what was documented in the export country. Straight away they have the ability to change the colour of that consignment from ‘Green’ to a ‘Red’ code.”

Furthermore:

“The scanners cannot make minute distinctions of the imported commodities. It just scans to make sure it has the exact item documented in the export country. These scanners belong to GRA-Customs. Note that the scanning machine cannot make a distinction between the types and sizes of the grains of rice, for example, for say valuation purposes.”

On suspicious cargo:

“Cargo can be flagged ‘green’, ‘red’, or ‘yellow’. These colour codes originate from the Customs perspective, not the Stevedore. Each colour has its own meaning. ‘Green’ means no suspicion. The ‘green’ code originated at the declaration stage, thus, before you import or before the items get to Ghana, it is made in advance. ‘Green’ means it is ready to be scanned. Immediately after scanning without any suspicions, it is taken straight to the gate and sent out for clearance. ‘Yellow’ code suggests caution. For

example, having car spare parts in a rice container that has been documented as rice only. The declaration has been rice, but scanning will tell that there are metal objects in the container. Officers will now ask what kind of objects are in the container because the scanner is unable to determine what the undocumented items are. This is to say that the scanner has the capacity to shoot slides at a level that you can tell that false material is in there. 'Red' means there is something not right in the containers. This could be for an entire consignment."

6.2 Direct Observations in the Field

Deliberate observations were made to present in the study, the working context of the participants. That provided a degree of insight that stimulated fresh inquiries and/or offered supplementary information to enhance the analytical process (Kvale, 1997).

Random observations were made at the CTSB offices at the Customs head office in Accra, while there to conduct a scheduled focus group discussion. The observations included the open-plan, wide-spaced office area which appeared to foster collegiality among officers and their supervisors. The stereotypical hierarchical culture of a para-military organization appeared significantly toned down. There was also a certain desirable eagerness amongst the selected participants to contribute to the focus group discussion. That level of enthusiasm was positive overall for data collection (Dennison et al., 2013).

Observational evidence suggested, on one hand, a certain convergence of negative officer sentiments towards freight forwarders (see chapter 8.4.3) in general, whom they commonly referred to as "Clearing Agents" or simply "Agents". On the other hand, it is common knowledge from the "Agents" interviewed that informal and even cozy relationships exist amongst members of these two sub-units of analysis (Wei, 2015, p 71-82). The direct observations at the container port terminal, however, had limited relevance for data triangulation as stevedoring and port operations are context-driven elements, and not intended as core to the import valuation phenomenon.

Except for one, all twenty respondent interviews were conducted on operational and/or company sites. The researcher had the opportunity to observe the marketplace dynamics, business owners and their interactions with workers in a real-life setting through the interview appointments. The observational opportunities it provided shed further light on the often-hazy issue-context parameters of the import valuation phenomenon, and its influence on the entrepreneur's attitudes and actions in the market.

6.3 Documentation

According to Yin (2018), an important source of evidence for a case study such as this may come in the form of documentation. Administrative and other internal records, for instance, have the characteristic advantage of being stable, unobtrusive, specific and at the same time broad. While documentation may have shortcomings with selectivity and reporting bias, it has served in this study to support and/or supplement evidence from other data sources. Overall, documentation is considered to play a valuable role in any case study data collection exercise.

6.3.1 Newspaper Sources

Archival records such as newspapers are useful and acceptable in case study research, especially, one that is exploratory in nature. The study was however careful to avoid an overreliance on documentation, not least because newspaper sources may lack objectivity.



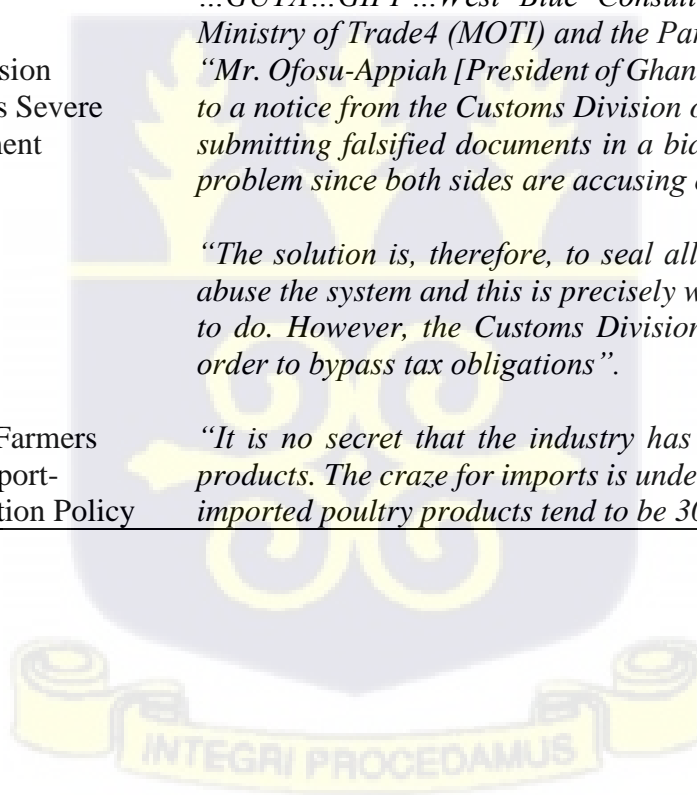
Table 6. 2: National Newspapers Excerpts Summary

Date	Reference	Caption	Excerpt
15/10/18	Business & Financial Times, Pg 40	We Need Equitable Trade Rules – GIHOC MD	<i>“Ghana needs to also start putting impediments on imports from certain countries which have put similar ones in the way of exports from the country”</i>
12/09/18	Business & Financial Times, Pg.1	Government Must Ensure Free & Fair Trade – Unilever Boss	<i>“In an interview with the B&FT on what the government must do to revive the country’s manufacturing sector, Mr. Yeo said: How do you make policies that are more business-friendly? From a taxation point of view all the way to regulatory agencies, how do you ensure that any product made in Ghana or imported into Ghana actually goes by the standard specifications that are put in place? We cannot build a strong manufacturing base if the regulatory systems are not working”</i>
28/08/18	Ghanaian Times, Pg 26	Former GIFF Presidents support CTN (Cargo Tracking Notes) ² Implementation	<i>“We, the undersigned former Presidents of GIFF are convinced that the implementation of the CTN will bring more benefits to the country such as ensuring a fair and level playing field for all industry players, not just for a few, as well as for national security purposes....”</i> <i>“In a related development, members of the Frozen Food Importers Association of Ghana have stated their support for the CTNs”</i> <i>“We believe it will be a level playing field in the current Customs duty payment and valuation regime.”</i>
28/08/18	Business & Financial Times, Pg 3	Confusion Hits Port over CTN* (Cargo Tracking Notes)	<i>The CTN is being introduced by the GRA to help in its revenue mobilization function and to block avenues for smuggling and related trade malfeasance at the country’s ports.</i> <i>“The directive basically requires that all imports into the country should be covered by the CTN which gives a valid description of the merchandise in a shipping container”</i>

² <https://www.saloodo.com/logistics>: Cargo Tracking Note (CTN), also known as a Waiver Certificate, is/was a mandatory shipping document for importing cargo to 25 African countries. The Cargo Tracking Note is designed to provide local Customs authorities with the required information and visibility about the import shipment.

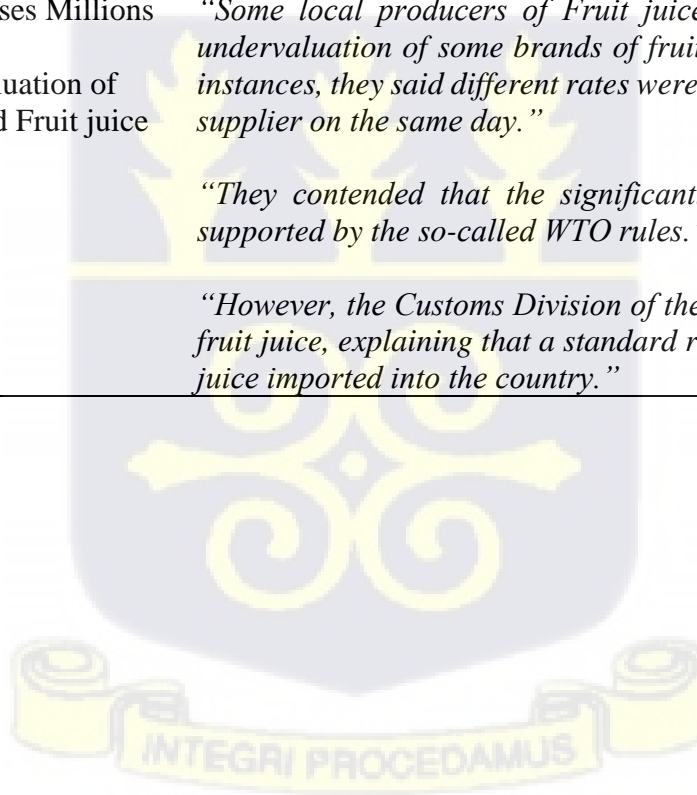
			<p><i>“Such a document will enable Customs to access all relevant information to help undertake valuation, keep track of all imports, and eradicate avenues for under-invoicing and smuggling”</i></p> <p><i>“... has observed that the lack of discipline and incessant corruption has made it impossible for the country to use import duties and tariffs as economic tools to curtail cheap imports and stimulate growth in the local industries”</i></p>
2/08/18	Daily Graphic’/Business, Pg 25	Corruption, Indiscipline killing Industrialization – Oteng -Gyasi	<p><i>“He mentioned the pervasive evasion of import duties, fake invoicing, misdescription of goods, undervaluation and mislabeling of imported products as some of the strategies used by some criminal minds to dodge taxes and subsequently flood the market with cheap imports, which then lead to the collapse of indigenous factories.’</i></p> <p><i>“As a result, he said, it was sad that when people ask for steps to be taken to help rid the system of these criminal activities, “we get bogged down by Cargo Tracking Note (CTN) and we have trade associations fighting over it.”</i></p>
23/07/18	Business & Financial Times, Pg 3	Rice Importers Stealing Millions from Government	<i>“Investigations by the B&FT have revealed that rice importers in the country are cheating and making away with over US\$21million annually - mainly through under-declaration and misclassification of import merchandise”</i>
20/07/18	Business & Financial Times, Pg 2	Local Rice Industry Backs Cargo Tracking Notes (CTN)	<i>“Local rice industry players have backed the government's decision to implement what is known as CTN, aimed at preventing importers from, under-declaring their goods, saying it will enhance fairness in the rice market and ensure both local and foreign rice are sold at their right prices.”</i>
30/06/17	Daily Graphic /Business, Pg 23	High Charges Impede Trade – USAID Report	<i>“The Study by the USAID (The United States Agency for International Development) is one of the ‘benchmark’ guidelines outlined in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). The study recounted “a situation where an importer paid GHS7,139 in official and unofficial fees, plus GHS30,734 in duties and Value added tax (VAT), to import perishable goods valued at GHS69,250 through the Tema Port....of the amount paid, the report found out that only GHS1,595 was the official fee for services rendered”</i>

2/03/17	Business & Financial Times, Pg 3	Customs Officers Trained on Fraudulent Document Detection	<p><i>“Detection of fraudulent documents submitted by clearing agents [freight forwarders] to officials of the Customs Division of the GRA has been identified as a major challenge to the Customs Division”</i></p> <p><i>“The facilitator of the training.....called on Customs Officers to reject fictitious documents”</i></p>
24/02/17	Business & Financial Times, Pg 15	International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Hails New Entry Agreement	<p><i>“The ICC has welcomed the entry into force of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).”</i><i>“The ICC has been a leading proponent of the TFA, playing a key role in the 2013 negotiations that led to the agreement and working closely with the WTO and other international organizations to coordinate and support the deal’s implementation”</i></p>
16/02/2017	Business & Financial Times, Pg 5	Tax Evasion Deserves Severe Punishment	<p><i>“The ICC Ghana Secretary.....said ICC Ghana, with the support of AGI... ..GUTA...GIFF...West Blue Consulting, Ghana Shippers Authority... encouraged the Ministry of Trade4 (MOTI) and the Parliament of Ghana to ratify the TFA”</i></p> <p><i>“Mr. Ofosu-Appiah [President of Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders – GIFF], is reacting to a notice from the Customs Division of GRA which cautioned shippers and traders against submitting falsified documents in a bid to outsmart Customs officials. There seems to be a problem since both sides are accusing each other of being responsible for the loopholes.”</i></p> <p><i>“The solution is, therefore, to seal all perceived loopholes so that it would be difficult to abuse the system and this is precisely what GCNET and West Blue Consulting are supposed to do. However, the Customs Division claims falsified documents are being presented in order to bypass tax obligations”.</i></p>
9/6/16	Daily Graphic’/Business, Pg 34	Poultry Farmers want Import-Substitution Policy	<p><i>“It is no secret that the industry has lost ground to imported chicken and other poultry products. The craze for imports is understandable when one takes cognizance of the fact that imported poultry products tend to be 30-40% cheaper than locally produced chicken.”</i></p>



24/05/16	Business & Financial Times, Pg 4	Africa Losses US\$38 Billion to Tax Evasion – Report	<p><i>“The African Progress Panel has reported that Africa lost over 38 billion of tax revenue to trade mispricing (a form of tax evasion). Trade mispricing is the deliberate over-invoicing of exports and under-invoicing of imports by entities in a country usually for the purpose of avoiding paying tax or levies in that country.”</i></p> <p><i>“Another study by the Global Financial Integrity (GFI) on five African countries..... Ghana alone lost more than 14 billion in misstated over the entire 10-year period in which the study was carried out (2001-2011). Trade is-invoicing is perhaps the most serious economic issue plaguing these countries.” – GFI president Raymond Baker</i></p>
21/04/15	Daily Graphic, Pg 3	State Loses Millions – from undervaluation of Imported Fruit juice	<p><i>“Some local producers of Fruit juice have decried what they describe as a consistent undervaluation of some brands of fruit juice by local importers at the Tema Port. In some instances, they said different rates were charged for the same brand of product from the same supplier on the same day.”</i></p> <p><i>“They contended that the significantly different values that were quoted could not be supported by the so-called WTO rules.”</i></p> <p><i>“However, the Customs Division of the GRA has dismissed the claims of local producers of fruit juice, explaining that a standard rate of 20% is charged as import tax on a liter of fruit juice imported into the country.”</i></p>

Source: Various National Newspapers



6.3.2 WTO, WCO and GRA Sources

The documents presented in this section corroborate mentions and references made in the interviews, as well as findings from the GRA-Customs division by providing specific details from official sources.

ARTICLE VII OF THE GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE 1994

Valuation for Customs Purposes

1. The contracting parties recognize the validity of the general principles of valuation set forth in the following paragraphs of this Article, and they undertake to give effect to such principles, in respect of all products subject to duties or other charges or restrictions on importation and exportation based upon or regulated in any manner by value. Moreover, they shall, upon a request by another contracting party review the operation of any of their laws or regulations relating to value for customs purposes in the light of these principles. The CONTRACTING PARTIES may request from contracting parties reports on steps taken by them in pursuance of the provisions of this Article.

2. (a) The value for customs purposes of imported merchandise should be based on the actual value of the imported merchandise on which duty is assessed, or of like merchandise, and should not be based on the value of merchandise of national origin or on arbitrary or fictitious values.

(b) "Actual value" should be the price at which, at a time and place determined by the legislation of the country of importation, such or like merchandise is sold or offered for sale in the ordinary course of trade under fully competitive conditions. To the extent to which the price of such or like merchandise is governed by the quantity in a particular transaction, the price to be considered should uniformly be related to either (i) comparable quantities, or (ii) quantities not less favorable to importers than those in which the greater volume of the merchandise is sold in the trade between the countries of exportation and importation.

(c) When the actual value is not ascertainable in accordance with sub-paragraph (b) of this paragraph, the value for customs purposes should be based on the nearest ascertainable equivalent of such value.

3. The value for customs purposes of any imported product should not include the amount of any internal tax, applicable within the country of origin or export, from which the imported product has been exempted or has been or will be relieved by means of refund.

4. (a) Except as otherwise provided for in this paragraph, where it is necessary for the purposes of paragraph 2 of this Article for a contracting party to convert into its own currency a price expressed in the currency of another country, the conversion rate of exchange to be used shall be based, for each currency involved, on the par value as established pursuant to the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund or on the rate of exchange recognized by the Fund, or on the par value established in accordance with a special exchange agreement entered into pursuant to Article XV of this Agreement.

(b) Where no such established par value and no such recognized rate of exchange exist, the conversion rate shall reflect effectively the current value of such currency in commercial transactions.

(c) The CONTRACTING PARTIES, in agreement with the International Monetary Fund, shall formulate rules governing the conversion by contracting parties of any foreign currency in respect of which multiple rates of exchange are maintained consistently with the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund. Any contracting party may apply such rules in respect of such foreign currencies for the purposes of paragraph 2 of this Article as an alternative to the use of par values. Until such rules are adopted by the Contracting Parties, any contracting party may employ, in respect of any such foreign currency, rules of conversion for the purposes of paragraph 2 of this Article which are designed to reflect effectively the value of such foreign currency in commercial transactions.

Figure 6. 1: The WTO Agreement on Customs Valuation (WTO-ACV)
Source: WCOOMD (World Customs Organisation)

STANDARDS ON PROCEDURES RELATING TO APPEALS AND REVIEW

Traders directly affected by a decision or omission by customs are to receive an explanation of reasons, and will have the right to appeal the decision.

TRANSPARENCY, IMPARTIALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION AT THE BORDER CROSSING

Governments will publish notifications relating to procedures on the control of foods, beverages or feedstuffs at the border crossing, including offering the possibility of a second opinion when consignments are deemed unsafe.

RULES ON FEES AND CHARGES RELATING TO EXPORTS/IMPORTS

Fees and charges relating to imports and exports will be limited to the approximate costs of the services rendered. Any penalties for breach of laws or regulations will be proportional to the breach, and the collection and assessment of penalties and duties will be guarded against conflicts of interest.

RELEASE AND CLEARANCE OF GOODS

Customs procedures for the release and clearance of goods for import, export or transit will be standardized and improved. This includes commitments to maximize technology use, simplify rules as appropriate for authorized traders, publish release times, and encourage risk management and audit-based control in the inspection of cargo.

RULES ENCOURAGING FREEDOM OF TRANSIT

Governments are encouraged to improve transit of goods to other countries, including providing dedicated transit

lanes, minimizing transit documentation requirements, and allowing advance filing for processing of documents.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN CUSTOMS

Governments are to share information when customs requests information from another customs authority, particularly relating to verification of import or export declarations. Development of voluntary compliance systems allowing self-correction by business without penalty is encouraged.

CONSULTATION ON TRADE FACILITATION REFORMS

Each government is required to form or maintain a National Committee for Trade Facilitation in order to coordinate the implementation of the agreement. Most governments are consulting with both public stakeholders and the business community as they prepare for the implementation of trade facilitation reforms. The WTO Trade Facilitation Committee serves as a permanent forum for WTO Members to share experiences related to the implementation of the TFA. The Committee's institutional arrangements and responsibilities can be found in Article 23 of the TFA.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FOR DEVELOPING AND LEAST DEVELOPED ECONOMIES

The TFA provides for staged implementation for developing and least developed economies, allowing longer periods for compliance depending on need. Affected economies can also link commitments to the receipt of technical assistance and capacity-building support, as monitored by the WTO.

ABOUT THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR TRADE FACILITATION

The Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation is a public-private partnership for trade-led growth. We believe that international trade should be simple, fast and cost-effective, creating new business opportunities, enabling greater economic and social development and reducing poverty. Our work is designed to help governments in developing and least developed countries implement the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement. We bring together governments and businesses as equal partners to identify opportunities to address customs delays and unnecessary red-tape at borders, and design and deploy reforms that deliver commercially quantifiable results.



www.tradefacilitation.org
@GATFnews

Figure 6. 2: The Trade Facilitation Agreement (Summary)

Source: Tradefacilitation.org (WTO)

▪ **OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURE**

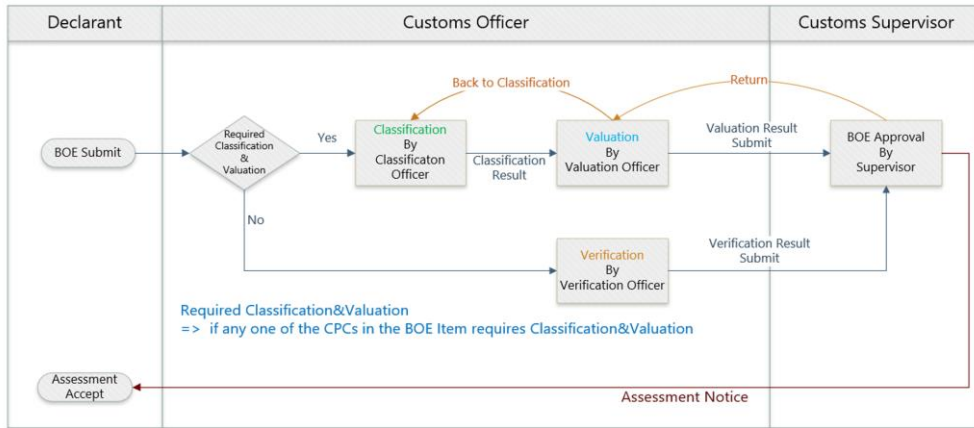


Figure 6. 3: Overview of Valuation Procedure
Source: GRA-Customs Division

▪ **VALUATION PROCEDURE AT CTSB**

The Customs Technical Services Bureau adopts the WTO GATT Agreement on Customs Valuation.

