

Women Entrepreneur Motivations, Challenges, and Growth Aspiration: A Gender Lens Analysis in Sudan

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurship has developed considerably around the world, and it is widely established that entrepreneurship is important for economic growth and wealth. Although more and more Sudanese women are taking up the entrepreneurship challenge, male entrepreneurs still outnumber them in Sudan. The purpose of this study is to shed light on women's entrepreneurship in Sudan by understanding challenges and constraints facing them, to determine the motivational factors drive their intentions to start their own business and their growth aspiration vis-a-vis their male counterparts.

Data were collected using a survey questionnaire with both close-ended and open-ended questions conducted in Khartoum state the capital of Sudan. The sample frame consisted of a list of (40) male and (50) female entrepreneurs owned running businesses. The findings revealed that females in the sample became entrepreneurs for reasons of Self-fulfillment whilst male entrepreneurs were motivated by the need for more income. Compared to men, females were more likely than males to name necessity as a motive to start their business with a wider gender gap while factors such as Self-fulfillment show a narrow gender gap. The most frequent challenges faced by female entrepreneurs are gender-specific challenges whereas Access to finance is a challenge for males. Males surpassed females' entrepreneurs in their export orientations

Based on this, the study argues that for female entrepreneurship to flourish, Sudan needs to introduce more effective policies and regulations supportive to women entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship; Women Entrepreneur; Challenge; Motivation; Gender; Sudan

1. Introduction

The importance of entrepreneurship is widely recognized and its socioeconomic impact on community development has been well documented. To mention some of its numerous benefits, entrepreneurship contributes to generating more jobs, securing a better quality of life, and supply markets with new and innovative products. Moreover, it enhances economic growth and promotes economic development.

Entrepreneurship is very much related to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) since the later is seen as a vehicle for entrepreneurship development, contributing not just to employment and social and political stability, but also innovative and competitive power (Thurik & Wennekers, 2004). Realizing its socio-economic benefits, many countries have designed and implemented strategies and policies that aim

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