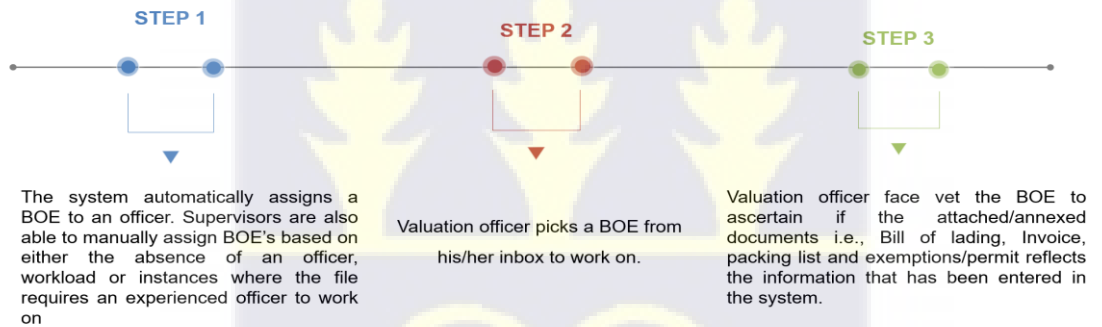


Figure 6. 4: Valuation Procedure at Customs Technical Services Bureau (Head Office)
Source: GRA-Customs Division



VALUATION APPROVAL PROCESS **GRA**

- The approval officer face vets the declaration to confirm the correctness of the HS codes applied, Value, Permits, CPC's and all regulatory requirements are complied with.

- The approval officer has the menu to reject the file back to the classification or the valuation officer to change the HS codes or to apply the correct value to the item.

- When the approval officer is satisfied with the process he/she goes ahead to approve the BOE.

Figure 6. 5: The Valuation Approval Process

Source: GRA- Customs Division



HS CODE	MERCHANDISE DESCRIPTION
0207.12.00.00	FROZEN POULTRY PRODUCTS (Chicken Whole/Full)
10	RICE Bulk cargo
20	FRUIT JUICE
1507.90.00.00	SOYA-BEAN OIL
1701.99.10.00	SUGAR
2002.90.11.00	BULK TOMATO PASTE
2002.90.20.00	CANNED TOMATO PASTE/PUREE
2523.29.00.00	CEMENT
3926.90.99.00	PVC CABLE TRUNKING
0207.14.00.00	FROZEN POULTRY PRODUCTS (Chicken Leg Quarters)
0207.27.00.00	FROZEN POULTRY PRODUCTS /Turkey Drumsticks
0303.54.00.00	FROZEN MACKEREL
1006.40.00.00	RICE Bulk cargo
1507.90.00.00	SOYA-BEAN OIL
1511.90.91.00	PALM OIL BASE COOKING OIL (5L & 1L)
1511.90.99.00	PALM OIL BASE COOKING OIL
1512.19.00.00	SUNFLOWER OIL
1517.10.00.00	MARGARINE
1604.13.10.00	CANNED SARDINE (IN TOMATO SAUCE/Veg Oil)
1604.13.90.00	CANNED SARDINE (IN TOMATO SAUCE/Veg Oil)
2002.90.19.00	BULK TOMATO PASTE
2202.99.10.00	LUCOZADE ENERGY DRINK /OTHER BEVERAGES
2202.99.90.00	Fruit nectar (12 x 1 Litre Packs) Don Simon
3916.20.00.00	PVC PROFILES
3925.90.00.00	PVC PANELS

Figure 6. 6: Random Selection of Import Merchandise for Valuation Assessment
Source: Field Data, 2023/GRA-Customs Division



Table 6. 3: Schedule of Revised Assessments on Selected Imports (June 2020 – March 2023)

Schedule of Revised Assessments on Selected Import Merchandise						
Period/Year	Aggregate Declared FOB Values (USD)	Aggregate Assessed FOB (USD)	% Change to Assessed FOB Value	Aggregate Declared CIF (USD)	*Aggregate Assessed CIF (USD)	% Change to Assessed CIF Value
June, 2020	671,657,729	797,197,254	18.69%	744,812,526	880,391,105	18.20%
2021	1,499,239,796	1,623,520,281	8.29%	1,655,720,597	1,794,044,267	8.35%
2022	1,423,253,581	1,597,166,499	12.22%	1,716,447,918	1,912,352,038	11.41%
March, 2023	290,836,245	346,402,012	19.11%	423,789,254	486,980,987	14.91%

* Dutiable Value

Source: Field Data, 2003/GRA-Customs Division

An embedded case study design may incorporate statistical data for a unit of analysis as presented above (Table 6.3) (Yin, 2018). The table represents findings based on a purposive selection of imported merchandise with some local industry market competition. Also, consistent with contemporary literature, the statistics collated here are limited to a unit of analysis, namely, the GRA- Customs Division. It is therefore not a holistic representation of the case issue.

6.4 Chapter Summary

The chapter presents findings on twelve (12) companies belonging to three (3) distinct embedded units of analysis, namely, the institution of the GRA-Customs division (GRA-Customs), some members of the Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders (FF), and, finally, a diverse group of Accra-based firm enterprises. Additionally, contextual input for this case study came from interviews and observations at a Tema-based Port terminal operator and stevedoring company. This brought the total number of participants interviewed to twenty. The companies within the firm enterprises group, cut across various sectors and industries. They range from manufacturing and export to importers of fast-moving merchandise for wholesale and retail commerce. What these respondents share in common, except one – a start-up local rice milling

company – is that they are all involved in the regular importation of merchandise and, thus, conversant with the valuation process. The rice miller (FL-3), however, through competition with imports in the marketplace may be affected by Customs valuation.

The well-appointed offices of at least two of the four freight forwarding companies (Agents) interviewed, as well as impressions formed from direct observations at the interviews, suggest that the respondents selected were not necessarily representative of the freight forwarder population. The respondents may be said to have a more professional, corporate outlook in carrying out their agency for clients at the GRA-Customs division.

At the GRA-Customs, the eight interviewed participants comprised two members of the management team, as well as a focus group of six officers, all from the specialised CTSB unit, directly responsible for valuation, country of origin verification and merchandise classification for import duty purposes.

The findings have been presented narratively, according to categories of data sources, namely, interviews, direct observations and documentation. These categories are further broken down into sub-categories of sources, except the direct observations section which comes with a brief descriptive summary.

The following chapter analyses the import valuation phenomena, and its influence on entrepreneurial opportunity perception and behaviour, with cognizance of the underlying theoretical basis of the study's objectives.



THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF DATA

7.0 Introduction

This chapter analyses the findings of the data collected from respondents in the GRA-Customs division, firm enterprise and the freight forwarder groups. They are individually and collectively key stakeholder groups in the import valuation process; presenting varying and often overlapping perspectives on the research questions raised. The named units of analysis are the object of the inquiry while recognizing any emerging contextual input. According to Bhattacharjee (2012), units of analysis may present as individuals, groups, organizations, countries and even objects, to mention a few.

The main reason for choosing a thematic analysis approach was how relatively simple it is to find and compile respondent patterns for the study (Lim, 2024). This is meant to make it easier to comprehend the topic of customs import valuation and how it could influence entrepreneurial orientation in Ghana. Thus, seven (7) themes were derived from the data collected in a manner consistent with the study's objectives. In all instances, the respondents selected for interviews within organisations were those most knowledgeable about the valuation process and/or better understood how it influenced the firm's opportunity perception, as well as its strategic posturing. Participant's perspectives would emerge as themes or be assigned to those predetermined. Finally, the most recurring notions are collated under the dominant themes.

7.1 Thematic Analyses of the Case

Themes were derived from representations of various participants, having been analyzed for salient points and similarities. Differences in narratives were noted to advance the discourse of import valuation and its influence on entrepreneurship in Ghana. To aid the textual analysis of the issues, coded texts were categorized under sub-themes that were in turn placed under main

themes. The themes were found to be consistent with the participant's responses and the relevant documentary support.

7.1.1 Hierarchy of Themes

The "Hierarchy of Themes" is a fundamental concept in the field of academic research and analysis. It refers to the structured organization of overarching ideas or subjects within a given study, with each theme encompassing a range of related subtopics or concepts. This hierarchical framework aids researchers in systematically exploring and understanding the multifaceted aspects of a subject, allowing for a more comprehensive and structured examination of the chosen area of inquiry. The hierarchy of themes serves as a valuable tool for researchers to delve deeper into their subject matter and make meaningful connections between various elements of their study.



Table 7.1: Hierarchy of Themes

Code	Theme & Sub-Themes	Code	Theme & Sub-Themes	Code	Theme & Sub-Themes	Code	Theme & Sub-Themes
T 1	International Trade Regulatory Factors	T 2	Government Policy	T 3	Customs Internal Policy	T 4	Customs Resource Constraints
T 1.1	WTO	T 2.1	Benchmarking Value	T 3.1	Risk Assessment Tools	T 4.1	Personnel Resources/Logistics
T 1.1.1	WTO - ACV	T 2.2	Discount Policy/BDV	T 3.2	Reference Valuation	T 4.2	IT Infrastructure
T1.1.1.1	Transaction Value	T 2.3	Revenue Targets	T 3.3	Stakeholder Education		
T 1.1.2	WTO TFA	T 2.4	Trade Facilitation				
T1.1.2.1	Advance Ruling	T 2.5	Revenue Targets				
T 1.2	WCO						
T 5	Compliance Level	T 6	Customs Professionalism	T 7	Market Imperatives		
T 5.1	Documentary Integrity	T6.1	Transparency in Valuation	T7.1	Price Competition		
T 5.2	Perception of Importer	T6.2	Diligence & Competence	T7.2	Business Profitability/Viability		

Source: Field Data, 2023

7.1.2 Thematic Analyses of The Case Interviews

This section of the study looks at the core narratives and insights derived from the in-depth case interviews conducted. Through a systematic analysis, recurring patterns emerge as unique perspectives and key themes from the voices of the interviewees. These findings provide a rich and often nuanced understanding of the subject matter, offering valuable insights that contribute to the overarching research objectives. The study explores here the fundamental components that form the basis of the research framework. The themes represent the specific aspects or

levels of analysis that will be explored to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. By identifying and elucidating the themes, the study aims to provide a structured and purposeful approach to the investigation; allowing the study to uncover insights and patterns within each unit of analysis, and ultimately contributing to a richer exploration of the research question at hand.

Table 7. 2: Themes of Units of Analyses

Respondent Code	Units of Analyses/Respondents	Sector	Main Themes
GRA GRA-1 GRA-2 GRA-FG	GRA- Customs Division Senior Officer (1) Senior Officer (2) Focus Group	Revenue Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ International Trade ▪ Regulatory factors ▪ Government Policy ▪ Customs Internal Policy ▪ Customs Resources ▪ Compliance Level
FF FF-1 FF-2 FF-3 FF-4	Freight Forwarders GIFF Member “ “ “	Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government Policy ▪ Perception of Customs ▪ Professionalism
FL FL-1 FL-2 FL-3 FL-4 FL-5 FL-6	Firm-level Enterprises Electrical Cable & Conductors Aluminum Cooking Utensils Rice Milling Agro-Chemicals FMCG - Electrical Merchandise FMCG – Packaged Foods	Manufacturing/Export “ Miller/Wholesaler Wholesaler/Retailer “ “	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government Policy ▪ Perception of Customs ▪ Professionalism ▪ Market Imperatives

Source: Field data, 2023

7.1.2.1 International Trade Regulatory Factors

Relevant Sub-Themes: WTO, WCO, WTO-ACV and Transaction Value

Chalfin (2006) cites Ghana as both the location and context for a contemporary anthropological inquiry on the subject of Global Customs Regimes. The paper informs that the Agreement on

Customs Valuation (WTO-ACV) with its “transaction value” rule, and related provisions, is the basis for import valuation in Ghana and elsewhere.

Excerpts and Comments:

➤ GRA-2:

Respondent describes how the WTO-ACV, to which Ghana is a signatory, influences GRA-Customs’ import merchandise valuation practices:

“Yes, we are supposed to implement all the twenty-four articles of the WTO-ACV [Agreement on Customs Valuation], even though developing countries were given a five-year delay to be able to resolve all their issues. But as developing countries, when the agreement was being put together, we didn’t show any interest at the time or we didn’t have the opportunity to make any inputs so it looks like the agreement favours the developed countries more than we developing countries.”

The preceding are sentiments of near-resignation expressed by a senior Customs official on the reach and influence of WTO (and its implementing affiliate, the WCO) that strengthen Chalfin's (2006) assertion that: “It was my experience in Ghana and, to a lesser extent, South Africa that allowed me to understand the tremendous bearing of the WTO/WCO provisions on the operations and aspirations of individual Customs officers and the national Customs administrations.”

➤ GRA-FG:

The question of how the WTO/WCO, through its instruments (in this instance the WTO-ACV), influence import valuation practices in Ghana is further elucidated by respondents of the GRA focus group:

“Transaction Value is one of the values, it is a primary value. They [i.e. the WTO/WCO] did not say, mandatorily, we have to use the ‘transaction value’ rule. If you [i.e. the Customs Officer] do not accept the transaction value, you sequentially and hierarchically move from Method 1(of the WTO-ACV) to the next acceptable Method.”

It is observed here that while the influence of applying the “transaction value” – the “primary value” method - is highlighted in the case findings, due to its peculiar implementation

challenges, the broad dependence on the WTO/WCO “rules of the game” by GRA-Customs, presents itself now and again, regardless of which ACV method is being applied to a BOE declaration.

➤ GRA-2:

In a further demonstration of the multilateral group’s direct influence over import valuation policy and practices in Ghana:

“... the WCO came out with a ruling that all [Customs] administrations wean themselves from the DICs [Destination Inspection Companies] and do their own valuation and classification, so Customs administration at the time decided that they will establish a unit: Customs Technical Services Bureau (CTSB), for that unit to take over the functions of the DICs so that classification, valuation and origin determination will be done by Customs itself.”

The policy-shaping reach of multilateral governance (i.e. the WCO) within the valuation framework (WTO-ACV) of a national Customs administration, such as the GRA-Customs division, is apparent here.

Relevant Theoretical Constructs:

Normative Isomorphism; Coercive Isomorphism and Institutional Voids

7.1.2.2 Government Policy

Relevant Sub-Themes: Benchmarking, Discount Policy, Risk Management Tools, WCO, WTO Compliance Level, Reference Pricing/Risk Assessment Tools and Revenue Targets

The study reveals the dilemma the GRA authority faces reporting to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) on matters relating to trade facilitation, and to the Ministry of Finance (MOF), on revenue-generating issues, even though both areas are operationally linked. This may lead to policy tensions, even paralysis, that influence import valuation guidelines.

Excerpts and Comments:

➤ GRA-1:

On the subject of the valuation of imported poultry vis-a-vis the viability of the local poultry sector:

“You know this is one area where we have paid particular attention to as far as valuation is concerned because of the sensitive nature of the industry as against our local production that you spoke about. So, we know the difficulties that it can create for the government. So, it is one area that we are so serious about benchmarking. Yes, so that people don’t bring them in at very cheap or low prices and then come and destroy the local industry.”

Yet, the Benchmark Values Discount (BVD) Policy is a key example of a government’s direct intervention in GRA-Customs valuation practices.

The officer concedes that:

“It is [BVD] not part of the agreement [WTO-ACV] let me be sincere with you, you see. But these are risk management tools that countries can develop for themselves which are not bad in this case, especially with WCO; but as far as WTO is concerned there is nothing like that.”

The officer elaborates further on the reason for the benchmark approach in the valuation procedure:

“..... because we are implementing, we know the difficulties we are facing and we have to devise methods to avert those difficulties that we face on the ground”.

Nonetheless, prior to the introduction of the BVD policy in Ghana, it is apparent that the GRA-Customs were applying reference or minimum pricing in import value assessments, otherwise known as the benchmark Values. Selected items are supposedly benchmarked to some “prevailing world market” prices as a risk management tool to reflect the true market dynamics of those commodities. According to GRA, however, the benchmark values are not meant to replace or substitute transaction values. They are only used when the conditions for the acceptance of the transactional values are not met.

➤ GRA-2:

Consider the following from the officer respondent:

“...It was a discount policy but because people used to complain the benchmark values were so high, so they named it benchmark policy. So, the discount was supposed to be only on benchmark items. The items that we have earmarked, were items that yield very high revenue. Like rice, chicken, frozen items, and cooking oil. So, we established these values as a guide. So, in practice, it means if we determine the value then we discount it by 50% so it is not the people's values but the values that we determine then we give a discount. So, they are just risk assessment tools that we use for valuation. But the benchmark policy states that if you determine the customs value, discount it by 50%

Interviewer: isn't that going against the WTO-ACV?

“... but this one is a government policy so you do your valuation according to the WTO valuation then you discount it by 50%, so if it is the transaction value you accept, you discount it by 50%.”

Interviewer: did you get any feedback from the WTO?

“Because it is a government policy, it doesn't go to WCO or WTO it is a government policy the government determines and it is in the agreement. For certain things, it is the government that determines what they want to do.”

Continuing:

“So, the government determined that they wanted to give their people a discount on the Customs valuation to ease their problems a bit. Because at the time prices were so high and exchange rates were so high to ease the suffering of the citizenry, they decided that let's do this to cushion them a bit and now the government has realized that it is going against them so they want to take it off and the people are saying oh no the hardship is still there so don't take it away, so now they have reduced it to 30% and 10%.”

Relevant Theoretical Construct: Institutional Voids

7.1.2.3 Customs Internal Policy

Relevant Sub-themes: WTO, WTO-CVA, Reference Pricing/Risk Management Tools and Revenue Targets

A policy is a formalised act with a pre-agreed objective that is approved or sanctioned by an institutional body or authority (Delaney, 2000). GRA-Customs policy extracts and procedures regarding import valuation were obtained from documentation and interview transcripts incorporated into the findings. (See Chapter 6: Fig 6.3, 6.4 & 6.5).

Excerpts and Comments:

➤ GRA-FG:

An officer of the focus group volunteers:

“We are supposed to revise our database [of import merchandise values] every three months, ideally. But bear in mind that the government also has its policy pertaining to how it wants its revenue targets to be achieved. The WTO rules state that if you want to rely on the value [in the database], the value must be within a 90-day period because trade-wise a lot of things change, so three months will be reasonable for the price to remain or change. But as to how regularly we update our values here generally; it is done on specific commodities. It also depends on the risk involved with the commodity, if not we do not really”

Relevant Theoretical Construct: Institutional Voids

7.1.2.4 Customs Resource Constraints

Relevant Sub-themes: WTO, WTO-CVA, Trade Facilitation, Reference Pricing,

Personnel Resources/Logistics, Transparency in Valuation, Diligence and Competence,

IT Infrastructure, Price Competition, Business and Profitability/Viability

The responses collated from the interviews shed light on the challenges faced by Customs administrations in effectively carrying out their tasks. The insightful and lively focus group discussions, for example, highlighted the financial, technological, and human resource limitations that hinder GRA-Customs operations. In the following analyses, the author will delve into some of the key findings and potential means to address these constraints, with the aim to enhance customs efficiency and favourably bolster international trade.

Excerpts and Comments:

➤ GRA- FG:

The theme of Customs Resource Constraints influences and overlaps other themed findings such as the effectiveness of GRA-Customs' internal policies, the implementation of government policies, as well as the bureaucratic capacity for adherence to the multilateral trade "rules of the game". This is reflected in the following focus group (FG) extract:

"The question is whether the WTO took our situation into context before coming out with the [valuation] policies. It is a yes and a No! Yes, in the sense that they gave us [valuation] Method 1 [transaction value], which is based on the documents presented [by the importer] and its genuineness. It requires us to accept or you the importer will have to accept our value in cases where items are questionable. We also have other methods that we utilize if the importer has reason not to accept the determined value. So, in our setting, we base most of our valuation on the other methods because the invoices, sometimes even the bill of lading presented are not genuine. So, yes, they took that into consideration and that is how we have other [Valuation] methods 2,3 and others."

The preceding response sheds light on the reality of time constraint officers face in light of the 90% green channel algorithm, and the 48-hour BOE turnaround (key performance indicator – KPI).

More from the FG:

"The reference prices, if you look at them very well, they fall under Method 3. This is because for us to pick a reference price, it is a price value of a similar good.....the process requires that you have to go to the database and check all the time. If you are checking all the time, it reduces your efficiency and wastes your time."

Responding to the question of the reliability of the aforementioned database, the respondent overlaps into the sub-themes of fairness, diligence and professionalism in valuation as follows:

"Well, it [reference price database] is supposed to be revised every three months but looking at what happens on the international trade level, if most of them have not undergone any changes, then there is no need to revise it. You just have to study it and compare whether what you have now is what is existing, so if there is no big change, we

do not change but if there are major changes then we also follow suit to make changes as well.”

➤ GRA-1:

The senior officer, however, offers a different, concerning narrative on database integrity:

“It borders on resource.....when we go out there....and all the benchmark values that we have done.....(I have been part of the teams that did it). We have to go out of site to do the work for about one week. Also, we need certain resources, access to certain websites, commodity sites which we should subscribe to and it is a lot of money to be paid.”

➤ FL-1(B):

The respondent is the logistics manager for a local manufacturer of high-quality electrical cables. His response is to an open-ended question about GRA’s approach to import valuation:

“.....It is because our Customs officers do not know the difference between, let’s say, a medium voltage cable and a low voltage cable. If somebody is importing one kilometer of a medium voltage cable and then another person is importing one kilometer of a low voltage cable. The value difference is about a hundred times the other.

He continues:

“So, if I am bringing in a medium voltage cable and I say it is a low voltage cable, I have drastically reduced the value by a hundred percent, erm hundred times. So, that is where the valuation process and then the umm, the umm, ‘black box’ thing is a problem. And because the customs officer wants to do his work and leave, he may not necessarily have to go into the details, and he doesn’t also know that when somebody brings in an armoured cable, underground cable, it is far more expensive than erm, cable for light. He’ll just give it any value at all that is declared [revised value].”

Relevant Theoretical Construct: Institutional Voids

7.1.2.5 Compliance Level

Relevant Sub-themes: WTO, WTO-CVA and Transaction Value

The responses from the interview on compliance reveal invaluable insights into the adherence to regulatory standards and the internal policies within the Customs administration. These

findings shed light on the effectiveness of compliance measures, potential areas for improvement, and the overall commitment to ethical standards within the GRA-Customs. In this section, the researcher highlights key takeaways from the interview, offering a glimpse into the compliance landscape and its implications for the future.

Excerpts and Comments:

➤ GRA-1:

The reports of difficulties from Customs officers on importer compliance are consistent, and border on frustration, as indicated in this extract from an officer respondent:

“There are a lot of challenges.....the primary objective of the valuation system is the transaction value. It means that when you [the importer] buy goods, by the definition of the transaction value, it is the price actually paid or payable at where the goods are in the country of exportation with the necessary adjustments as per Article 8. To a very great extent, we are supposed to use that in determining the customs value. In practice it is very difficult...but you know; the compliance level is very low. It means that the traders we deal with or the economic operators we deal with don't tell us the truth. If you see what they present to us..... You know, over here we don't see the goods physically, we examine their documentation to make a determination.”

The above is supported in the literature as follows:

“Evasion of duty through undervaluation or misdescription of imports is an acute problem for Customs administration in developing countries. King et al. (2003) estimates widespread under-invoicing in Nepal and also indicates a lack of effective valuation procedures in place in Nepal”
- Rajkarnikar, Pushpa Raj (2006)

➤ GRA-FG:

A member of the GRA-Customs' focus group of six respondents added, as further evidence, that:

“If we are able to stop ‘challenged invoices’, then our job will become very effective. Most importers do not give original invoices to their agents to clear for them and that is a big challenge for us. If original invoices are given, it means the processes will be effective.”

Relevant Theoretical Constructs: Institutional Voids, Mimetic Isomorphism

7.1.2.6 Customs Professionalism

Relevant Sub-themes: Transparency in Valuation, Diligence and Competence, Price Competition, Business Profitability/Viability and Compliance level

Emerging sub-themes of transparency, diligence and competence in the conduct of assigned duties by GRA officers, form the building blocks of Customs professionalism in the analysis. Professionalism in Customs administration is pivotal to ensuring the smooth and efficient flow of international trade, safeguarding national security, and upholding the integrity of Customs procedures. The section explores the key elements of ethical standards, public service, regulatory compliance, and the role of technology in enhancing Customs operations. It aims to shed light on the importance of professionalism in maintaining the trust and credibility of Customs administrations.

Excerpts and Comments:

➤ FF-1:

A freight forwarder commented as follows in response to an open-ended question on challenges they face in their day-to-day duties:

“When a client [importer] comes to me and I am able to clear [a consignment] say under USD 100 dollars per unit [assessed value], and then he goes to somebody else [a competitor freight forwarder] and the other company is able to clear under, say, USD50 per unit [assessed value], definitely I lose the business. The business goes to that agency the next time around. Because maybe that agent has a friend at Customs who manages to cut down the price[value]..... so whoever does it better gets the business.... but if there is a case where, as I said, a process is followed stringently - if it is 50 dollars [valuation] for this, 50 dollars everywhere across the board- there is no comparative advantage over anything.”

Relevant Theoretical Construct: Institutional Voids, Mimetic Isomorphism

7.1.2.7 Market Imperatives

Relevant Sub-themes: Documentary Integrity, Transparency in Valuation, Diligence and Competence, Price Competition, Business Profitability/Viability and Opportunity Perception.

Interview excerpts on the theme of market imperatives revealed insights into the dynamic landscape of the marketplace. From shifting consumer preferences to emerging technologies and the impact of global events, responses across the board shed light on the crucial factors that drive success and adaptation in today's competitive markets.

Excerpts and Comments:

➤ FL-1 (A):

Contemporary research brings to the fore what drives entrepreneurial behavior; the need to look at history, society, and relevant rules. These factors create chances for both individuals and businesses alike, while defining the limits of what they can do (Welter & Smallbone, 2011)

Respondent's impression of import valuation on market competition:

“Outside of regular management meetings, there is a specific meeting where we consider, particularly, imported products [competition]. Because there are a lot of imported products coming through Ghana and what we have realized is thatokay, I will be frank.... the [value] declaration under which those items come in has no bearing on what it is. You will see, for example, that what we call house-wiring cables, we know for a fact what everybody [local manufacturer-competitors] who make them here sells them for. And there may be a five (5) to seven (7) per cent price differential. Meanwhile, somebody is importing house-wiring cable and the value declaration on the [BOE] entry..... and we actually subscribe officially to a source to provide us with the import information: the value on that entry declaration is one-third (1/3) of what we make it here at cost - i.e. factory cost. And so, for a long time, we just took this at face value that these guys [international exporters] might be that much cheaper..... but we began to interrogate it further to see. Actually, there is something not right, it doesn't make sense!”

Indications and inferences from entrepreneur respondents for the study have reinforced the notion of commercial opportunities having historical roots, thus, often, local characteristics. Hence, it can be deduced from the literature (Welter & Smallbone, 2011), that, over time, entrepreneurs would tend to identify, discover, and, subsequently, exploit local opportunities based on historical learnings, experience and intuition as has been expressed in the preceding excerpt.

➤ GRA-1:

A senior Customs officer expounds on valuation challenges as follows:

“If you look at Article 1 which deals with the transactions, while there are four conditions to consider, it also encourages us not to have doubts about the BOE being presented to you. Meanwhile, you [declarants] will go and buy goods and sit in your office and prepare another invoice and submit it to me. Should I accept it or not as a transaction value? And we see over 80% of these. Not scientifically but conservatively, I can tell you that it is only about 10% of the people we deal with that tell us the true value at which they buy the goods.”

Here again, we see overlapping sub-themes of WTO-ACV’s transaction value rule exacerbating compliance issues by way of documentary integrity challenges that ultimately present as price competition in the marketplace.

Relevant Theoretical Constructs: Institutional Voids, Mimetic Isomorphism

7.1.2.8 Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO)

Relevant Sub-themes: Trade Facilitation, Price Competition, Product Branding, Documentary Integrity, Transparency in Valuation and Business Profitability/Viability.

The responses gathered from the transcripts regarding EO disposition and behaviour provide learning into the mindset of these entrepreneurs. The interview insights shed light on firms’ willingness to take calculated risks, innovate, and proactively seek business opportunities. While some respondent’s perspectives on EO highlight the pivotal role it plays in shaping firm decision making, others seem to strive to adapt to the uneven field status quo that uncertain import valuation engenders.

Excerpts and Comments:

➤ FL-1 (A):

“My company’s vision is really built around the aspiration to build an industrial giant in Africa. We intend to achieve this using the best of our talents, as much as possible build an integrated local value chain in terms of how we get our inputs into our production, and by being extremely innovative in finding ways in which we can adapt to use global best practices within the African context”.

The firm's outlook here is consistent with an EO characterization. The literature describes FLE as a broad organizational philosophy, and also viewed as a management style or orientation. According to Rauch et al. (2009) and Saeed et al. (2014), entrepreneurial orientation (EO) is the most widely accepted measurement of FLE.

In spite of the respondent's entrepreneurial disposition, he expresses passionately the plant's concerns:

"... we have been fighting a battle to say to the government, that's not the right way to do it! Why should the [imports] have their way when we [local manufacturers] have the capacity? There are at least three major cable manufacturers in Ghana."

According to the case study findings, this incidentally award-winning firm enterprise has proved dynamic and innovative over a twenty-five-year period, serving the local market as well as exporting to the ECOWAS sub-region. On innovativeness, the company's posture has been to develop its own plant replacement parts, among others.

The managing director shares further on innovativeness:

"We have been designing for our environment. So, where a plant device specification is 200 – 240 volts range, we can successfully modify that to take as low as 120 volts to suit our fluctuating ECG current. So, we have been doing some local engineering adaptations to solve our peculiar challenges."

Kreiser and Davis (2010) proffer that "entrepreneurship is an opportunity-seeking and forward-looking perspective involving introducing new products or services ahead of the competition and acting in anticipation of future demand to create, change and shape the firm's environment".

Respondent continues:

"There is also innovation to, for example, build a cable that will treble the carrying capacity of our existing power networks. So, all the pylons you see, if we use the traditional cables, you require three pylons to achieve a trebling of the capacity. But with this cable manufacturing technology, we can do it on the same pathways and treble by restringing a new conductor. So, this is just an example of innovation at the product end which is ongoing."

➤ FL-3:

Respondent is an upstart agri-business that presents as a dynamic, proactive venture inclined to risk-taking and exhibits EO characteristics as well. The respondent-founder sheds light on these characteristics as follows:

“When we started the project [the agri-business] we were looking to do maize. We wanted to bring ‘Oblayo’ and ‘Ekuegbemi’ [varieties of packaged maize cereals] to the modern home at the breakfast table. We wanted to have ‘oblayo’ pre-cooked so you don’t need to soak it overnight before you cook it in the morning. Something you should be able to prepare in 10-15minutes and breakfast is ready for every family. We’re going to have cinnamon flavour and all kinds of novelties. That was the original concept and then do a bit of cornflakes because we produce a lot of corn in this country”.

Respondent continues with the EO mindset narrative:

“But there were challenges we saw with maize; we realized the cost of additional investments we needed to compete..... so, the idea of rice comes in Primary processing is already enough to be on the table. We’ll eat our rice just like that, just cook it, but you can have extruded snacks like rice pops, and you can have rice candy bars, all kinds of things can be done with chocolate which we find here. So, there is been a change in product focus.”

With the dynamic shift to rice milling, in the face of challenges, the respondent-owner of the venture shares his thoughts on Customs import valuation and his competition:

“As to whether someone is under-invoicing here or not has not been a major problem for us because we think that we still can be competitive on the marketand even if we can’t match the price, we should be able to apply branding to compensate for that. These rice imports are mostly ‘old crop’ consignments. We produce ‘fresh crop’ products for the local market.....when you position your brands right, there is room for you to deal with the issues of import even when the price is not an advantage for you.”

But then, the respondent, who is also an active member of the Ghana Rice Millers’ Association (GRMA) equivocates:

“I have a bigger interest in the rice industry, though, because it is not everybody that has the capacity to deal with the issues of branding. So, if you can’t deal with the issues

of branding, it means that the industry itself would have a major shock from things like the under-invoicing of [price-competitive] imports. So, we have to find other ways to get around it and that is what I mean by the matter is still a relevant matter. But actively today, what we [the plant] are constantly monitoring are the world market prices of the imported rice products, not necessarily the price program of our rivals for the local market”

Relevant Theoretical Construct: Institutional Voids

7.2 Documentation Analysis

The section below presents an analysis of the documents that were used for the study. Various newspapers are cited by publication dates, with captions and excerpts from the relevant paper; as well as theme and sub-themes, and the theoretical constructs that are used in the analysis.

7.2.1 Newspaper Sources

The newspaper sources provided reported insights into historical and contemporary highlights of the issue of import valuation and its ramifications on entrepreneurship. The analysis involved the review of various newspaper articles to observe relevant trends, shed light on public perception, media representation, and the evolving narratives around the topic of Customs import valuation. By searching these primary sources, the researcher seeks to enrich the inquiry with a broad understanding of how the media has influenced, and, simultaneously, reflected societal attitudes on valuation-related issues.



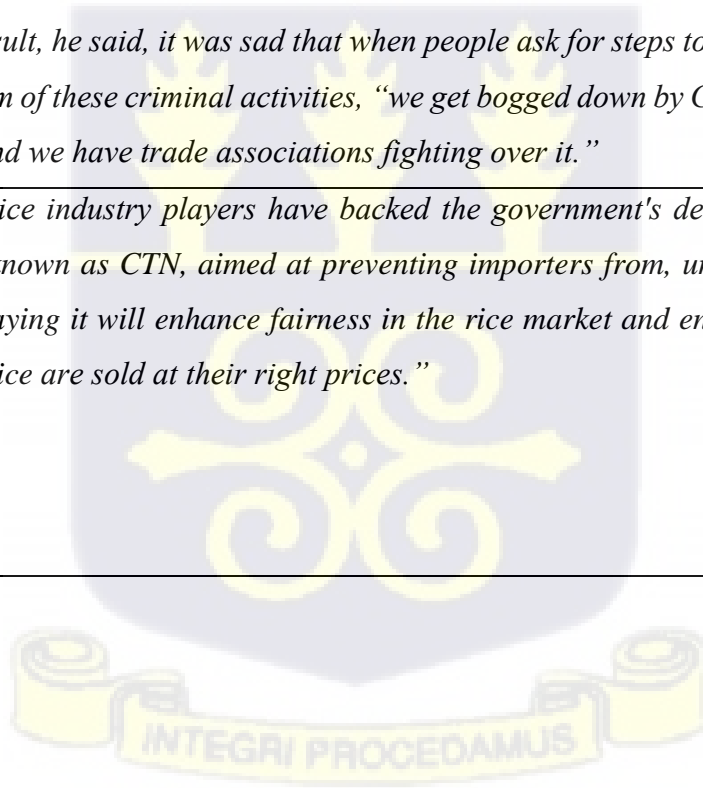
Table 7.2: National Newspaper Excerpt

Date	Reference	Caption	Excerpt	Theme/Sub-theme	Theoretical Constructs
21/04/2015	Daily Graphic, Pg 3	State Loses Millions – from undervaluation of Imported Fruit juice	<p><i>“Some local producers of Fruit juice have decried what they describe as a consistent undervaluation of some brands of fruit juice by local importers at the Tema Port. In some instances, they said different rates were charged for the same brand of product from the same supplier on the same day.”</i></p> <p><i>“They contended that the significantly different values that were quoted could not be supported by the so-called WTO rules.”</i></p> <p><i>“However, the Customs Division of the GRA has dismissed the claims of local producers of fruit juice, explaining that a standard rate of 20% is charged as import tax on a liter of fruit juice imported into the country.”</i></p>	<p>Transparency in Valuation</p> <p>Market Imperatives</p>	<p>Institutional Voids</p>
24/05/2016	Business & Financial Times, Pg 4	Africa Losses US\$38 Billion to Tax Evasion – Report	<p><i>“The African Progress Panel has reported that Africa lost over 38 billion of tax revenue to trade mispricing (a form of tax evasion). Trade mispricing is the deliberate over-invoicing of exports and under-invoicing of imports by entities in a country usually for the purpose of avoiding paying tax or levies in that country.”</i></p> <p><i>“Another study by the Global Financial Integrity (GFI) on five African countries..... Ghana alone lost more than 14 billion in misstated over the entire 10-year period in</i></p>	Compliance Level	

			<i>which the study was carried out (2001-2011). Trade is-invoicing is perhaps the most serious economic issue plaguing these countries.” – GFI president Raymond Baker</i>	Customs Professionalism	Institutional Voids
09/06/2016	Daily Graphic’/Business, Pg 34	Poultry Farmers want Import-Substitution Policy	<i>“It is no secret that the industry has lost ground to imported chicken and other poultry products. The craze for imports is understandable when one takes cognizance of the fact that imported poultry products tend to be 30-40% cheaper than locally produced chicken.”</i>	Market Imperatives	Institutional Voids
02/03/2017	Business & Financial Times, Pg 3	Customs Officers Trained on Fraudulent Document Detection	<i>“Detection of fraudulent documents submitted by clearing agents [freight forwarders] to officials of the Customs Division of the GRA has been identified as a major challenge to the Customs Division”</i> <i>“The facilitator of the training.....called on Customs Officers to reject fictitious documents”</i>	Customs Resource Constraints	
16/02/2017	Business & Financial Times, Pg 5	Tax Evasion Deserves Severe Punishment	<i>“Mr. Ofosu-Appiah [President of Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders – GIFF], is reacting to a notice from the Customs Division of GRA which cautioned shippers and traders against submitting falsified documents in a bid to outsmart Customs officials. There seems to be a problem since both sides are accusing each other of being responsible for the loopholes.”</i> <i>“The solution is, therefore, to seal all perceived loopholes so that it would be difficult to abuse the system and this is precisely what GCNET and West Blue Consulting are</i>	Compliance Level	Institutional Voids

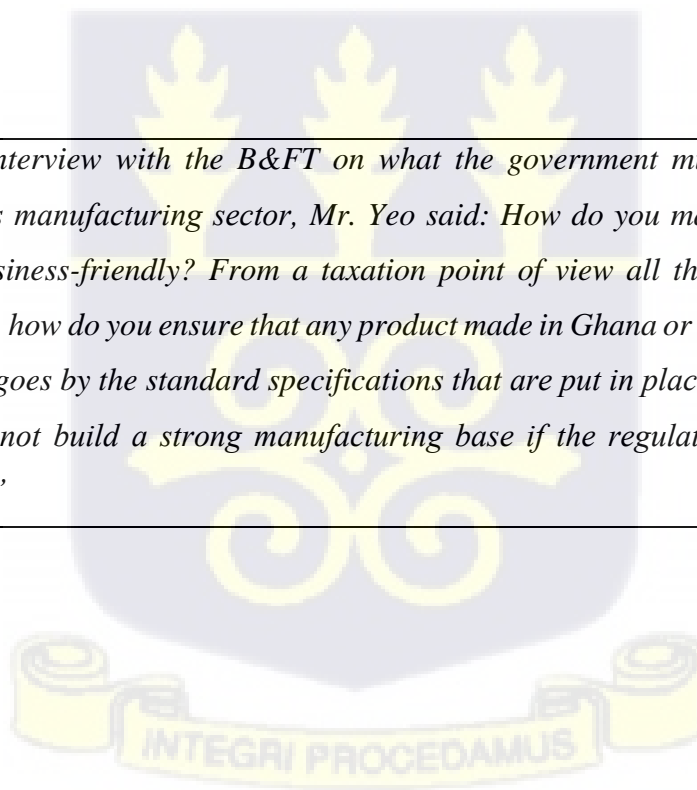
			<i>supposed to do. However, the Customs Division claims falsified documents are being presented in order to bypass tax obligations”.</i>	Customs Professionalism	
24/02/2017	Business & Financial Times, Pg 15	International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Hails New Entry Agreement	<p><i>“The ICC has welcomed the entry into force of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).”</i></p> <p><i>“The ICC has been a leading proponent of the TFA, playing a key role in the 2013 negotiations that led to the agreement and working closely with the WTO and other international organizations to coordinate and support the deal’s implementation”</i></p> <p><i>“The ICC Ghana Secretary.....said ICC Ghana, with the support of AGI... ..GUTA...GIFF...West Blue Consulting, Ghana Shippers Authority... encouraged the Ministry of Trade (MOTI) and the Parliament of Ghana to ratify the TFA”</i></p>	WTO TFA	Institutional Voids
30/06/2017	Daily Graphic /Business, Pg 23	High Charges Impede Trade – USAID Report	<p><i>“The Study by the USAID (The United States Agency for International Development) is one of the ‘benchmark’ guidelines outlined in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).</i></p> <p><i>The study recounted “a situation where an importer paid GHS7,139 in official and unofficial fees, plus GHS30,734 in duties and Value added tax (VAT), to import perishable goods valued at GHS69,250 through the Tema Port”</i></p> <p><i>“Of the amount paid, the report found out that only GHS1,595 was the official fee for services rendered”</i></p>	Customs Professionalism	Institutional Voids

02/08/2018	Daily Graphic'/Business, Pg 25	Corruption, Indiscipline killing Industrialization – Oteng-Gyasi	<p><i>“... has observed that the lack of discipline and incessant corruption has made it impossible for the country to use import duties and tariffs as economic tools to curtail cheap imports and stimulate growth in the local industries”</i></p> <p><i>“He mentioned the pervasive evasion of import duties, fake invoicing, misdescription of goods, undervaluation and mislabeling of imported products as some of the strategies used by some criminal minds to dodge taxes and subsequently flood the market with cheap imports, which then lead to the collapse of indigenous factories.”</i></p> <p><i>“As a result, he said, it was sad that when people ask for steps to be taken to help rid the system of these criminal activities, “we get bogged down by Cargo Tracking Note (CTN) and we have trade associations fighting over it.”</i></p>	Compliance Level Customs Professionalism	Institutional Voids
20/07/2018	Business & Financial Times, Pg 2	Local Rice Industry Backs Cargo Tracking Notes (CTN)	<p><i>“Local rice industry players have backed the government's decision to implement what is known as CTN, aimed at preventing importers from, under-declaring their goods, saying it will enhance fairness in the rice market and ensure both local and foreign rice are sold at their right prices.”</i></p>	Compliance Level Customs Professionalism Market Imperatives	Institutional Voids



23/07/2018	Business & Financial Times, Pg 3	Rice Importers Stealing Millions from Government	<i>“Investigations by the B&FT have revealed that rice importers in the country are cheating and making away with over US\$21million annually - mainly through under-declaration and misclassification of import merchandise”</i>	Compliance Level Customs Professionalism	Institutional Voids
28/08/2018	Business & Financial Times, Pg 3	Confusion Hits Port over CTN* (Cargo Tracking Notes)	<i>The CTN* is being introduced by the GRA to help in its revenue mobilization function and to block avenues for smuggling and related trade malfeasance at the country’s ports.</i> <i>“The directive basically requires that all imports into the country should be covered by the CTN which gives a valid description of the merchandise in a shipping container”</i> <i>“Such a document will enable Customs to access all relevant information to help undertake valuation, keep track of all imports, and eradicate avenues for under-invoicing and smuggling”</i>	Government Policy Risk Assessment Tools Documentary Integrity Transparency in Valuation	Institutional Voids
28/08/2018	Ghanaian Times, Pg 26	Former GIFF Presidents support	<i>“We, the undersigned former Presidents of GIFF are convinced that the implementation of the CTN will bring more benefits to the country such as ensuring a fair and level playing field for all industry players, not just for a few, as well as for national security purposes....”</i>	Documentary Integrity	Institutional Voids

		CTN (Cargo Tracking Notes) Implementation	<p><i>“In a related development, members of the Frozen Food Importers Association of Ghana have stated their support for the CTNs”</i></p> <p><i>“We believe it will be a level playing field in the current Customs duty payment and valuation regime.”</i></p>		
15/10/2018	Business & Financial Times, Pg 40	We Need Equitable Trade Rules – GIHOC MD	<i>“Ghana needs to also start putting impediments on imports from certain countries which have put similar ones in the way of exports from the country”</i>	Trade Facilitation	Institutional Voids
12/09/2018	Business & Financial Times, Pg 1	Government Must Ensure Free & Fair Trade – Unilever Boss	<p><i>“In an interview with the B&FT on what the government must do to revive the country’s manufacturing sector, Mr. Yeo said: How do you make policies that are more business-friendly? From a taxation point of view all the way to regulatory agencies, how do you ensure that any product made in Ghana or imported into Ghana actually goes by the standard specifications that are put in place?”</i></p> <p><i>“We cannot build a strong manufacturing base if the regulatory systems are not working”</i></p>	Trade Facilitation Business Profitability/Viability	Institutional Voids



7.2.2 Notes on a Schedule of Revised Assessments on Selected Imports

The above caption is important to the study findings. It represents a snapshot of an aggregated valuation assessment report on purposively selected merchandise imports over a given period.

The import items selected for the study (see Chapter 6: Fig 6.6) are often those with local industry competition such as milled rice, poultry products and electrical accessories. The schedule below depicts the common dichotomy in valuation perception by the parties involved: i.e. the expectation of the importing enterprise vis-à-vis the GRA-Customs' own assessment. Over time, cumulatively, the influence and impact of this gulf in valuation expectation may influence trade dynamics, economic data collection, thus policies; and entrepreneur environmental opportunity assessment. Hence, a deeper analysis of the intricacies of this schedule extract is pivotal to entrepreneurship and attendant policies. Once again, the schedule below throws further light on an entrepreneurship dilemma in the face of uncertainties in Customs import valuation in Ghana.

Table 7. 3: Schedule of Revised Assessments on Selected Imports (June '20 – March '23)

Period/Yr.	Aggregate Declared FOB Values (USD) (1)	Aggregate Assessed FOB values (USD) (2)	% Change to Assessed FOB Value	Aggregate Declared CIF Values (USD) (3)	*Aggregate Assessed CIF Values (USD) (4)	% Change to Assessed CIF Value
Jun-2020	671,657,729	797,197,254	18.69%	744,812,526	880,391,105	18.20%
2021	1,499,239,796	1,623,520,281	8.29%	1,655,720,597	1,794,044,267	8.35%
2022	1,423,253,581	1,597,166,499	12.22%	1,716,447,918	1,912,352,038	11.41%
Mar-2023	290,836,245	346,402,012	19.11%	423,789,254	486,980,987	14.91%

Source: GRA-Customs Division

* Dutiable Value

The exploratory study sought to obtain preliminary data from the source on an assortment of merchandise imports. The aggregated import items include frozen poultry, margarine, cooking oil, and milled rice to represent import competition for some local industries and entrepreneurs.

1. **Aggregate Declared FOB Values (USD)** – represent reported FOB values by import declarant (importer) via electronic submission to GRA-Customs Division

2. **Aggregate Assessed FOB values (USD)** - represents the revised or re-assessed FOB values by the GRA-Customs Division
3. **Aggregate Declared CIF (USD)** - represent reported CIF values by import declarant (importer) via electronic submission to GRA-Customs Division
4. **Aggregate Assessed CIF (USD)** - represents the revised or re-assessed CIF values by the GRA-Customs Div for tariff application purposes.

Table 7.4 indicates that the selected import items whose commercial invoices (via BOE) were electronically submitted to GRA-Customs for processing between June 2020 - March 2023 were reviewed upwards in value by between 8.35% and 18.20% for duty purposes.

7.3 Chapter Summary

The chapter on the thematic analysis of the study explores several key factors broadly influencing import trade dynamics and entrepreneurial disposition in Ghana. It primarily focuses on interview responses to various aspects of government policy, GRA-Customs internal policy, compliance levels, Customs professionalism, market imperatives and entrepreneurial orientation, as they relate to import valuation in Ghana. These themes are pivotal to shaping the import trade landscape and informing the learnings of entrepreneurs in this domain.

The chapter further elucidates and synthesizes responses from various stakeholders of the three units of analysis, as well as contextual input from a Tema-based port terminal operator and stevedore company. Additionally, it incorporates an analysis of documents such as relevant newspaper sources, as well as a "Schedule of Revised Assessments on Selected Imports." These documents serve as rich sources of information and provide some historical context to the thematic analysis.

In sum, the aforementioned analyses provide insight into the multifaceted influences that shape import trade in Ghana via GRA-Customs valuation assessments, and, thus, sets the context for entrepreneurial decision-making. The next chapter discusses in some depth the implications, recommendations and conclusions of the overall case study within the domain of entrepreneurship in Ghana.

DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

8.0 Introduction

The chapter draws a curtain on the issue-based, exploratory case study on Customs import valuation and its influence on entrepreneurial perceptions and disposition in Ghana. It began with a summary of the case study, followed by thematic discussions on the research findings in light of the reviewed literature. It is all structured according to the three research questions presented in the first chapter. The next section highlights the contributions and implications of the inquiry; followed by a structured reflection on the methodology based on the three units of analysis. Further reflections on the findings through the lens of institutional theory are presented just before the recommendations section. In light of the study's limitations, directions for future research are spelt out for guidance. Finally, the chapter ends with concluding remarks summarising the essence of this exploratory inquiry vis-a-vis its aims.

8.1 Summary of Research

The case study has been structured and presented in eight chapters to thematically explore how GRA-Customs' valuation of imported merchandise influences entrepreneurship in Ghana. This is accomplished through the following research objectives:

- I. To explore the influences that bear upon GRA-Customs' import valuation practices in Ghana
- II. To explore how GRA-Customs' import valuation practices influence firm-level opportunity perception.
- III. To explore how GRA-Customs' import valuation practices influence firm-level entrepreneurial orientation (EO).

The choice of an interpretative/constructivist research paradigm engendered a case study approach to facilitate insight into the issue-based phenomenon of import valuation and its influence on entrepreneurship in Ghana.

The introductory chapter sets the stage with a narrative on the research background. This encompasses government policies and attendant institutional challenges confronted by entrepreneurs in Ghana within a global trade regulatory framework. It is followed by the statement of the research problem, along with the gaps in the relevant literature to justify the inquiry. The research problem dovetails into the aims and questions the research endeavours to address. Next, is the scope of the study which touches on the empirical approach applied, as well as introduces relevant theoretical constructs and units of analysis. The second chapter looks broadly at the research context of Ghana by highlighting the country's economic profile, and presenting the institutional context as it relates to the import trade sector. The literature review chapter follows and focuses on aspects of the discipline's constructs of entrepreneurial orientation (EO), entrepreneurial opportunity and firm-level entrepreneurship (FLE). Also, the contextual constructs of trade liberalization and its governance are covered here. In the fourth chapter, the lens of institutional theory (IT) is employed in a literature review that covers the theoretical foundations of the case study. The research methodology is expounded on in chapter five and justifies the use of an interpretive/constructivist worldview, and its corresponding single case study design. Chapter six presents data primarily from the sampled participants of four groups, as well as documentary sources to address the three research questions of the study. This is followed by the synthesis of those findings through a thematic analysis in the seventh chapter. Finally, as indicated earlier, in this eighth and closing chapter, the entire thesis comes together in a series of thematic discussions linking the study's findings to the research objectives against the backdrop of existing literature. Then, the research contributions are outlined and recommendations for expanding future inquiries are made amidst an overall conclusion to the exploratory case study.

8.1.1 A Summary of the Research Findings

The "Summary of the Research Findings" section provides a concise overview of the key discoveries and insights derived from the inquiry conducted for this study. This segment distils the main findings and offers readers a succinct, informative glimpse of the research conclusions.

Table 8:1 below provides an overview of the study's trajectory before the discussion of the findings

Table 8.1: Summary of Case Study Findings

Research Questions (RQ)	RQ1 How is the GRA-Customs influenced in its import valuation practices?	RQ2 How do the GRA-Customs' import valuation practices influence entrepreneurial opportunity perception in Ghana?	RQ3 How do the GRA-Customs' import valuation practices influence entrepreneurial orientation (EO) in Ghana?
Relevant Themes			
International Trade Regulatory Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The WTO-CVA (Customs Valuation Agreement) ▪ The WCO Directives & Rulings ▪ The WTO – Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) 		
Government Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revenue Targets ▪ Benchmarking Values ▪ Discount Policy on Values ▪ Trade Facilitation 		
Customs Internal Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risk Assessment Tools ▪ Reference Valuation 		
Customs Resource Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personnel Resources/Logistics ▪ IT Infrastructure 		
Compliance Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documentary - Bill of Entry (BOE) Integrity ▪ Perception of Importer/Agent 		
Customs Professionalism		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transparency in Valuation ▪ Diligence and Competence 	
Market Imperatives		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Price Competition ▪ Business Profitability/Viability 	

Source: Field data, 2023

8.2 Discussions of Findings

Contemporary literature abounds with empirical evidence enumerating the difficult, dynamic environment encountered by entrepreneurial initiatives and activity in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This is often attributed to financial, human capital and infrastructure constraints, not to mention pervasive bureaucratic bottlenecks (Correa & Borja-Vega, 2013). Further evidence points to the effects of culture, history, values and education on entrepreneurial activity (Correa & Borja-Vega, 2013). Hence, Sorescu and Spanjol (2008) argue that firms in the region continue to face disproportionately greater risks of innovation failure compared to those in more developed economies. They are therefore likely to receive less rewards for being entrepreneurially oriented in a developing country such as Ghana.

The preponderance of merchandise imports into developing countries from more advanced economies has motivated this exploratory study into how Customs valuation practices influence entrepreneurship in Ghana. The case findings are juxtaposed against the aforementioned attributions in contemporary entrepreneurship literature. A common thread in the study's findings, indeed across the private and public sectors, is the need for transparency in valuation transactions. Emphasizing this point, respondent FL-1(B), a logistics manager of a local electrical cable manufacturer and exporter, cynically describes the import valuation process as a "black box", lacking clarity and consistency. For its part, the GRA-Customs allude to a similar notion of "opaqueness" when interview responses become inundated with references to non-compliant and outright unethical behaviours of declarants, especially in making false declarations on BOEs in order to gain some financial advantage. It soon becomes clear that without addressing the issue of transparent transactions on both sides of the divide, the nature and trajectory of entrepreneurship in a developing country such as Ghana would remain lackluster.

8.2.1 Relationship of Findings to Existing Knowledge

The exploratory rationale for this issue-based case study is supported by Rajkarnikar (2006) that there remain only a few studies in the literature related to Customs valuation. Scholarship on the subject outside institutions and publishers linked to the World Customs Journal, an affiliate of the WCO/WTO, is limited. In that Nepal study, findings were limited to the WTO-ACV's impact on trade, price inflation and the state revenue.

Around that season, Chalfin (2006) published "It was my experience in Ghana and, to a lesser extent, South Africa that allowed me to understand the tremendous bearing of the WTO/WCO provisions on the operations and aspirations of individual Customs officers and the national Customs administrations." The thesis findings firmly support the literature's claim of the high degree to which the joint reach of the WTO and the WCO, through the implementation of the WTO-ACV and TFA, aims to harmonise and homogenise Customs operations globally. The case study findings, however, also, reveal the extent to which government policy, GRA-Customs internal institutional constraints, and importer compliance may impact the operational efficiencies of a Customs administration.

A relatively recent paper (Javorcik & Narciso, 2017b) argues that member countries of the WTO are obliged to comply with the WTO-ACV. That suggests that Customs officers are no longer able to exercise discretion concerning assessing the value of goods based on which the import duty will be determined. They are not allowed, according to the paper, to use some external standard such as a minimum price or a reference price for this purpose. While this study acknowledges the constraints placed on Customs officers by the WTO-ACV - especially the transaction value rule - according to the findings, however, there are many instances of officer discretion in the valuation process.

According to Rajkarnikar (2006), evasion of duty through undervaluation or misdescription of imports is an acute problem for Customs administration in developing countries. King et al. (2003) estimate a widespread under-invoicing in developing countries and also indicate a lack

of effective valuation procedures in places such as Nepal. This claim is supported by this exploratory thesis in Ghana.

Finally, the findings also resonate with the literature's recognition that in settings such as Ghana, entrepreneurial activities may be facilitated through informal institutional mechanisms. A common example would be the establishment of such relationships with relevant government agents and other managerial ties (Peng, 2003; Peng & Luo, 2000) even if they are not legally recognized. However, these ties can also be expensive, hinder the development of new ventures (Klapper et al., 2006), and adversely impact the entrepreneurial experience. Although these conditions are not unique to SSA, they feature prominently in the region's institutional political and economic context because of the common weak institutions and structures, as well as regulations that impede full market participation (Easterly, 2001).

8.2.1.1 Exploring Pressures that Bear upon the GRA-Customs' Valuation Practices (RQ1)

The findings point to a GRA-Customs administration inundated with steady volumes of irregular, suspicious bills of entry (BOEs), operating under WTO/WCO rules and guidelines that are barely designed to deal with local peculiarities. The influences from the rule-making body exerted on its members through the implementation of the ratified but often incongruous WTO-ACV are consistent with the process of normative, if not, at times, coercive isomorphism; where pressures from entities who have resources on which an organization may depend prevail in, say, a policy dialogue or directive (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). It was noted from the study narratives that the circumstances described above may have contributed to a bureaucratically weakened Customs administration, characterized by institutional voids that impede organizational objectives. The concept of institutional void is defined as a lack or a failure of an existing institution to support efficient and effective market transactions (Khanna & Palepu, 1997)

8.2.1.2 *Exploring the Influences of GRA-Customs' Valuation Practices on Firm-level*

Opportunity Perception (RQ2)

It is reasonable to assume that recurring encounters with Customs' bureaucratic challenges (institutional voids) by prospective and/or established entrepreneurs would leave an impression on firms' perception of their environment, and, in turn, inform the boundaries of innovativeness and risk-taking. Bowen & De Clercq, 2008 assert that the regulatory environment which governs the transaction processes of firms is often seen as the institutional force that most shapes firms' behaviour and strategic choices. Extending this view to entrepreneurial opportunity perception, Yuan, Haowen, Yi and Peng (2014) argue that institutions play a significant role in reducing uncertainty and minimizing the costs of doing business. This positively encourages businesses to identify and exploit opportunities more creatively and proactively. Similarly, Shane (2000) suggests that a supportive institutional environment helps to minimize information asymmetries, and, rather, encourages information exchange that facilitates rigorous assessment of entrepreneurial opportunities.

It is worth noting here that a key recommendation of the study is for increased transparency in Customs' valuation. This may be attained by GRA configuring stakeholder access to current and historical valuation data on the ICUMS digital platform. Such an approach towards import valuation transparency may be an antidote to the challenge of rampant declarant under-invoicing. Otherwise, the status quo - a continuing lack of transparency in valuation methodology - may exacerbate entrepreneurial apathy, instead of innovativeness and proactiveness in entrepreneurship. Thus, institutional voids, manifesting as "bureaucratic opaqueness", in this context, would continue to cumulate adverse consequences amongst competing enterprises. Over time, the higher call to entrepreneurial orientation might fade progressively. (Bruton et al., 2010).

8.2.1.3 *Exploring the Influences of GRA-Customs' Valuation Practices on Firm-level*

Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) (RQ3)

According to institutional theorists, the entrepreneurial behaviour of business enterprises can be explained by the level of enablement of the institutional environment in which they operate (Acs, 2010; Aldrich, 2010; Baumol & Strom, 2007; North, 1990). Consistent with this assertion, Steier (2009) found the influence of institutions on enterprises, especially start-ups, can be significant. This is perhaps because the entrepreneurship of firms can be essentially created or destroyed by the institutional arrangements of a country (Aldrich, 2010).

As a result of the potentially significant different market outcomes for a firm, based on the degree of import valuation impartiality in a country, EO adoption cannot be taken for granted. This suggests that firms are likely to adopt EO if the Customs institutional environment presents a level playing field for operators. In a developing context, Michailova et al. (2013) argue that when the environment is perceived to be favourable to business, firms are more likely to be innovative, effective and competitive. In the context of this case study, “favourable” is tantamount to impartiality or fairness – i.e. a level import valuation playing field for prospective and existing entrepreneurs.

From the study's findings, there are indications of pressures encouraging certain behaviour conformity amongst respondents, across and within the three units of analysis. Simultaneous pressures on GRA-Customs, firm enterprises and the freight forwarder respondents to conform to the WTO-ACV requirements, especially, is characterized in the study as isomorphic. The GRA-Customs narratives, amongst others, confirm the sheer volume of suspicious declarant (firm importer) BOEs submitted electronically to the GRA-Customs for processing. That in itself presents a recurring source of motivation for stakeholders to mimic each other in what unit actors might perceive as a colleague's and/or competitor's “successful” practice with desirable outcomes. This idea is supported by Di Maggio and Powell (1991). It suggests that a competitive organization or firm will search the organizational field for effective solutions to a

problem and adopt a model that is perceived to be successful or that which would ensure survival and legitimacy. The findings point to unit respondents conforming to varying degrees of environmental pressures, that often lead to actions to maintain the status quo on Customs import valuation, within a context of institutional voids.

8.3 Implications of The Study

The findings and indications from this study yield to various scholarly calls to expand the entrepreneurship literature, especially as it pertains to the higher-order construct of FLE in developing contexts such as in the SSA region. The study presents an opportunity to broaden and deepen the debate on the nature of global multilateral institutional pressures at the meso (firm) level in a lower-middle-income country such as Ghana (Su et al., 2017; Galvin, 2010). It endeavours to serve as a foundational guide at the nexus of firm-level entrepreneurship and import trade policy, while providing theoretical insights from an institutionalist perspective (Creswell, 2009).

8.3.1 Theoretical Contribution of the Study

This study burrows in on an essential slice of a familiar debate in the literature on the role of institutions in enabling, disrupting or even discouraging entrepreneurial growth in a developing context such as Ghana.

The notion that organisations adopt isomorphic structures and practices to make up for the absence of institutional infrastructure is generally supported by the body of research on the relationship between institutional voids and institutional isomorphism (Khanna & Palepu, 1997). According to a Chinese study, firms that adopt isomorphic structures and practices in an attempt to obtain legitimacy and access to resources are linked to institutional voids (Xu and Shenkar 2002). Similarly, Vietnamese firms have been known to adopt isomorphic practices to demonstrate their adherence to global standards (Meyer and Nguyen, 2005; Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005). Additionally, Webb et al. (2019) make a distinction between formal and informal institutional voids and discuss how entrepreneurship productivity may be impacted by

either. Although that inquiry has been expanded to include entrepreneurship, its primary focus is still on how institutional isomorphism shapes organizational structures.

This exploratory thesis on how, among others, multilateral agencies exert isomorphic influences on a client GRA-Customs administration's import valuation practices, offers an illustration of how institutional voids are directly created by such influences. It is not enough for isomorphism to uniformly mould organizational practices and structures at the GRA-Customs division to, for example, gain legitimacy and resources (Khanna and Palepu, 1997). Rather, through the homogenizing effects of the application of the WTO-CVA and the TFA to Customs administrations globally, the study's theoretical extension offers insight into how regulatory pressures from the multilateral agencies may induce institutional voids on their merit. It is observed from the findings that the administrative capacities of Customs are not simply subject to normative and coercive influences from the multilaterals. Rather, regulatory pressures may create institutional voids as Customs personnel contend with WTO's prioritization of a trade facilitation agenda at the expense of Customs' core revenue collection role through import valuation.

Finally, the study did not observe that the GRA-Customs administration was otherwise inherently deficient in structure and practices (Khanna and Palepu, 1997). In the conceptual framework (see Fig 3.1), the force of a multilateral regulatory framework is linked directly to the institutional voids of the GRA-Customs division. This illustrates the institutional isomorphism-institutional void nexus. Ultimately, the homogenizing pressures have an adverse influence on import valuation practices, which filter down to the FLE construct.

8.3.2 Implication for Practice

Trade facilitation is a practical term frequently used to refer to reducing red tape in international trade, particularly when it comes to Customs and other border procedures. The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), to which Ghana is a signatory, is widely believed to have considerable advantages. The World Bank and the Organization for Economic Co-operation

and Development (OECD) have released several models that predicted a USD 377 billion rise in annual global trade in manufactured products (Wilson et al., 2005); another model predicted a USD 40 billion global gain for every 1% in cost of trade that is saved by actions like those encouraged by the agreement (Walkenhorst & Yasui, 2003). Yet, the case findings from this developing country context, reveal undue institutional pressures emanating from the implementation of the TFA and the WTO-ACV instruments. These are characterized as trade regulatory pressures that are often overwhelming for the GRA-Customs bureaucratic infrastructure, according to the study. The findings point to the need for the trade “rules-of-the-game”, often acclaimed to expedite global trade, to be scrutinized for its impact on FLE in Ghana. The study advocates that the mechanics of implementing the TFA, as well as the notion of “transaction value” within the WTO-ACV, require a reassessment of their influence on EO in Ghana.

As a leading voice in the private sector, the AGI may be restructured by its firm members to be more effective in its domestic and international advocacy for transparent and consistent import valuation across the board. The national association’s concerns are two-fold: (i) the appropriate valuation protocols for imported raw materials (see 8.3.3 Implication for Policy); and (ii) the appropriate valuation protocols for imported finished goods. While the former may directly affect manufacturing or production costs, the latter refers to possible unfair valuation advantages to traders of imported merchandise at the expense of local manufacturers. It is acknowledged, however, that the AGI, in representing its firm members, issued press statements expressing dissatisfaction with the Benchmark Discount Value (BDV) regime in 2022. The AGI would need to strategize beyond issuing strongly-worded press statements on import valuation policies.

The study argues that imported merchandise (both raw material and finished goods) is local market bound in one form or another. The performance of such goods in the marketplace is often a function of pricing. Considering that non-oil merchandise imports represent

approximately 14.5 % of Ghana's GDP (Bank of Ghana [BoG], 2022), its impact on the economy, and, thus, entrepreneurial opportunities, cannot be overstated. The findings indicate that the level of consistency, professionalism and, above all, transparency that attends import valuations (often the basis for an applied duty tariff rate of between 10 - 35% of CIF – (see Table 7.4), would invariably impact the pricing of goods and the nature of competition in the market place. Given the high value of duties and tax revenue accruing from imports (GHS 5.5 billion representing 12.4% of total tax revenue), the perception of the integrity of the valuation process by entrepreneurs is key to the strategic orientation of any profit-making venture in the country.

8.3.3 Implication for Policy

Following Delaney, “policy is approved or sanctioned by an institutional body or authority” (Delaney, 2000). Consequently, the policy challenges of this issue-based study have emerged primarily from the institutional bodies of the WTO, WCO and the agency of the GRA-Customs division. To the extent that it impacts import valuation, government policies and directives are channeled through the GRA-Customs Division. While WTO's main functions involve trade negotiations and enforcing multilateral trade rules, special attention is also given to policies supporting trade facilitation in developing economies such as Ghana.

Nonetheless, the findings from this study indicate that the WTO's trade facilitation agreement (TFA), which contains explicit provisions for expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods, may, at least, be partially responsible for the diligence shortfalls of Customs' valuation officers at the CTSB. This is reflected in the authority's forty-eight-hour BOE turnaround staff performance indicator. Also, highlighted in the findings is the mandatory ninety per cent “green channel” expedition policy for merchandise imports at the Tema port. While these digitized features may have enhanced BOE turnaround efficiencies, given the reportedly high proportion of suspicious declarations, the gains may be at the expense of import classification and valuation vigilance. Therefore, despite WCO/WTO's technical assistance and

capacity-building programs for developing economies such as Ghana, the Customs valuation challenge remains perennial and unresolved, according to the study's findings. The World Customs Organization (WCO), as the implementor of the WTO-ACV, may reassess the myriad of valuation challenges Customs administrations like the GRA face.

Pal (2006) defines public policy as a course of action or inaction chosen by public authorities to address a given problem or interrelated set of problems. At the international level, one under-utilized policy tool available to the WCO is the mirror analysis developed by the British economist Richard Stone (1913-1991). The trade statistics concept of mirror analysis compares a nation's imports (or exports) with mirror imports or exports reported by counterpart countries to identify gaps in merchandise quantities, weight or value that could reveal Customs fraud (WCO, 2015). It can be an essential instrument for the WTO/WCO, scholars and policymakers to tackle the widespread challenge of inconsistent, non-transparent import valuation practices that undermine entrepreneurial opportunity perception and behaviour in Ghana.

On the national front, the case study findings may encourage the reconciliation of sometimes divergent directives of Ghana's MOF and MOTI concerning prioritizing trade facilitation over diligence in import valuation and, thus, revenue mobilisation. This may be accomplished through policy analyses of examining the policy process where attempts to address public concerns as stated above are made. Such analyses would entail examining the origin, adoption, implementation and evaluation of the policy in question (Squires, 2010) in the light of entrepreneurial development in Ghana.

Still, public policy analysis on engendering economic and entrepreneurial opportunity must consider the long-term impact of "irregular" national directives such as the benchmark policy, the benchmark value discount (BVD) policy, and, subsequently, the partial and then full reversal of the BVD policy. Such policy inconsistency on import valuation is not uncommon in Ghana. It casts a shadow of uncertainty over entrepreneurial decision-making for the medium to long term. Policymakers must appreciate that interventionist valuation policies that do not

align with the WTO-ACV (even with all its shortcomings) must be minimised. The degree of inconsistency in policy direction conveys signals to the investment community and shapes the perception of entrepreneurial opportunities in an environment.

8.4 Reflection on the methodology used for this research

The focus of this issue-based case study has been to bring to the fore, the commonly experienced but often obscure influence of import valuation on entrepreneurial dynamics in Ghana. An iterative process led to the selection of a case study design type, described in the literature as a single case with multiple embedded units (Yin, 2018). The case issue here, as indicated earlier, is the matter of Customs import valuation in Ghana. It comes with three embedded units of analysis, namely, the GRA-Customs division, a set of purposively sampled firm enterprises across industries and sectors, and, another set of independent freight forwarding companies based in Tema. Typical with case studies of this nature, there is a blurring of lines between the case and its context. Hence, the semi-structured interview conducted with a manager of a key stevedore and port terminal corporate group in Tema is treated as contextual input or evidence, instead of a unit of analysis.

It is worth re-emphasizing that this exploratory inquiry does not intend to offer conclusive recommendations on import valuation challenges faced by both Customs officials, on the one hand, and entrepreneurs and their freight forwarding agents on the other hand. It is to be viewed as a scholarly endeavour to bring to the fore a trade development phenomenon that is rarely addressed within the discipline of entrepreneurship. The decision to opt for a case study design was to illuminate how the rules of the import valuation “game” are applied and/or side-stepped, and with what result (Schramm, 1971). Furthermore, as an important contemporary phenomenon where the behaviours of the relevant participants cannot be easily manipulated by the researcher, the import valuation issue and its influence on entrepreneurship qualifies for case study research (Yin, 2018).

8.4.1 GRA-Customs Division

In retrospect, any apprehension of the researcher concerning data gathering from the GRA-Customs institution, the first unit of analysis, was exaggerated. It was fortuitous to have interviewed two senior officers with a bona fide professional outlook. One of them was recognised as an authority on WTO issues. At times, one sensed frustration from the authority's management over resource constraints vis-a-vis work volume. It was motivating to have experienced the enthusiasm with which the focus group participants of six welcomed and answered the semi-structured questions. Overall, the interactions that took place were vibrant with often accusatory undertones towards the body of freight forwarders the officers regularly engaged.

8.4.2 Firm-Level Group

The group members sampled for this study numbered six, with seven respondents, representing a diverse group of manufacturers and exporters, as well as fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) traders. The purposive sampling approach took into consideration, through pre-selection interviews, the manager and/or owner's propensity towards risk-taking, innovativeness, proactiveness and a certain firm competitive aggressiveness in the marketplace. The sampled respondents shared in common a vision to diversify and enlarge the market share of their respective enterprises. Responses from such a diverse group enriched the narratives from the field for a deeper understanding of the import valuation phenomenon. Due to the structure of the study's design, the inquiry benefitted from a degree of replication akin to a multiple-case design.

Often, there was a sense of frustration from respondents suggesting that if the import valuation field were level, as one would expect, market competition would be fairer and business results stable and more predictable. A particular trader made exceedingly harsh comments and even accusations of corruption against officers of the GRA institution that were not captured in the results due to a lack of proof. Nonetheless, in the wider scheme, even such unsubstantiated

sentiments expressed by a firm enterprise respondent reflected ingrained perceptions of institutional voids that may colour an entrepreneur's investment decision lens.

8.4.3 Freight forwarders

The freight forwarder respondent unit was organized for individual interviews mostly through the Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders (GIFF). They selected members of good standing, applying a snowball sampling approach. The respondents were commercially independent of the firm enterprise respondents and unknown to the GRA-Customs respondents. This was a precaution taken to avoid conflict of interest, especially between the freight forwarders and the firm enterprise respondents. These anonymous arrangements enhanced the confidentiality and openness of the study.

Freight forwarders rarely work for their account, but rather on behalf of other business enterprises. Hence, they are commonly referred to as “agents” in their capacities as representatives of a principal or a business enterprise.

It is apparent, in retrospect, that the four freight forwarders interviewed for the study were among the more established of the GIFF members. That could be viewed as a limitation of sorts due to an already small sample size, being skewed towards the more professionally-oriented type of freight forwarding company. Despite this observation, some respondents expressed concern about a certain lack of respect for their profession by their Customs counterparts. This is often reflected in the GIFF being relatively sidelined during major undertakings, such as the various port digitization programs at the Tema port since 2002.

8.4.4 Stevedoring Firm (Contextual)

The stevedoring company interviewed for contextual input also manages the operations of a container terminal at the Tema port. Being physically present at the terminal concretized for me the essence of the case study as regards the nature of the import valuation challenge. At this highly automated port terminal, loaded container trucks queued to go through scanners being

monitored remotely from a nearby control room run by GRA-Customs officers. Through the successful automation and digitization of what is now seen as a model paperless port in the West African sub-region, trade is being facilitated at unprecedented efficiency but, perhaps, with concomitant risk to consistent import valuation. Such valuation risks carry inherent market consequences for well-meaning, fair-playing entrepreneurs.

8.5 Recommendations

Institutional theory serves as the foundation for the exploratory study. Thus, any recommendation informed by the findings must begin from the entrepreneur's institutional environment. Myriads of studies in Africa have contributed to the understanding of the negative impact of institutional voids in Africa (Aidis et al., 2008; Sutter et al., 2013). This study's findings suggest that the inconsistent application and/or non-application of the "rules of the [import valuation] game" (North 1990) by the GRA-Customs may be linked to the latter's institutional voids, emanating primarily from the multilateral institutions of the WTO/WCO. Altogether, this works to the detriment of entrepreneurship development in Ghana.

In line with respondent FL-1(B)'s portrayal of GRA-Customs's approach to valuation as a "black box" process, the question of transparency in import valuation is paramount. To address this commonly held notion of a "black box" approach to import valuation, the ICUMS (Integrated Customs Management System) digital interface could be configured to grant viewing access to historical and current valuation data to a defined public (including qualified freight forwarders and their principals) to augment transparency. Import valuation data transparency, as recommended above, could be achieved in anonymity without the disclosure of declarant/importer firm details to a viewer. In contrast to the common notion of the "black box", the anonymous disclosure of import valuation data, could provide an assuring sense of a level playing field. This could provide an incentive for firm-level entrepreneurial orientation in Ghana.

The findings also reveal that countries of origin such as India and Chile provide export value verification resources to Customs administrations worldwide. In other words, commercial invoices and shipping documents from such origins are easier to verify due to those countries' own internal infrastructure to ensure proper and accessible export documentation. The GRA-Customs could make representations to the WCO requesting replication of such resources for Customs administrations globally. This could be of particular benefit to developing nations such as Ghana who, according to the study findings, are struggling to implement the WTO-ACV “transaction value” method of valuation. This may be considered as part of a Customs import valuation transparency augmentation initiative.

A less daunting alternative to the global approach, still, through the WCO, could involve similar verification initiatives, but on a regional bloc or bilateral basis. The process would continue to require importing enterprises to submit bills of entry (BOE) in advance before consignments arrive at the destination port.

The Ghana International Trade Commission (GITC) is an agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry established by an Act of Parliament, the GITC Act 926, 2016. It is to provide for the regulation of the international trade of Ghana in conformity with the rules and regulations of the World Trade System and related matters. Amongst its objectives are to oversee Ghana's compliance with international trade rules, and ensure fair competition for persons engaged in domestic production and international trade. Also, to protect the domestic market from the impact of unfair trade practices in the course of international trade. The challenges regarding the implementation of the WTO-ACV's transaction value rule ought to fall within the mandate and competence of the GITC. The GITC has successfully taken up anti-dumping initiatives against the likes of China through the WTO arbitration process. It may now direct its efforts toward the perennial challenge of inconsistent import valuation in Ghana, which according to the findings may be adversely affecting entrepreneurship.

A conspicuous documentary finding of this study is the observation that the GRA-Customs valuation procedure flow chart (figure 6.3) commences with the submission of the declarant BOE which is considered “suspicious” on presentation. In countries such as South Korea where approximately 90% of the BOEs (according to respondent GRA-1) submitted by declarants are readily considered to be transaction value-compliant (i.e. acceptable at face value), such a procedure would be considered sound and normative. However, in circumstances where a significant proportion of the BOEs submitted are perceived to be suspicious, a different, more preventive approach would be recommended.

In Ghana’s adequately described circumstances above, the Cargo Tracking Notes (CTN) system may be re-considered by the GRA-Customs to mitigate the flow of suspicious BOEs submitted by unscrupulous importer declarants (firm enterprises). Reference has been made to the CTN system in the findings (Table 6.2). Cargo Tracking Note (CTN), also known as a Waiver Certificate, is/was a mandatory shipping document for importing cargo to some consenting African countries. The CTN is designed to provide local Customs authorities with the required information and transparency about the import consignment from the beginning of the shipment. It is worth reiterating that, per the findings see (table 6.2), there had been a public contention between Pro-CTN local enterprises and an opposing anti-CTN freight forwarders group. The CTN recommendation is based on the minimal human interference it allows to misrepresent shipping documents after the shipper and/or exporter presents the originals to the shipping line.

8.5.1 Directions for Future Research

According to Rajkarnikar (2006), there is a paucity of scholarly research on Customs Import Valuation. That remains the case and presents promising research opportunities in the area.

The study indicates that Ghana is a fertile research context due to historically frequent changes in import valuation policies. Various methodological approaches could be applied to

investigate the immediate and remote causes plaguing consistent Customs import valuation in Ghana and its effect on certain industrial sectors.

Expounding on some of the limitations of this study may be essential for designing and conducting future research in the study area. To begin with, all respondent firm enterprises shipped their consignments in containers. None were bulk cargo shippers. Given that bulk cargo imports such as grains, cereals and edible oils represent significantly higher import tonnage, compared to containerized cargo, any future research on Customs import valuation ought to cover that category or, at least, seek to contrast the experiences of both categories.

In addition, Ghana is the geographical context for this study. Future researchers may develop a proposal based on the findings of this exploratory study, and test it in other developing countries. This would allow the juxtaposing of findings against other emerging and/or developed economies, for a deeper understanding of the phenomena.

Furthermore, beyond this qualitative, exploratory, single case study, various research designs can be utilized, namely, a multiple case study design to ensure a more robust triangulation of findings through case replication.

Also, import values and valuation issues are primarily about numbers; hence, a quantitative inquiry would empirically investigate, statistically, the extent of import under-declarations in Ghana, and, which industry sectors are most vulnerable to such falsifications.

Lastly, seasoned qualitative researchers such as Stakes (2005) and Yin (2003) have advocated for consideration of rival explanations and interpretations in case study inquiries. The absence of explicit rivals to the research questions, interpretations and /or explanations to findings on the Customs valuation phenomena warrants some disclosure under study limitations.

Based on GRA respondent narratives, plausible rival explanation to declarant/importer under-invoicing - a major feature of the valuation phenomena - would be the manipulation of import classification codes and purported country of origin by the declarant/importer (firm enterprise).

(See Chapters 1 and 6 for further details on classification codes and country of origin (COO))

Thus, future research in this area would have a rival explanation gap to assess the potential role of the manipulation of these elements (import classification code and COO) in the valuation process, and its ultimate impact on entrepreneurial behaviour in Ghana.

8.6 Conclusion

The literature review backs the broad consensus that entrepreneurship is a process that begins with the discovery of opportunities by individuals and/or enterprises who purposefully scan their environment. The findings of this case study, however, question the nature of the opportunities aspiring and established firm enterprises perceive when they scan their environment in Ghana. The study supports previous research that suggests that the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) context shapes the character and influences the trajectory of entrepreneurial activity, perhaps more so than anywhere else in the world (Sorescu & Spanjol, 2008).

Furthermore, perhaps, a deeper and historically more pertinent context SSA grapples with is its legacy of colonial institutions. This notion ties in with Chalfin's (2006) and Robinson's (2004) contemporary anthropological work on "Global Customs Regimes". The seminal essay points to the ascendance of multilateral bodies such as the WTO and WCO, with the capacity to restructure governance and effect "shifts in the expression and location of state power on a global scale".

A related and equally compelling assertion is that in the modern system, the institutional characteristics of states in more industrially developed areas have set an agenda for states in less developed areas (Krasner 1984). In light of these scholarly assertions, perhaps, it is unsurprising that the WTO/WCO regulations, with their prioritised objective of global trade facilitation, would indeed overwhelm Customs administrations in developing countries such as Ghana. This, the study argues, adversely influences entrepreneurial advancement.

The study also reveals that the GRA-Customs' import valuation regime is characterized by external isomorphic pressures from above, while inundated by internal institutional voids. The latter appears to stem from a WTO/WCO-governed, top-down valuation system. The valuation system from the onset is besieged by suspicious declarant BOEs, to exploit bureaucratic ambiguities by its perpetrators. Over time, the uncertainty over import values and the valuation process is likely to worsen if the status quo remains. This could, increasingly, influence entrepreneurial perception of environmental opportunities, based on existing market imperatives. Then, predictably, the EO dimensions of innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking and competitive aggressiveness would find an ever-shrinking space to display what Mthanti and Ojah, (2018) describe as a lofty kind of entrepreneurship in Ghana.



REFERENCES

- Abradu-Otoo, P., Acquaye, I., Addy, A., Akosah, N. K., Attuquaye, J., Harvey, S., ... & Nalban, V. (2022). Quarterly Projection Model for the Bank of Ghana.
- Abrokwah, E., Bob-Eshun, E., Conron, H., Iddrisu, A. M., Nuer, D., & Warwick, R. (2021). *Customs revenue in Ghana: Recent trends and their causes* (No. R198). IFS Report.
- Acs, Z. J. (2010). High-impact entrepreneurship. *Handbook of entrepreneurship research: An interdisciplinary survey and introduction*, 165-182.
- Acs, Z. J., & Audretsch, D. B. (Eds.). (2010). *Handbook of entrepreneurship research: An interdisciplinary survey and introduction* (pp. 165-182). New York: Springer.
- Acs, Z. J., Desai, S., & Hessels, J. (2008). Entrepreneurship, economic development and institutions. *Small business economics*, 31, 219-234.
- Adam, N. A., & Alarifi, G. (2021). Innovation practices for survival of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the COVID-19 times: the role of external support. *Journal of innovation and entrepreneurship*, 10(1), 15.
- Adams, K. P., Vosti, S. A., Arnold, C. D., Engle-Stone, R., Prado, E. L., Stewart, C. P., ... & Dewey, K. G. (2022). The cost-effectiveness of small- quantity lipid-based nutrient supplements for prevention of child death and malnutrition and promotion of healthy development: modeling results for Uganda. *medRxiv*, 2022-05.
- Addo, A. A., & Avgerou, C. (2020). Information technology and government corruption in developing countries: Evidence from Ghana customs. *MIS quarterly: management information systems*, 45(4), 1833-1862.
- Adom, K., Chiri, N., Quaye, D., & Awuah-Werekoh, K. (2018). An Assessment of Entrepreneurial Disposition and Culture in Sub-Saharan Africa: Some Lessons from Ghana. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, 23(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S1084946718500012>.
- Adombila, M. (2018). Overhaul tax exemption regime to save domestic industries- AGI. *Daily Graphic*, 61.
- AfDB, OECD, & UNDP. (2016). *African Economic Outlook 2016 : Sustainable Cities*,. 397. <http://www.oecd.org/countries/namibia/1826046.pdf>.
- African Economic Outlook (2012). Available at: <https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Ghana%20Full%20PDF%20Country%20Note.pdf>. Accessed [2023].

- Ahmed, A., & Nwankwo, S. (2013). Entrepreneurship development in Africa: An overview. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, 9(2/3), 82-86.
- Ahn, M. J., & York, A. S. (2011). Resource-based and institution-based approaches to biotechnology industry development in Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 28, 257-275.
- Aidis, R., Estrin, S., & Mickiewicz, T. (2008). Institutions and entrepreneurship development in Russia: A comparative perspective. *Journal of business Venturing*, 23(6), 656-672.
- Aldrich, D. P. (2010). Fixing recovery: Social capital in post-crisis resilience. *Journal of Homeland Security*, Forthcoming.
- Aldrich, H. E. (1990). Using an ecological perspective to study organizational founding rates. *Entrepreneurship Theory and practice*, 14(3), 7-24.
- Ali, E. B., Agyekum, E. B., & Adadi, P. (2021). Agriculture for sustainable development: A SWOT-AHP assessment of Ghana's planting for food and jobs initiative. *Sustainability*, 13(2), 628.
- Allam, Z., Sharifi, A., Bibri, S. E., Jones, D. S., & Krogstie, J. (2022). The metaverse as a virtual form of smart cities: Opportunities and challenges for environmental, economic, and social sustainability in urban futures. *Smart Cities*, 5(3), 771-801.
- Amineh, R. J., & Asl, H. D. (2015). Review of constructivism and social constructivism. *Journal of social sciences, literature and languages*, 1(1), 9-16.
- Amoako, I. O. (2019). Institutions Influencing Trust Development in Entrepreneurial Relationships in Africa. 105–134. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-98395-0_4
- Ampah, J., Ribeiro, J. X. F., Bugyei, K. A., Kumi, F., Akowuah, J. O., Ofori, H., & Otchere, C. (2021). Status, challenges and prospects of food processing equipment fabricators in Ghana. *Scientific African*, 12, e00843.
- Andreas, P. (2000). *Border games: Policing the US-Mexico divide*. Cornell University Press.
- Anim-Asante, J. (1988). A descriptive list of the records of the Customs Department in the National Archives of Ghana, Accra. *Department of Library and Archival Studies, University of Ghana, Legon*.
- Antoncic, B., & Hisrich, R. D. (2004). Corporate entrepreneurship contingencies and organizational wealth creation. *Journal of management development*, 23(6), 518-550.
- Arasaratnam, S. (1998). Trade and political dominion in South India, 1750-1790. In *the East India Company*, vol 4, ed. P. Tuck, 145-179. London: Routledge.

- Aremu, M. A., & Adeyemi, S. L. (2011). Small and medium scale enterprises as a survival strategy for employment generation in Nigeria. *Journal of sustainable development*, 4(1), 200.
- Arenius, P., & Minniti, M. (2005). Perceptual variables and nascent entrepreneurship. *Small business economics*, 24, 233-247.
- Arinaitwe, S. K. (2006). Factors constraining the growth and survival of small-scale businesses. A developing countries analysis. *Journal of American Academy of Business*, 8(2), 167-178.
- Aryee, J., & Hansen, A. S. (2022). De-politicization of digital systems for trade facilitation at the port of Tema: A soft systems methodology approach. *Case Studies on Transport Policy*, 10(1), 105-117.
- Atiase, V. Y., Mahmood, S., Wang, Y., & Botchie, D. (2018). Developing entrepreneurship in Africa: investigating critical resource challenges. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 25(4), 644–666. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-03-2017-0084>
- Atkinson, P. (1988). Ethnomethodology: A critical review. *Annual review of sociology*, 14(1), 441-465.
- Audretsch, D. B. (2009). Entrepreneurship capital and economic growth. *Investigaciones Regionales-Journal of Regional Research*, (15), 27-45.
- Auriol, E. (2013). Barriers to formal entrepreneurship in developing countries. Available at: <https://dailyguidenetwork.com/gra-scrap-benchmark-value-policy/>. Accessed [2023].
- Baird, I. S., & Thomas, H. (1985). Toward a contingency model of strategic risk taking. *Academy of management Review*, 10(2), 230-243.
- Bank of Ghana [BoG]. (2019). Bank of Ghana 2019 Annual Report.
- Bank of Ghana, (2017). Annual report. Available at: <https://www.bog.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/AnnRep-2017.pdf>. Accessed: [2023]
- Baron, R. A. (2007). Behavioral and cognitive factors in entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurs as the active element in new venture creation. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, 1(1-2), 167-182.
- Barrow, C. (2015). The Entrepreneurial University: Where It All Went Wrong. In *Transformative Researchers and Educators for Democracy* (pp. 47-56). Brill.
- Battilana, J. (2006). Agency and institutions: The enabling role of individuals' social position. *Organization*, 13(5), 653-676.

- Baughn, C. C., & Neupert, E. K. (2003). Culture and National Conditions Facilitating Entrepreneurial Start-ups. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, 1(3), 313–330. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024166923988>.
- Baughn, C. C., Cao, J. S., Le, L. T. M., Lim, V. A., & Neupert, K. E. (2006). Normative, social and cognitive predictors of entrepreneurial interest in China, Vietnam and the Philippines. *Journal of developmental entrepreneurship*, 11(01), 57-77.
- Baumbach, S., Oberländer, A. M., Röglinger, M., & Rosemann, M. (2020). Dynamic capabilities for opportunity exploration: insights from an explorative case study. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Venturing*, 12(6), 575-616.
- Baumol, W. J. (1990). Sir John versus the Hicksians, or theorist malgré lui *Journal of Economic Literature*, 1708-1715.
- Baumol, W. J. (1993). Formal entrepreneurship theory in economics: Existence and bounds. *Journal of business venturing*, 8(3), 197-210.
- Baumol, W. J. (1996). Entrepreneurship: Productive, unproductive, and destructive. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 11(1), 3–22. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-9026\(94\)00014-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-9026(94)00014-X)
- Baumol, W. J., & Strom, R. J. (2010). Useful knowledge” of entrepreneurship: Some implications of the history. *The Invention of Enterprise*, 527-541.
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559.
- Bedi, H. S. (2016). Firm level innovativeness: Antecedents and consequences. *Envision-International Journal of Commerce and Management*, 10(1), 68-76.
- Belianska, A., Bohme, N., Cai, K., Diallo, Y., Jain, S., Melina, M. G., ... & Zerbo, S. (2022). Climate change and select financial instruments: An overview of opportunities and challenges for Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Bell, E., & Bryman, A. (2007). The ethics of management research: an exploratory content analysis. *British journal of management*, 18(1), 63-77.
- Benaraba, C. M. D., Bulaon, N. J. B., Escosio, S. M. D., Narvaez, A. H. G., Suinan, A. N. A., & Roma, M. N. (2022). A comparative analysis on the career perceptions of tourism management students before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 30, 100361.
- Benitez, J., Llorens, J., & Braojos, J. (2018). How information technology influences opportunity exploration and exploitation firm’s capabilities. *Information & Management*, 55(4), 508-523.
- Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1967). *The Social. Construction of Reality*, New York: Garden City.

- Besada, H., & Golla, T. (2023). Policy impacts on Ghana's extractive sector: The implicative dominance of gold and the future of oil. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 14, 101214.
- Bhattacharjee, A. (2012). *Social science research: Principles, methods, and practices*. USA.
- Billinger, S., Srikanth, K., Stieglitz, N., & Schumacher, T. R. (2021). Exploration and exploitation in complex search tasks: How feedback influences whether and where human agents search. *Strategic Management Journal*, 42(2), 361-385.
- Binks, M., & Vale, P. A. (1990). *Entrepreneurship and economic change. (No Title)*.
- BoG Annual Report. (2020). www.bog.gov.gh
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3rd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bogdan, R.C., & Biklen, S.K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods*. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bokpe, S. J. (2018, January 26). Arrival of the first Indian family in Gold Coast. *Daily Graphic*, SS13.
- Bowen, H. P., & De Clercq, D. (2008). Institutional context and the allocation of entrepreneurial effort. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 39, 747-767.
- Brixiova, Z. (2010). Unlocking productive entrepreneurship in Africa's least developed countries. *African Development Review*, 22(3), 440-451.
- Brixiova, Z. (2013). Modeling productive entrepreneurship in developing countries. *Small business economics*, 41(1), 183-194.
- Brixiová, Z., Ncube, M., & Bicaba, Z. (2015). Skills and youth entrepreneurship in Africa: Analysis with evidence from Swaziland. *World Development*, 67, 11-26.
- Bruton, G. D., Ahlstrom, D., & Li, H. L. (2010). Institutional theory and entrepreneurship: where are we now and where do we need to move in the future *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 34(3), 421-440.
- Bruton, G. D., Ketchen Jr, D. J., & Ireland, R. D. (2013). Entrepreneurship as a solution to poverty. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 28(6), 683-689.
- Buame, S. K. (1996). *Entrepreneurship: A contextual perspective, discourses and praxis of entrepreneurial activities within the institutional context of Ghana*. Lund: Lund University Press.
- Buckley, P. J., Casson, M., Buckley, P. J., & Casson, M. (2010). A theory of cooperation in international business. *The Multinational Enterprise Revisited: The Essential Buckley and Casson*, 41-67.

- Buli, B. M. (2017). Entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation and performance of SMEs in the manufacturing industry: Evidence from Ethiopian enterprises. *Management Research Review*, 40(3), 292–309. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-07-2016-0173>
- Burch, P. (2007). Educational policy and practice from the perspective of institutional theory: Crafting a wider lens. *Educational Researcher*, 36(2), 84-95.
- Burgelman, R. A. (1983). Corporate entrepreneurship and strategic management: Insights from a process study. *Management Science*, 29(12), 1349-1364.
- Burgess, J. A. (1982). Selling places: environmental images for the executive. *Regional Studies*, 16(1), 1-17.
- Busenitz, L. W., Gomez, C., & Spencer, J. W. (2000). Country institutional profiles: Unlocking entrepreneurial phenomena. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(5), 994-1003.
- Callaghan, C., & Venter, R. (2011). An investigation of the entrepreneurial orientation, context and entrepreneurial performance of inner-city Johannesburg Street traders. *Southern African Business Review*, 15(1).
- Cantillon, R. (1734). *Essai Sur La Nature Du commerce en general*, essay on the nature of general commerce, translated by Henry, H. (1892), Macmillan: London
- Cantillon, R., & Van den Berg, R. (2015). *Richard Cantillon's essay on the nature of trade in general: a variorum edition*. Routledge.
- Capelleras, J. L., Mole, K. F., Greene, F. J., & Storey, D. J. (2008). Do more heavily regulated economies have poorer performing new ventures? Evidence from Britain and Spain. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 39(4), 688–704. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8400340>
- Carsten, J., Rankin, A., Ferguson, D., & Stentz, A. (2007, March). Global path planning on board the mars exploration rovers. In *2007 IEEE Aerospace Conference* (pp. 1-11). IEEE.
- Caruana, A., Morris, M. H., & Vella, A. J. (1998). The effect of centralization and formalization on entrepreneurship in export firms. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 36(1), 16.
- Cassell, C., & Symon, G. (1994). Qualitative research in work contexts. In C. Cassell, & G. Symon (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research* (pp. 1-13). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- CEFACT, U. (2001). Compendium of Trade Facilitation Recommendations. *Geneva: UN-CEFACT*.
- Chalfin, B. (2006). Global customs regimes and the traffic in sovereignty: Enlarging the anthropology of the state. *Current Anthropology*, 47(2), 243-276.

- Chamlee-Wright, E. (1997). *The cultural foundation of economic development: Urban female entrepreneurship in Ghana*. London: Routledge.
- Chaudhry, A., & Garner, P. (2007). Do governments suppress growth? Institutions, rent-seeking, and innovation blocking in a model of Schumpeterian growth. *Economics & Politics*, 19(1), 35-52.
- Chowdhury, M. S. (2007). Overcoming entrepreneurship development constraints: The case of Bangladesh. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, 1(3), 240–251. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17506200710779549>
- Cooper, A. C. (1971). Spin-offs and technical entrepreneurship. *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, (1), 2-6.
- Cooper, R. G. (1986). *Winning at new products* (Vol. 26). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Correa, P., & Borja-vega, C. (2013). The Impact of Government Support on Firm R & D Investments. July.
- Correa, P., Andrés, L., & Borja-Vega, C. (2013). *The impact of government support on firm R&D investments: a meta-analysis*. The World Bank.
- Covin, J. G., & Slevin, D. P. (1989). Strategic management of small firms in hostile and benign environment. *Strategic Management Journal*, 10(1), 75–87.
- Covin, J. G., & Slevin, D. P. (1991). A conceptual model of entrepreneurship as firm behavior. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 16(1), 7-26.
- Cravo, T. A., Gourlay, A., & Becker, B. (2012). SMEs and regional economic growth in Brazil. *Small Business Economics*, 38, 217-230.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). Mapping the field of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 3(2), 95-108.
- Creswell, J. W., & Zhang, W. (2009). The application of mixed methods designs to trauma research. *Journal of Traumatic Stress: Official Publication of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies*, 22(6), 612-621.
- Daily Guide network (2022). GRA Scraps Benchmark Value Policy.
- Dallago, B. (2000). The organisational and productive impact of the economic system. The case of SMEs. *Small Business Economics*, 15, 303-319.
- Davidsson, P. (2016). A “business researcher” view on opportunities for psychology in entrepreneurship research. *Applied Psychology*, 65(3), 628-636.
- Davis, J. L., Greg Bell, R., Tyge Payne, G., & Kreiser, P. M. (2010). Entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance: The moderating role of managerial power. *American Journal of Business*, 25(2), 41-54.

- Dean, B. A. (2018). The interpretivist and the learner. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 13, 1.
- Dean, C. C., Thibodeaux, M. S., Beyerlein, M., Ebrahimi, B., & Molina, D. (1993). Corporate entrepreneurship and competitive aggressiveness: A comparison of US firms operating in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States with US firms in other high-risk environments. *Advances in International Comparative Management*, 8, 31-54.
- Delaney, D. (2000). Governing out of Order: Space, Law and the Politics of Belonging.
- Delaney, D. (2002). The space that race makes. *The professional geographer*, 54(1), 6-14.
- Dennison, L., Morrison, L., Conway, G., & Yardley, L. (2013). Opportunities and challenges for smartphone applications in supporting health behavior change: qualitative study. *Journal of medical Internet research*, 15(4), e2583.
- Denscombe, M. (1998). The good research guide for small-scale social science projects.
- Derry, S. J. (1999). *A fish called peer learning: Searching for common themes*. In A. M. O'Donnell & A. King (Eds.)
- Desiderio, D. (2019). Data analysis techniques for enhancing the performance of Customs. *World Customs Journal*, 13(2), 17-22.
- Dess, G. G., Lumpkin, G. T., & Covin, J. G. (1997). Entrepreneurial strategy making and firm performance: Tests of contingency and configurational models. *Strategic management journal*, 18(9), 677-695.
- Devine, R. A., & Kiggundu, M. N. (2016). Entrepreneurship in Africa: Identifying the Frontier of Impactful Research. *Africa Journal of Management*, 2(3), 349–380. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322373.2016.1206802>
- DiMaggio P.J., & Powell W.W. (1991). Introduction, in Powell W.W., and DiMaggio P.J. (eds.) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Dimitratos, P., Lioukas, S., & Carter, S. (2004). The relationship between entrepreneurship and international performance: the importance of domestic environment. *International Business Review*, 13(1), 19-41.
- Dimov, D. (2007). From opportunity insight to opportunity intention: The importance of person–situation learning match. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 31(4), 561-583.
- Djalo, M. U., Yusuf, M., & Pudjowati, J. (2023). The impact of foreign debt on export and import values, the rupiah exchange rate, and the inflation rate. *Jurnal Ekonomi*, 12(01), 1124-1132.

- Djanitey, R. (2018). Assessing the impact of national single window on the competitiveness of Ghana's maritime sector.
- Doh, S., & Kim, B. (2014). Government support for SME innovations in the regional industries: The case of government financial support program in South Korea. *Research policy*, 43(9), 1557-1569.
- Downs Jr, G. W., & Mohr, L. B. (1976). Conceptual issues in the study of innovation. *Administrative science quarterly*, 700-714.
- Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., & Holman, D. (1996). Using repertory grids in management. *Journal of European industrial training*, 20(3), 3-30.
- Easterly, W. (2001). The middle-class consensus and economic development. *Journal of economic growth*, 6(4), 317-335.
- Edoho, F. M. (2015). Entrepreneurship and socioeconomic development: Catalyzing African transformation in the 21st century. *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*, 6(2), 127-147.
- Elert, N., Henrekson, M., & Wernberg, J. (2016). Two sides to the evasion: The Pirate Bay and the interdependencies of evasive entrepreneurship. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*, 5(2), 176-200.
- Elert, N., Henrekson, M., & Wernberg, J. (2016). Two sides to the evasion: The Pirate Bay and the interdependencies of evasive entrepreneurship. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*, 5(2), 176–200. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEPP-01-2016-0001>
- Elo, M., & Volovelsky, E. K. (2017). Jewish diaspora entrepreneurs-the impact of religion on opportunity exploration and exploitation. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, 31(2), 244-269.
- Ernest, P. (1999). Social constructivism as a philosophy of mathematics: Radical constructivism rehabilitated. *A historical paper available at www. people. ex. ac. uk/PErnest*.
- Essuman, B. (n.d). *Business Administration in Management*.
- Evans, J. R., & Mathur, A. (2005). The value of online surveys. *Internet research*, 15(2), 195-219.
- Fadahunsi, A., & Rosa, P. (2002). Entrepreneurship and illegality: Insights from the Nigerian cross-border trade. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 17, 397–429.
- Fayolle, A., Basso, O., & Bouchard, V. (2010). Three levels of culture and firms' entrepreneurial orientation: A research agenda. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 22(7-8), 707-730.

- Feng, D. (2006). China's Recent Curriculum Reform: Progress and Problems. *Planning and Changing*, 37, 131-144.
- Forlani, D., & Mullins, J. W. (2000). Perceived risks and choices in entrepreneurs' new venture decisions. *Journal of business Venturing*, 15(4), 305-322.
- Foss, K., & Foss, N. (2002). Economic organization and the tradeoffs between productive and destructive entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship and the Firm*. Aldershot, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Frazer, G. (2005). Which firms die? A look at manufacturing firm exit in Ghana. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 53 (3), 585–617.
- Frese, M., Gielnik, M. M., & Mensmann, M. (2016). *Psychological training for entrepreneurs to take action*. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 25 (3), 196-202. doi:[10.1177/0963721416636957](https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721416636957) ISSN 0963-7214.
- Gable, G. G. (1994). Integrating case study and survey research methods: an example in information systems. *European journal of information systems*, 3, 112-126.
- Galvin, R. (2010). *The Politics of Mathematics: Modelling the Economics of Thermal Refits in the German Building Regulations*. Working Paper, available from http://justsolutions.EU/Resources/Galvin_PoliticsOfMaths_Draft_July2010.pdf Accessed 17 November.
- Garud, R., Hardy, C., & Maguire, S. (2007). Institutional entrepreneurship as embedded agency: An introduction to the special issue. *Organization studies*, 28(7), 957-969.
- Gassen, H.G. (1982). The bacterial ribosome: a programmable enzyme. *Applied Chemistry*, 94(1), 15-27.
- GATT-WTO. (1947). Valuation for customs purposes (Article VII). WTO.ORG. https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/cusval_e/cusval_info_e.htm
- Gebert, D. (1992). Arbeitsgruppe. In E. Gaugler & W. Weber (Ed.) *Enzyklopädie der Betriebswirtschaftslehre Handwörterbuch des Personalwesens* (sec. edition), (p. 120-129). Stuttgart: Poeschl.
- Gelfand, M. J., Leslie, L. M., & Fehr, R. (2008). To prosper, organizational psychology should... adopt a global perspective. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 29(4), 493-517.
- George, G., Rao-Nicholson, R., Corbishley, C., & Bansal, R. (2015). Institutional entrepreneurship, governance, and poverty: Insights from emergency medical response services in India. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 32(1), 39–65. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10490-014-9377-9>.
- Ghimire. (2005). The Legislative Review Study on Customs Policies of HMG.

- Goel, S., & Jones III, R. J. (2016). Entrepreneurial exploration and exploitation in family business: A systematic review and future directions. *Family Business Review*, 29(1), 94-120.
- Golenkova, Z. T., & Igitkhanian, E. D. (2008). Certain aspects of the Russian entrepreneur's life today. *Sociological Research*, 47(2), 66-81.
- GRA & West Blue (2016). Strategic Action Plan and Road Map: Ghana National Single Window.
- GRA. (2021). GRA-Customs. <https://gra.gov.gh/customs/>
- Grainger, A. (2008). Customs and trade facilitation: from concepts to implementation. *World customs journal*, 2(1), 17-30.
- Grainger, A. (2014). The WTO trade facilitation agreement: Consulting the private sector. *Journal of World Trade*, 48(6).
- Grainger, Karen. (2011). First order and second order politeness: Institutional and intercultural contexts. In Linguistic Politeness Research Group (ed.), *Discursive approaches to politeness*, 167–188. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Grande, J., Madsen, E. L., & Borch, O. J. (2011). The relationship between resources, entrepreneurial orientation and performance in farm-based ventures. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 23(3-4), 89-111.
- Gredler, G. R. (1997). Issues in early childhood screening and assessment. *Psychology in the Schools*, 34(2), 99-106.
- Greene, R., Luther, J. E., Devillers, R., & Eddy, B. (2010). An approach to GIS-based multiple criteria decision analysis that integrates exploration and evaluation phases: Case study in a forest-dominated landscape. *Forest Ecology and Management*, 260(12), 2102-2114.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2(163-194), 105.
- Gupta, R., & Pandit, A. (2012). Strategic Entrepreneurial Orientation: Development of a Multi-Dimensional Construct Based on Literature Review. *South Asian Journal of Management*, 19(4).
- Gurses, K., & Ozcan, P. (2015). Entrepreneurship in regulated markets: Framing contests and collective action to introduce pay TV in the US. *Academy of Management Journal*, 58(6), 1709-1739.
- Ha-Brookshire, J. E. (2009). Does the firm size matter on firm entrepreneurship and performance? US apparel import intermediary case. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 16(1), 132-146.

- Hage, Jerald (1980). *Theories of Organization*. New York: Wiley.
- Hagen, E. (1962). *On the Theory of Social Change: How Economic Growth Begins*, Homewood, Dorsey, Illinois
- Hanoteau, J., & Vial, V. (2020). Institutional quality, conforming and evasive entrepreneurship. *Eurasian Business Review*, 10(1), 97-121.
- Hawley, R. (1968). Solid insulators in vacuum: a review. *Vacuum*, 18(7), 383-390.
- Hayton, J. C., George, G., & Zahra, S. A. (2002). National culture and entrepreneurship: A review of behavioral research. *Entrepreneurship theory and practice*, 26(4), 33-52.
- Heugens, P. P., & Lander, M. W. (2009). Structure! Agency! (and other quarrels): A meta-analysis of institutional theories of organization. *Academy of Management Journal*, 52(1), 61-85.
- Heyman, J. (1995). Putting power in the anthropology of bureaucracy: The Immigration and Naturalization Service at the Mexico–United States borderTitle.
- Hilson, G., Hilson, A., & Maconachie, R. (2018). Opportunity or necessity? Conceptualizing entrepreneurship at African small-scale mines. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 131(October), 286–302. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2017.12.008>
- Hirsch, P. M., & Lounsbury, M. (1997). Ending the family quarrel: Toward a reconciliation of “old” and “new” institutionalisms. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40(4), 406-418.
- Hofer, C. W., & Bygrave, W. D. (1992). Researching entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship theory and Practice*, 16(3), 91-100.
- Hornig, S., & Grady, C. (2003). Misunderstanding in clinical research: distinguishing therapeutic misconception, therapeutic misestimation, & therapeutic optimism. *IRB: Ethics & Human Research*, 25(1), 11-16.
- Hornsey, M. J., Harris, E. A., & Fielding, K. S. (2018). The psychological roots of anti-vaccination attitudes: A 24-nation investigation. *Health psychology*, 37(4), 307.
- Hoskisson, R. E., Eden, L., Lau, C. M., & Wright, M. (2000). Strategy in Emerging Economies
Author (s): Robert E . Hoskisson , Lorraine Eden , Chung Ming Lau and Mike Wright
Published by: Academy of Management Stable URL : <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1556394> REFERENCES Linked references are available on JSTOR fo. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(3), 249–267.
- Hosseini, M., Dadfar, H., & Brege, S. (2018). Firm-level entrepreneurship and international performance: A simultaneous examination of orientation and action. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, 16, 338-368.
- Howlett, M. and M. Ramesh (2003). *Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems*, Toronto, Oxford University Press

- Huang, K. P., & Wang, K. Y. (2013). The moderating effect of social capital and environmental dynamism on the link between entrepreneurial orientation and resource acquisition. *Quality & Quantity*, 47, 1617-1628.
- Hughes, M., & Morgan, R. E. (2007). Deconstructing the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and business performance at the embryonic stage of firm growth. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 36(5), 651-661.
- Hussein, M. E., Hirst, S., Salyers, V., & Osuji, J. (2014). Using grounded theory as a method of inquiry: Advantages and disadvantages.
- Igwe, P. A., Onjewu, A., & Uguru, N. S. (2018). African Entrepreneurship. African Entrepreneurship, February. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-73700-3>
- Ireland, R. D., Covin, J. G., & Kuratko, D. F. (2009). Conceptualizing corporate entrepreneurship strategy. *Entrepreneurship Theory Practice*, 33, 19-46.
- Ireland, R. D., Covin, J. G., & Kuratko, D. F. (2009). Max (e T , e T). 979, 1000.
- Jansson, T., & Sedaca, S. (2000). Formalizing small businesses-the case of Colombia. *Small Enterprise Development*, 11(3), 4-15.
- Javorcik, B. S., & Narciso, G. (2017). WTO accession and tariff evasion. *Journal of Development Economics*, 125(October 2016), 59-71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2016.11.001>
- Jogaratnam, G. (2002). Entrepreneurial orientation and environmental hostility: an assessment of small, independent restaurant businesses. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 26(3), 258-277.
- Juárez Allende, H. H. (2022). WCO Relation with Customs Brokers. In *The World Customs Organization: Past, Present and Future* (pp. 115-120). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Karim, S., Appiah, M., Naeem, M. A., Lucey, B. M., & Li, M. (2022). Modelling the role of institutional quality on carbon emissions in Sub-Saharan African countries. *Renewable Energy*, 198, 213-221.
- Kauber, P. (1986, November). What's wrong with a science of MIS. In *the Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the American Decision Science Institute*.
- Khanna, T., & Palepu, K. (1997). Why focused strategies. *Harvard Business Review*, 75(4), 41-51.
- Khavul, S., Bruton, G. D., & Wood, E. (2009). Informal family business in Africa. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 33(6), 1219-1238.
- Khoury, T. A., & Prasad, A. (2016). Entrepreneurship amid concurrent institutional constraints in less developed countries. *Business & Society*, 55(7), 934-969.

- Kiggundu, B. M., & Roberts, F. L. (1988). Stripping in HMA mixtures: State-of-the-art and critical review of test methods.
- Kiggundu, M. N. (2002). Entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship
- Kim, B. (2001). Social constructivism. *Emerging perspectives on learning, teaching, and technology*, 1(1), 16.
- Kim, S., Lee, J., & Park, C. (2009). ADB Working Paper Series on Regional Economic Integration Emerging Asia : Decoupling or Recoupling. 31.
- Kimani, J., Maclean, I. W., Bwayo, J. J., MacDonald, K., Oyugi, J., Maitha, G. M., ... & Brunham, R. C. (1996). Risk factors for Chlamydia trachomatis pelvic inflammatory disease among sex workers in Nairobi, Kenya. *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 173(6), 1437-1444.
- Kimberly, J. R., & Evanisko, M. J. (1981). Organizational innovation: The influence of individual, organizational, and contextual factors on hospital adoption of technological and administrative innovations. *Academy of Management Journal*, 24(4), 689-713.
- King, H. R., Pankhurst, N. W., Watts, M., & Pankhurst, P. M. (2003). Effect of elevated summer temperatures on gonadal steroid production, vitellogenesis and egg quality in female Atlantic salmon. *Journal of Fish Biology*, 63(1), 153-167.
- King, J. (2003). Next steps in Tax Reform - Preliminary Report Nepal Title.
- Kirzner, I. M. (1997). Entrepreneurial discovery and the competitive market process: An Austrian approach. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 35(1), 60-85.
- Klapper, L., Laeven, L., & Rajan, R. (2006). Entry regulation as a barrier to entrepreneurship. *Journal of financial economics*, 82(3), 591-629.
- Klašnja-Milićević, A., Vesin, B., Ivanović, M., Budimac, Z., Jain, L. C., Klašnja-Milićević, A., ... & Jain, L. C. (2017). Agents in E-learning environments. *E-Learning Systems: Intelligent Techniques for Personalization*, 43-49.
- Knight, G. A. (1997). Cross-cultural reliability and validity of a scale to measure firm entrepreneurial orientation. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 12(3), 213-225.
- Kolb, R. W. (2018). Academy of Management. *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Business Ethics and Society*, 29(1), 7–31. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483381503.n11>
- Koppl, R., & Minniti, M. (2010). Market processes and entrepreneurial studies. *Handbook of Entrepreneurship Research: An Interdisciplinary Survey and Introduction*, 217-248.
- Kose, M. A., Otrok, C., & Prasad, E. (2012). Global business cycles: convergence or decoupling?. *International Economic Review*, 53(2), 511-538.

- Koul, A. K., & Koul, A. K. (2018). WTO Ninth Ministerial Conference and Trade Facilitation Agreement, 2013. *Guide to the WTO and GATT: Economics, Law and Politics*, 213-220.
- Krasner, S. D. (1984). Approaches to the state: Alternative conceptions and historical dynamics.
- Kraus, S., Rigtering, J. C., Hughes, M., & Hosman, V. (2012). Entrepreneurial orientation and the business performance of SMEs: a quantitative study from the Netherlands. *Review of Managerial Science*, 6, 161-182.
- Krauss, S. I., Frese, M., Friedrich, C., & Unger, J. M. (2005). Entrepreneurial orientation: A psychological model of success among southern African small business owners. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 14(3), 315-344.
- Kreiser, P. M., & Davis, J. (2010). Entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance: The unique impact of innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship*, 23(1), 39-51.
- Kreiser, P. M., Marino, L. D., Kuratko, D. F., & Weaver, K. M. (2013). Disaggregating entrepreneurial orientation: the non-linear impact of innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking on SME performance. *Small Business Economics*, 40, 273-291.
- Kreiser, P., Marino, L., Davis, J., Tang, Z. H. I., & Lee, C. (2010). Firm-level entrepreneurship: the role of proactiveness, innovativeness and strategic renewal in the creation and exploration of opportunities. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, 15(02), 143-163.
- Kropp, F., Lindsay, N. J., & Shoham, A. (2004). Entrepreneurial and marketing orientations: A new synthesis. *Working paper: Monterey Institute of International Studies*.
- Kropp, F., Lindsay, N. J., & Shoham, A. (2008). Entrepreneurial orientation and international entrepreneurial business venture startup. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 14(2), 102-117.
- Kuhn, K., Galloway, T., & Collins-Williams, M. (2016). Near, far, and online: Small business owners' advice-seeking from peers. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 23(1), 189-206.
- Kukla, A. (2013). *Social Constructivism and the Philosophy of Science*. Routledge.
- Kusumawardhani, A., McCarthy, G., & Perera, N. (2009). *Framework of entrepreneurial orientation and networking: A study of SMEs Performance in a developing country*.
- Kvale, S. (1999). The psychoanalytic interview as qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 5(1), 87-113.

- Kwakwa, P. A., Acheampong, V., & Aboagye, S. (2022). Does agricultural development affect environmental quality? The case of carbon dioxide emission in Ghana. *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*, 33(2), 527-548.
- Kwakye, J. K. (2020). Key policy initiatives for Ghana's post COVID-19 recovery.
- La Porta, R. L., Lopez-deSilanes, F., Shleifer, A., & Vishny, R. W. (1999). Investor protection and corporate valuation (No. w7403).
- Lee, S. M., & Peterson, S. J. (2000). Culture, entrepreneurial orientation, and global competitiveness. *Journal of World Business*, 35(4), 401-416.
- Leeds-Hurwitz, W. (2012). These fictions we call disciplines. *Electronic Journal of Communication/La Revue Electronique de Communication*, 22, 3-4.
- Levine, R. (1997). Financial development and economic growth: views and agenda. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 35(2), 688-726.
- Li, S., Gao, L., Han, C., Gupta, B., Alhalabi, W., & Almakdi, S. (2023). Exploring the effect of digital transformation on Firms' innovation performance. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 8(1), 100317.
- Li, Y., Chen, H., Liu, Y., & Peng, M. W. (2014). Managerial ties, organizational learning, and opportunity capture: A social capital perspective. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 31, 271-291.
- Lieberman, M. B., & Montgomery, D. B. (1988). First-mover advantages. *Strategic management journal*, 9(S1), 41-58.
- Light, I., & Dana, L. P. (2013). Boundaries of social capital in entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship theory and practice*, 37(3), 603-624.
- Lindsay, V., Ashill, N., Roxas, B., & Victorio, A. (2014). Entrepreneurial orientation and performance of microenterprises in an emerging economy. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 22(7), 631-656.
- Love, D. C., Asche, F., Gephart, J. A., Zhu, J., Garlock, T., Stoll, J. S., ... & Bloem, M. W. (2023). Identifying opportunities for aligning production and consumption in the US fisheries by considering seasonality. *Reviews in Fisheries Science & Aquaculture*, 31(2), 259-273.
- Low, M. B., & MacMillan, I. C. (1988). Entrepreneurship: Past research and future challenges. *Journal of Management*, 14(2), 139-161.
- Lu, Y., Tsang, E. W., & Peng, M. W. (2008). Knowledge management and innovation strategy in the Asia Pacific: Toward an institution-based view. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 25, 361-374.

- Lumpkin, G. T., & Dess, G. G. (1996). Clarifying the entrepreneurial orientation construct and linking it to performance. *Academy of Management Review*, 21(1), 135-172.
- Madhoushi, M., Sadati, A., Delavari, H., Mehdivand, M., & Mihandost, R. (2011). Entrepreneurial orientation and innovation performance: The mediating role of knowledge management. *Asian Journal of Business Management*, 3(4), 310-316.
- Maidique, M. A., & Patch, P. (1982). 1982. Corporate strategy and technological policy.
- Mair, J., & Marti, I. (2009). Entrepreneurship in and around institutional voids: A case study from Bangladesh. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 24(5), 419-435.
- Mair, J., Marti, I., & Ventresca, M. J. (2012). Building inclusive markets in rural Bangladesh: How intermediaries work institutional voids. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(4), 819-850.
- Malone, T. W., & Crowston, K. (1990, September). What is coordination theory and how can it help design cooperative work systems In *Proceedings of the 1990 ACM conference on Computer-supported cooperative work* (pp. 357-370).
- Mambula, C. (2002). Perceptions of SME growth constraints in Nigeria. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 40, 58–65.
- Matejun, M. (2018). The process of opportunities exploration and exploitation in the development of SMES' innovativeness. *Management and Production Engineering Review*, 9(3), 3-15.
- McGrath, R. G., MacMillan, I. C., & Scheinberg, S. (1992). Elitists, risk-takers, and rugged individualists? An exploratory analysis of cultural differences between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. *Journal of business venturing*, 7(2), 115-135.
- McGrath, S., & King, K. (1999). Learning to grow? The importance of education and training for small and micro- enterprise development. In K. King & S. McGrath (Eds.), *Enterprise in Africa: Between growth and poverty* (pp. 211–222). London: Intermediate Technology.
- McMahon, M. (1997, December). Social constructivism and the World Wide Web-A paradigm for learning. In *ASCILITE conference*. Perth, Australia (Vol. 327).
- McMullen, J. S., & Shepherd, D. A. (2006). Entrepreneurial action and the role of uncertainty in the theory of the entrepreneur. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(1), 132-152.
- McPherson, M. A. (1996). Growth of micro and small enterprises in southern Africa. *Journal of Development Economics*, 48(2), 253–277.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education. Revised and Expanded from Case Study Research in Education*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, 350 Sansome St, San Francisco, CA 94104.

- Merriam-Webster, 1991, Webster's ninth new collegiate dictionary, Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, Springfield, MA.
- Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(2), 340-363.
- Michailova, S., Piekkari, R., Storgaard, M., & Tienari, J. (2017). Rethinking ethnocentrism in international business research. *Global Strategy Journal*, 7(4), 335-353.
- Miller, D., & Friesen, P. H. (1978). Archetypes of strategy formulation. *Management Science*, 24, 921-933.
- Miller, A., & Camp, B. (1985). Exploring determinants of success in corporate ventures. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 1(1), 87-105.
- Miller, D. (1983). The correlates of entrepreneurship in three types of firms. *Management Science*, 29(7), 770-791.
- Miller, D. (2011). Miller (1983) revisited: A reflection on EO research and some suggestions for the future. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, 35(5), 873-894. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2011.00457.x>
- Minh, T. T., & Hjortsø, C. N. (2015). How Institutions Influence SME Innovation and Networking Practices: The Case of Vietnamese Agribusiness. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 53, 209-228.
- Mirvahedi, S., & Morrish, S. (2017). The role of serendipity in opportunity exploration. *Journal of Research in Marketing and Entrepreneurship*, 19(2), 182-200.
- Mishra, C. S. (2019). Does managerial ability drive firm innovativeness. *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, 68(4), 1139-1154.
- Mitsuhiro Sasakawa. (2017). The small black mushroom fly that damages green onions.
- Mole, K. F., & Mole, M. (2010). Entrepreneurship as the structuration of individual and opportunity: A response using a critical realist perspective: Comment on Sarason, Dean and Dillard. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 25(2), 230-237.
- Morris, M. H., Davis, D. L., & Allen, J. W. (1994). Fostering corporate entrepreneurship: Cross-cultural comparisons of the importance of individualism versus collectivism. *Journal of international business studies*, 25, 65-89.
- Mthanti, T., & Ojah, K. (2017). Entrepreneurial orientation (EO): Measurement and policy implications of entrepreneurship at the macroeconomic level. *Research Policy*, 46(4), 724-739. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2017.01.012>
- Mthanti, T., & Ojah, K. (2018). Institutions, human capital and entrepreneurial orientation: implications for growth policy. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*, 7(2), 135-160.

- Murphy, K. J. (1986). Incentives, learning, and compensation: A theoretical and empirical investigation of managerial labor contracts. *The Rand Journal of Economics*, 59-76.
- Nair, M., Arvin, M. B., Pradhan, R. P., & Bahmani, S. (2021). Is higher economic growth possible through better institutional quality and a lower carbon footprint? Evidence from developing countries. *Renewable Energy*, 167, 132-145.
- Narine, L., & Persaud, D. D. (2003). Gaining and maintaining commitment to large-scale change in healthcare organizations. *Health Services Management Research*, 16(3), 179-187.
- Naudé, W. (2010). Entrepreneurship, developing countries, and development economics: New approaches and insights. *Small Business Economics*, 34(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-009-9198-2>
- Nelson, J. (1997). Incidence of the mucopolysaccharidoses in Northern Ireland. *Hum Genet*, 101. 355–358
- Network, I., & Universities, C. (2007). *World Customs Journal*, 1(2).
- Ninsin, A. K. (1989). Planning for growth of small-scale industries in the informal sector: The realities, challenges of the Ghanaian economy. In E. Aryeetey (Ed.), *Proceedings of ISSER/UNDP International Conference on Planning for Growth and Development for Africa*. Legon: University of Ghana.
- North, D. C. (1990). A transaction cost theory of politics. *Journal of theoretical politics*, 2(4), 355-367.
- Novikov, I. (2014). How does Institutional Environment Affect the Internationalization of Small Enterprises? *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 12(March), 489–497. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2212-5671\(14\)00371-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2212-5671(14)00371-2)
- Nwafor, M., Adenikinju, A. F., & Ogujiuba, K. K. (2007). The impacts of trade liberalization on poverty in Nigeria: Dynamic simulations in a CGE model. *Poverty and Economic Policy Research Network Working Paper No. MPIA-2007-16*.
- Nyamekye, A. P., Tian, Z., & Cheng, F. (2021). Analysis on the contribution of agricultural sector on the economic development of Ghana. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 9(3), 1297-1311.
- Ofori-Dankwa, J., & Julian, S. D. (2013). Dynamism, capital structure, and performance in a sub-saharan economy: Extending the institutional difference hypothesis. *Organization Science*, 24(5), 1422–1438. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1120.0789>
- Okyere, I., & Jilau, L. (2020). The impact of export and import to economic growth of Ghana. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 12(21), 130-138.

- Olusola, B. E., Chimezie, M. E., Shuuya, S. M., & Addeh, G. Y. A. (2022). The Impact of Inflation Rate on Private Consumption Expenditure and Economic Growth—Evidence from Ghana. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 10(4), 1601-1646.
- Osei-Owusu, J. Y., & Mahmood, R. (2020). Port paperless system in Ghana, the way forward: GCNET or UNIPASS/ICUMS. *ADRRI Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 17(6 (5)), 72-87.
- Osiyevskyy, O., Shirokova, G., & Ritala, P. (2020). Exploration and exploitation in crisis environment: Implications for level and variability of firm performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 114, 227-239.
- Otoo, A. N. O. (2023). *Assessment of Industrial Policies in Ghana: A Case Study on the Current Policy of One District One Factory Policy (1DIF)* (Doctoral dissertation, Western Michigan University).
- Owusu-Ansah, D. (2023). History of Ghana. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*, April, 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.1360>
- Pal, K. K., & Gardener, B. M. (2006). Biological control of plant pathogens.
- Pal, L. A. (2006). *Exporting policy models: The role of international governmental organizations*. Ottawa: Carleton University.
- Palmer, R. (2007). Skills for work from skills development to decent livelihoods in Ghana's rural informal economy. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 27(4), 397-420. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2006.10.003> DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2006.10.003>
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry: A personal, experiential perspective. *Qualitative Social Work*, 1(3), 261-283.
- Peng, M. W. (2002). Towards an institution-based view of business strategy. *Asia Pacific journal of management*, 19, 251-267.
- Peng, M. W. (2003). Institutional transitions and strategic choices. *Academy of Management Review*, 28(2), 275-296.
- Peng, M. W., & Luo, Y. (2000). Managerial ties and firm performance in a transition economy: The nature of a micro-macro link. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(3), 486-501.
- Penrose, E. T. (1959). *The Theory of the Growth of the Firm*. New York: John Wiley.
- Phansalkar, A., Joshi, A., Eeckhout, L., & John, L. K. (2005, March). Measuring program similarity: Experiments with SPEC CPU benchmark suites. In *IEEE International Symposium on Performance Analysis of Systems and Software, 2005. ISPASS 2005*. (pp. 10-20). IEEE.

- Pinchot, G. (1985). *Intrapreneuring, why you don't have to leave the corporation to become an entrepreneur*. New York: Harper & Row, publishers
- Porter, M. E., & Millar, V. E. (1985). How information gives you competitive advantage.
- Prawat, R. S., & Floden, R. E. (1994). Philosophical perspectives on constructivist views of learning. *Educational Psychologist*, 29(1), 37-48.
- Pullon, S., Morgan, S., Macdonald, L., McKinlay, E., & Gray, B. (2016). Observation of interprofessional collaboration in primary care practice: a multiple case study. *Journal of interprofessional care*, 30(6), 787-794.
- Quartey, P., Aidam, P., & Obeng, C. K. (2007). The impact of trade liberalization on poverty in Ghana.
- Quaye, D. M., & Acheampong, G. (2013). Are SME Owner-Managers Entrepreneurs? Evidence from Ghana. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 5(23), 37-47. <http://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/EJBM/article/view/7471>
- Quinn, J. B. (1979). Technological innovation, entrepreneurship, and strategy. *Sloan Management Review (pre-1986)*, 20(3), 19.
- Rajkarnikar, P. R. (2006). Implementation of the WTO Customs Valuation Agreement in Nepal: An ex-ante impact assessment.
- Rauch, A., Wiklund, J., Lumpkin, G. T., & Frese, M. (2009). Entrepreneurial orientation and business performance: An assessment of past research and suggestions for the future. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 33(3), 761-787.
- Rerup, C., & Feldman, M. S. (2011). Routines as a source of change in organizational schemata: The role of trial-and-error learning. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(3), 577-610.
- Reynolds, P. D., Hay, M., & Camp, S. M. (1999). Global entrepreneurship monitor. *Kansas City, Missouri: Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership*.
- Richard, O. C., Barnett, T., Dwyer, S., & Chadwick, K. (2004). Cultural diversity in management, firm performance, and the moderating role of entrepreneurial orientation dimensions. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47(2), 255-266.
- Ridley, W., & Shirin, F. (2023). *The Effectiveness of Development-Oriented Non-Reciprocal Trade Preferences in Promoting Agricultural Trade* (No. 2479-2022-2188).
- Robinson, J. (2006). Navigating social and institutional barriers to markets: How social entrepreneurs identify and evaluate opportunities. *Social Entrepreneurship*, 95-120.
- Robinson, K. (2004). Chandra Jayawardena and the ethical 'turn' in Australian anthropology. *Critique of Anthropology*, 24(4), 379-402.
- Robson, P. J. A., & Obeng, B. A. (2008). The barriers to growth in Ghana. *Small Business Economics*, 30(4), 385-403.

- Rogerson, C. M. (2001). In search of the African miracle: Debates on successful small enterprise development in Africa. *Habitat International*, 25(1), 112–142.
- Rosenbusch, N., Rauch, A., & Bausch, A. (2013). The mediating role of entrepreneurial orientation in the task environment–performance relationship: A meta-analysis. *Journal of management*, 39(3), 633-659.
- Roth, K. (2000). The charade of US ratification of international human rights treaties. *Chicago Journal of International Law*, 1(2), 14.
- Rowley, J. (2002). Using case studies in research. *Management research news*, 25(1), 16-27.
- Roxas, B., & Chadee, D. (2013). Effects of formal institutions on the performance of the tourism sector in the Philippines: The mediating role of entrepreneurial orientation. *Tourism Management*, 37, 1-12.
- Roxas, B., & Coetzer, A. (2012). Institutional environment, managerial attitudes and environmental sustainability orientation of small firms. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 111, 461-476.
- Runeson, P., & Höst, M. (2009). Guidelines for conducting and reporting case study research in software engineering. *Empirical software engineering*, 14, 131-164.
- Saeed, S., Yousafzai, S. Y., & Engelen, A. (2014). On cultural and macroeconomic contingencies of the entrepreneurial orientation-performance relationship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 38(2), 255-290.
- Sakhdari, K., Burgers, H., Yadollahi Farsi, J., & Rostamnezhad, S. (2020). Shaping the organisational context for corporate entrepreneurship and performance in Iran: the interplay between social context and performance management. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 31(8), 1020–1046. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2017.1396547>
- Sarason, Y., Dean, T., & Dillard, J. F. (2006). Entrepreneurship as the nexus of individual and opportunity: A structuration view. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 21(3), 286-305.
- Sarason, Y., Dillard, J. F., & Dean, T. (2010). How can we know the dancer from the dance Reply to “Entrepreneurship as the structuration of individual and opportunity: A response using a critical realist perspective”. (Mole and Mole, 2008). *Journal of Business Venturing*, 25(2), 238-243.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2007). *Research methods. Business Students* 4th edition. Pearson Education Limited, England, 6(3), 1-268.
- Schein, E. H. (2009). *The corporate culture survival guide* (Vol. 158). John Wiley & Sons.

- Scherer, R. F., Adams, J. S., & Wiebe, F. A. (1989). Developing Entrepreneurial Behaviours: A Social Learning Theory Perspective. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 2(3), 16-27.
- Schramm, W. (1971). Notes on Case Studies of Instructional Media Projects.
- Schumpeter, J. A., & Nichol, A. J. (1934). Robinson's economics of imperfect competition. *Journal of Political Economy*, 42(2), 249-259.
- Schumpeter, J.A. (1934). *The Theory of Economic Development*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Schwandt, T. A. (1994). Constructivist, interpretivist approaches human inquiry. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 1(1994), 118-137.
- Schwandt, T. A., Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2007). Judging interpretations: But is it rigorous? Trustworthiness and authenticity in naturalistic evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 2007(114), 11-25.
- Scott, W.R. (1995) *Institutions and Organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Scott, A. J. (2006). Entrepreneurship, innovation and industrial development: geography and the creative field revisited. *Small Business Economics*, 26, 1-24.
- Scott, W.R. (2014). *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests and Identities*, 4th ed., Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Seifu, T. (2009). *Custom valuation system in Ethiopia*. 57–71.
- Sen, S. (2002). *Distant sovereignty: National imperialism and the origins of British India*. New York: Routledge.
- Shane, S. (1994). The effect of national culture on the choice between licensing and direct foreign investment. *Strategic Management Journal*, 15(8), 627-642.
- Shane, S. (2000). Prior knowledge and the discovery of entrepreneurial opportunities. *Organization Science*, 11(4), 448-469.
- Shane, S. A. (2003). *A general theory of entrepreneurship: The individual-opportunity nexus*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research. *Academy of management review*, 25(1), 217-226.
- Shantz, A. S., Kistruck, G., & Zietsma, C. (2018). The opportunity not taken: The occupational identity of entrepreneurs in contexts of poverty. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 33(4), 416-437.
- Shibusawa, T. (2008). *Interracial Asian couples: Beyond Black and White*.

- Short, J. C., Ketchen Jr, D. J., Shook, C. L., & Ireland, R. D. (2010). The concept of “opportunity” in entrepreneurship research: Past accomplishments and future challenges. *Journal of Management*, 36(1), 40-65.
- Shrivastava, P., & Grant, J. (1985). ‘Empirically derived models of strategic decision-making processes’, *Strategic Management Journal*, 6, 97–113.
- Sobh, R., & Perry, C. (2006). Research design and data analysis in realism research. *European Journal of marketing*, 40(11/12), 1194-1209.
- Solano Acosta, A., Herrero Crespo, Á., & Collado Agudo, J. (2018). Effect of market orientation, network capability and entrepreneurial orientation on international performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). *International Business Review*, 27(6), 1128–1140. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2018.04.004>
- Sorescu, A. B., & Spanjol, J. (2008). Innovation’s effect on firm value and risk: Insights from consumer packaged goods. *Journal of Marketing*, 72(2), 114–132. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.72.2.114>
- Spinosa C, Flores F, Dreyfus HL (1997) *Disclosing New Worlds: Entrepreneurship, Democratic Action, and the Cultivation of Solidarity*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Spitzer, J. J., & Singh, S. (2011). Assessing the effectiveness of lifecycle (target-date) funds during the accumulation phase. *Financial Services Review*, 20(4), 327.
- Squires, V. (2010). *A policy study of the emergence of a joint interdisciplinary school* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Saskatchewan).
- Sriram, V., & Mersha, T. (2010). "Stimulating entrepreneurship in Africa", *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, 6(4), 257-272. <https://doi.org/10.1108/20425961201000020>
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. sage.
- Stake, R. E. (2005). *Qualitative case studies*.
- Stambaugh, R. F., & Yuan, Y. (2017). Mispricing factors. *The Review of Financial Studies*, 30(4), 1270-1315.
- Staples, D. A. (2002). *Pycnogonum* (Pycnogonida: Pycnogonidae) from Australia with descriptions of two new species. *Memoirs of the Museum of Victoria*, 59, 541–553. [doi:10.24199/j.mmv.2002.59.12](https://doi.org/10.24199/j.mmv.2002.59.12).
- Steier, L. (2009). Where do new firms come from? Households, family capital, ethnicity, and the welfare mix. *Family Business Review*, 22(3), 273-278.
- Steier, L. P. (2009). Familial capitalism in global institutional contexts: Implications for corporate governance and entrepreneurship in East Asia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 26, 513-535.

- Stenholm, P., Acs, Z. J., & Wuebker, R. (2013). Exploring country-level institutional arrangements on the rate and type of entrepreneurial activity. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 28(1), 176-193.
- Stevenson, H. H. and Jarillo, J. C. (1990) 'A Paradigm of Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial Management', *Strategic Management Journal*, 11, 17- 27
- Stevenson, H. H., & Sahlman, W. A. (1989). The entrepreneurial process. *Small Business and Entrepreneurship*, 94-157.
- Stinchcombe, A. (1965). Social structure and organizations, in March, J. (Ed.), *Handbook of Organizations*, Rand McNally, Chicago, IL.
- Sturman, M. C. (1999). Multiple approaches to analyzing count data in studies of individual differences: The propensity for type I errors, illustrated with the case of absenteeism prediction. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 59(3), 414-430.
- Styles, C., & Seymour, R. G. (2006). Opportunities for marketing researchers in international entrepreneurship. *International Marketing Review*, 23(2), 126-145.
- Su, L. J., Hu, K. H., Zhang, W. F., Wang, J., Lei, Y., Zhang, C. L., ... & Zheng, Q. H. (2017). Characteristics and triggering mechanism of Xinmo landslide on 24 June 2017 in Sichuan, China. *Journal of Mountain Science*, 14(9), 1689-1700.
- Sutter, M., Kocher, M. G., Glätzle-Rützler, D., & Trautmann, S. T. (2013). Impatience and uncertainty: Experimental decisions predict adolescents' field behavior. *American Economic Review*, 103(1), 510-531.
- Swanson, D. R. (1977). Information retrieval as a trial-and-error process. *The Library Quarterly*, 47(2), 128-148.
- Takyi-Asiedu, S. (1993). Some socio-cultural factors regarding entrepreneurial activity in sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 8: 91–98.
- Taylor, C. R., Walsh, M. G., & Lee, C. (2003). The U.S./EU Beef Controversy and a Proposed Framework for Resolving Standards Disputes in International Trade. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 37(1), 101–122. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.17456606.2003.tb00442.x>
- Teal, F. (1998). The Ghanaian manufacturing sector 1991– 1995: Firm growth, productivity and convergence, CSAE WPS/98–17.
- Teal, F., Habyarimana, J., Thiam, P., & Turner, G. (2006). Ghana: An analysis of firm productivity. In Regional program on enterprise development. Washington, DC: The World Bank: 1–72.
- Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246.

- Thornton, P. H., Ribeiro-Soriano, D., & Urbano, D. (2011). Socio-cultural factors and entrepreneurial activity: An overview. *International Small Business Journal*, 29(2), 105-118.
- Thoumrungroje, A. (2010). Institutional drivers of entrepreneurial intentions in an emerging economy: an empirical investigation in Thailand. *Journal of International Business and Economics*, 10(2), 79-90.
- Tracey, P., Phillips, N., & Jarvis, O. (2011). Bridging institutional entrepreneurship and the creation of new organizational forms: A multilevel model. *Organization science*, 22(1), 60-80.
- UNCTAD. (2020). General Profile: Ghana. Unctadstat. <http://unctadstat.unctad.org>
- UNCTADSTAT. (2014). Trade Statistics Review of Imports Structure and Reforms in Ghana. *Euro Economic A*, 1(36), 144.
- UNECE, (2005). Europe's Forests in a Changing Environment. Federal Research Centre for Forestry and Forest Products, Geneva, 60 pp.
- UNECE. (2015). Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for the 2020 Censuses of Population and Housing. 251 pages.
- UNECE. (2016). Trade Facilitation Implementation Guild: Ghana National Single Window Program. Retrieved from <http://tfig.unece.org/cases/Ghana.pdf> on 2nd December, 2017
- UNESCO. (2016). Incheon declaration. Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all. Paris: UNESCO.
- Urbano, D., Aparicio, S., & Audretsch, D. (2019). Twenty-five years of research on institutions, entrepreneurship, and economic growth: what has been learned. *Small Business Economics*, 53, 21-49.
- Vacu, N. P., & Odhiambo, N. M. (2017). A Review of Imports Structure and Reforms in Ghana. *EuroEconomica*, 36(1), 144–158.
- van Dijk, C. K. (2021). *A Country in Despair: Indonesia between 1997 and 2000* (Vol. 186). Brill.
- Venkataraman, S. (1997). The distinctive domain of entrepreneurship research: An editor's perspective. In J. Katz & R. Brockhaus (Eds.), *Advances in entrepreneurship, firm emergence and growth*: 3, 119–138. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Venkataraman, N. (1989). Strategic orientation of business enterprises: The construct, dimensionality, and measurement. *Management Science*, 35(8), 942-962.
- Vij, S., & Bedi, H. S. (2016). Are subjective business performance measures justified?. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 65(5), 603-621.

- Vygotsky, L. S., & Cole, M. (1978). *Mind in society: Development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard university press.
- Waitzkin, H. (1990). On studying the discourse of medical encounters: a critique of quantitative and qualitative methods and a proposal for reasonable compromise. *Medical Care*, 28(6), 473-488.
- Walkenhorst, P., & Yasui, T. (2005). Benefits of trade facilitation: A quantitative assessment. In *Quantitative Methods for Assessing the Effects of Non-tariff Measures and Trade Facilitation* (pp. 161-192).
- Wang, N., Cui, D., & Dong, Y. (2023). Study on the impact of business environment on private enterprises' technological innovation from the perspective of transaction cost. *Innovation and Green Development*, 2(1), 100034.
- Watson, M., Pantzar, M., & Shove, E. (2012). The dynamics of social practice: Everyday life and how it changes. *The dynamics of social practice*, 1-208.
- WCO (n.d). Guidelines on the development and use of a national valuation database as a risk assessment tool Available at: https://www.wcoomd.org/~media/wco/public/global/pdf/topics/valuation/instruments-and-tools/guides/guidelines_national_db.pdf?db=web. Accessed [2023].
- WCO, W. C. O. (2019). World Customs Organization. WCO. <http://www.wcoomd.org/~media/wco/public/global/pdf/about-us/wco-members/list-of-members-with-membership-date.pdf?db=web>
- WCO. (2015). Practical Guidelines for Valuation Control. WCO. <https://www.wcoesarocb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/16-Practical-Guidelines-for-Valuation-Control-2015-FINAL-EN.pdf>
- Wei, L. (2015). China Customs' reform: approaches to improving the professionalism of customs clearing agents to enhance trade facilitation. *World Customs Journal*, 9(1), 71-82.
- Welter, F., & Smallbone, D. (2011). Institutional perspectives on entrepreneurial behavior in challenging environments. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 49(1), 107-125.
- Wen, X., Tuchin, V. V., Luo, Q., & Zhu, D. (2009). Controlling the scattering of intralipid by using optical clearing agents. *Physics in Medicine & Biology*, 54(22), 6917.
- Wennekers, S., & Thurik, R. (1999). Linking Entrepreneurship And Econ. *Small Business Economics*, 13(1), 27-55.
- Werbel, J. D. (2000). Relationships among career exploration, job search intensity, and job search effectiveness in graduating college students. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 57(3), 379-394.

- West, M. A., & Farr, J. L. (1990). *Innovation at work*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Whyte, W. F. (1996). Qualitative sociology and deconstructionism. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 2(2), 220-226.
- Wiklund, J., & Shepherd, D. (2003). Knowledge-based resources, entrepreneurial orientation, and the performance of small and medium-sized businesses. *Strategic Management Journal*, 24(13), 1307-1314.
- Wilson, J., Mann, C., & Otsuki, T. (2005). Assessing the potential benefit of trade facilitation: a global perspective in P. Dee and M. Ferrantino, eds., *Quantitative Methods for Assessing the Effects of Non-Tariff Measures and Trade Facilitation*.
- Wilson, T., Hoffmann, P., Somasundaran, S., Kessler, J., Wiebe, J., Choi, Y., ... & Patwardhan, S. (2005, October). Opinion Finder: A system for subjectivity analysis. In *Proceedings of HLT/EMNLP 2005 interactive demonstrations* (pp. 34-35).
- Woo, C. Y., & Cooper, A. C. (1981). Strategies of effective low share businesses. *Strategic 9*
- WTO. (2017). Agreement on Implementation of Article VII of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (Customs Valuation Agreement). WTO.ORG. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139177955.011>
- WTO. (2019). Final Act Embodying The Results of The Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. WTO Ministerial Conferences. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108629874.014>
- Yanow, D. (2007). Interpretation in policy analysis: On methods and practice. *Critical policy analysis*, 1(1), 110-122.
- Yanow, D., & Schwartz-Shea, P. (2014). Wherefore" interpretive": An introduction. *Interpretation and method: Empirical research methods and the interpretive turn*, 2.
- Yin, R. K. (1980). *Studying the implementation of public programs* (p. 63). US Government Printing Office.
- Yin, R. K. (1998). The abridged version of case study research. *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods*, 2, 229-259.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Vol. 5). sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2012). Case study methods. In H. Cooper, P. M. Camic, D. L. Long, A. T. Panter, D. Rindskopf, & K. J. Sher (Eds.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol. 2. Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological* (pp. 141–155).
- Yin, R. K., & Davis, D. (2007). Adding new dimensions to case study evaluations: The case of evaluating comprehensive reforms. *New directions for evaluation*, 2007(113), 75-93.

- Yin, R. K., Bateman, P. G., & Moore, G. B. (1985). Case studies and organizational innovation: Strengthening the connection. *Knowledge*, 6(3), 249-260.
- Zahra, S. A. (1991). Predictors and financial outcomes of corporate entrepreneurship: An exploratory study. *Journal of business venturing*, 6(4), 259-285.
- Zahra, S. A., & Covin, J. G. (1993). Business strategy, technology policy and firm performance. *Strategic management journal*, 14(6), 451-478.
- Zamani, O., Chibanda, C., & Pelikan, J. (2022). Impacts of import restrictions on poultry producers in Ghana. *Q Open*, 2(1), qoac007.
- Zhou, Y. (2017). On the innovation and entrepreneurship education of undergraduate tourism management specialty in higher vocational education. 86(Emehss), 60–64. <https://doi.org/10.2991/emehss-17.2017.83>
- Zucker, W. V. (1983). Tannins: does structure determine function? An ecological perspective. *The American Naturalist*, 121(3), 335-365.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of Introduction



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
BUSINESS SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

UGBS
University of Ghana Business School

Ref. No.:3w5/119

21/02/2022

To Whom It May Concerns

Dear Sir/Madam.

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: MR DANIEL TWIMASIE



I write to introduce Mr. Twimasie who is PhD Candidate of the Department of Marketing and Entrepreneurship in the University of Ghana Business School.

He is conducting research on: **Import Valuation Outcomes & Firm-level Entrepreneurship (FLE) in Ghana: An Institutional Theory Perspective**

I should be grateful if you could provide him with the necessary information and assistance needed for the successful completion of this project. I must emphasize that; any information given will be used solely for academic purposes and will be treated with a strictest anonymity and confidentiality.

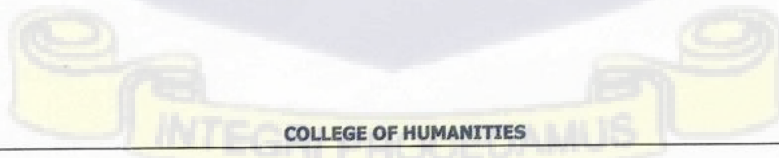
Counting on your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Kwame Adom (Senior Lecturer)

Supervisor

Email: kadom@ug.edu.gh



COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

P. O. Box LG 78, Legon, Accra, Ghana

• Telephone: +233 (0) 303 963 736

• Email: marketing@ug.edu.gh

• Website: www.ug.edu.gh

Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form

University of Ghana Business School



Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship

PROTOCOL CONSENT FORM

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of Study: Import Valuation Outcomes and Firm-level Entrepreneurship in Ghana: An Institutional Theory Perspective

Principal Investigator: Daniel K. Twimasie (Student)

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

General Information about Research

I am Daniel K. Twimasie, a Ph.D. candidate in Entrepreneurship at the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS). As part of the program requirements, I am researching to explore the implications of the implementation of the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Agreement on Customs Valuation (ACV) on entrepreneurial activities and initiatives in Ghana. Your organisation has been selected as part of a sample for the research. You are entreated to share information to assist in gathering the relevant data for analysis. The recorded interview request, which duration may not exceed one hour is aimed at gathering data to better understand the nature of the challenges in implementing the WTO-ACV from the perspectives of institutional and enterprise stakeholders. There are no "right or wrong answers". All views will be appreciated. The researcher will use an interview guide to gather responses or information from the participants selected for the study.

Benefits/Risks of the study

The study does not provide any direct benefit to participants involved in the study, however, the findings from this research may input institutional and/or public policy in augmenting firm-level entrepreneurship in Ghana. The study will not expose participants to any hazards or harm.



University of Ghana Business School



Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship

Confidentiality

The researcher will not identify the participants by name in any reports using information obtained from this study, and the confidentiality of a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

Compensation

There shall be no compensation available to participants of this study.

Withdrawal from Study

Participation in this study is voluntary, hence, participants may withdraw at any time without any penalty, and no one will be informed when he/she decides to participate or withdraw from the study. Participants will not be adversely affected if he/she declines to participate or later stops participating in the study. The participant and legal representative will be informed promptly should information become available that may be relevant to the participant's willingness to participate or withdraw.

Contact for Additional Information

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Administrator of the Ethics Committee for Humanities, ISSER, University of Ghana at ech@ug.edu.gh or 00233- 303-933-866.

University of Ghana Business School



Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship

PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

"I have read the above, asked questions and received responses regarding participation in this study. I freely consent to participate in this interview. By signing this form, I will not have waived any of my rights and will expect to receive a copy for my personal records."

Participant's Name

Organisation's Name

Signature

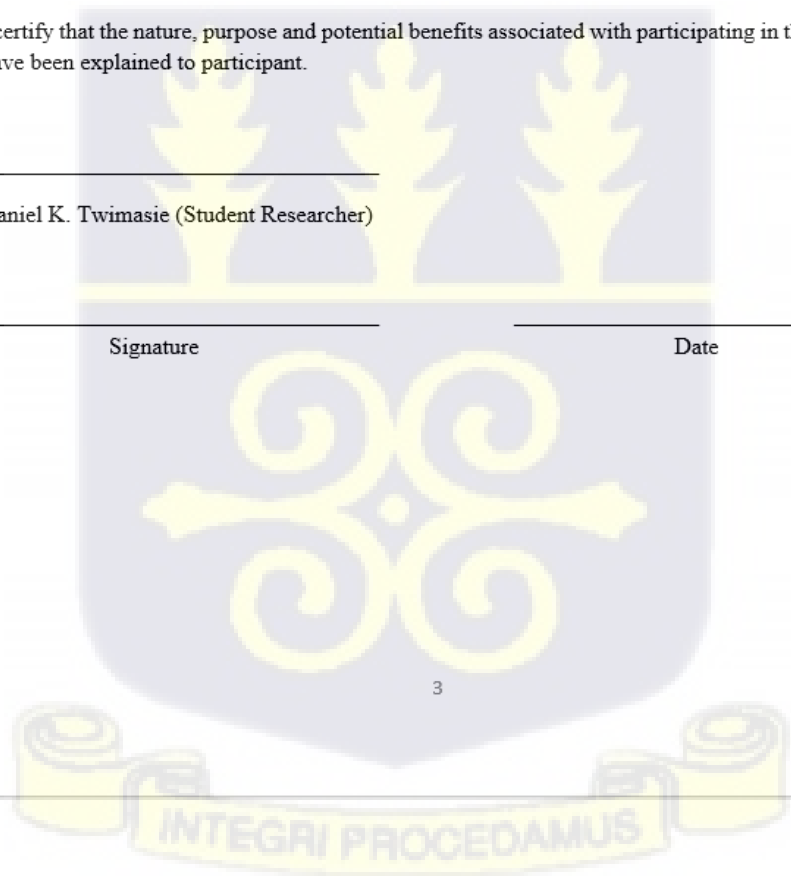
Date

I certify that the nature, purpose and potential benefits associated with participating in the research have been explained to participant.

Daniel K. Twimasie (Student Researcher)

Signature

Date



Appendix 3: Semi-structured Interview Questions

I. GRA-Customs Division Personnel

- How would you describe your role as a Customs Valuation Officer?
- How do you go about ascertaining Customs dutiable values?
- What do you do on the ground to ascertain it?
- What is “Transaction Value” in Customs valuation?
- What is the WTO requirement for “Transaction Value”?
- Does it have any application at all in Ghana?
- How is “Transaction Value” applied on imported merchandise?
- As a Customs officer, do you have any concerns about how valuation affects imports that have local production competition?
- Is that an issue as far as valuation is concerned?
- Does the state intervene in Customs valuation in Ghana?
- In what ways might the state intervene in Customs valuation in Ghana?
- How does the state influence import valuation in Ghana?
- What would you say are the typical challenges of imported merchandise valuation in Ghana, if any?
- How does that affect imported merchandise valuation in Ghana?
- Does the GRA-Customs Division have the requisite capacity and the resources to deal with the volume of import declarant Bills of Entry (BOEs)?
- How are valuation petitions resolved with importers?
- Do you have BOE turnaround guidelines?
- What Customs valuation protocol is applicable in Ghana today?
- Are you familiar with the WTO-CVA?
- Are the WTO-CVA protocols enforced in Ghana and under what conditions?
- Is the GRA-Customs under obligation to implement WTO-WCO protocols?

- Are there impediments in the way of implementing the WTO-CVA consistently?
- How do these impediments manifest in practice?
- Are there any external institutional influences on import valuation in Ghana?
- What would you say are the importer's concerns regarding import valuation?
- How do you get to know about the importers' challenges regarding import valuation?
- How, in your view, might import valuation impact business/market competition

II. Firm Enterprises (Importer)

- Does your business entail the importation of finished goods, intermediary (semi-processed goods or raw materials)?
- Does your firm at any time, simultaneously, import raw materials for processing and finished goods for resale?
- How would you describe the nature of the challenges posed by Customs' valuation to your firm by product category?
- Kindly shed light on whether there are any perceived or specific issues with respect to Customs' valuation affecting your firm's competitiveness in the marketplace.
- How does GRA-Customs address valuation disputes or petitions when they arise?
- Does the AGI assist its members in dealing with import valuation challenges and disputes when they arise? How?
- What do you perceive is the source or cause of valuation challenges across product categories?
- As one responsible for your firm's growth and profitability, how does import valuation affect your firm's strategic direction?
- Are you planning for any business expansion or an increase in your plant's capacity utilization in the foreseeable future – if yes, why? If not, why?
- What is your perception, if any, of WTO's role in import valuation outcomes in Ghana?

- What is your perception, if any, of external influences in the process and therefore outcomes of import valuation in Ghana?
- What are your thoughts on the aborted reversal of the benchmark value policy in January 2022?
- As your trading business expands, will you consider manufacturing locally?
- Shed light on any import valuation challenges or disputes you experience in trading
- What would you like to see (or have the government implement) before you might consider local production?

III. Freight Forwarder Group

- What would you say are your primary concerns with import valuation, as an agent representing clients?
- What are your thoughts on the aborted reversal of the benchmark value policy in January 2022?
- Do you perceive that most of your clients have a good grasp of the Customs valuation process or not?
- What in your estimation are factors that influence import valuation?
- Are your clients generally accepting of import valuations from GRA-Customs or not?
- Are the majority of your clients importers of finished goods or intermediate or raw materials?
- How would you describe or characterise your most successful clients?
- Why in your opinion are they successful as entrepreneurs?

