



THE ROLE OF INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH IN KENYA (A CASE OF WOMEN OWNED MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES IN MURANG'A COUNTY)

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Abstract

Despite the diversity in Entrepreneurship definitions, there's a general agreement that Entrepreneurship is the ability to identify a gap in the market place which entrepreneurs solve using their entrepreneurial abilities. The study considered to discover the extent women in business engage in entrepreneurship innovativeness as pertains to adding value to businesses and bring newness in the market place. Entrepreneurship innovation has widely been appreciated as the force behind Economic Development of any Country. Different Entrepreneurship innovations are indicators of Different Economic Development. The force behind economic development in Kenya are small and medium Enterprises. A majority of the working population in Kenya are in the Micro, small and Medium enterprises. These enterprises contribute 80% of the Kenyan GDP. The growth of innovative SMES is significant for economic growth. The study analyzed the relationship between innovative entrepreneurship and economic development in Kenya. The objectives under study included training and technology and how the two contribute to economic growth. The study used descriptive research design. The research instrument used was the questionnaire. Data was subjected to descriptive statistics. The findings suggested that for economic growth and development to be realized, value addition, entrepreneurship training, technology adoption as well as inculcating an entrepreneurial culture should be enhanced in Kenya.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Innovativeness, Creativity, Kenya



INTRODUCTION

In Africa, Women are a powerful force for growth and development making important contribution to the Economy as workers and as entrepreneurs to the welfare of their families (World Bank, 2006). This is however achieved under a myriad of challenges which greatly inhibit the realization of their full potential. The contribution of women in the Economic growth in Kenya cannot be over emphasized. A study carried out by Ellis and Jozefina (2007) indicated that gender mainstreaming is good for Economic growth and essential for poverty reduction.

According to the world Vision (world Bank, 2006), female led enterprises tend to be undercapitalized, have poorer access to machinery, fertilizer extension, information and credit than male-led enterprises which hurts women ability to participate in development and contribute to higher living standards for their families. Women led micro and small enterprises make significant contribution to the Kenyan Economy especially in agriculture and in the informal sector.

Problem statement

Although the Government of Kenya can be credited for recognition of the small and Micro enterprises in Kenya, it's vital to appreciate that those enterprises are operated mainly by Women. For a Business to thrive and affect an Economy, adoption of Technology through innovation and acquisition of skills through training in order to effectively perform and succeed in entrepreneurship. Despite the contribution of women in micro and small entrepreneurship, this study endeavored to investigate the extent to which women in micro and small Enterprises are adoptable to the new technology and the level to which training affects business performance. These two variables have often been left out and financial access has been viewed as the main factor affecting business performance among Women. Women operate under a lot of multiple responsibilities that equally affect business performance. This factor has been left for future study.

Technology Adoption

Entrepreneurs not only incubate technology innovation but also create employment opportunities and competitiveness (Reynold, 2009). Technology industry provides a fast growing, high financial return and technology intensive market for technology entrepreneurs. A large number of technological companies have been created by entrepreneurs including college students and graduates. Many of them have founded the world class businesses such as Dell.com, Facebook.com, Micosoft.com and google.com. Compared to entrepreneurs in traditional Industries such as food, restaurant, retail tourism and manufacturing. Technological entrepreneurs are more knowledgeable, technology dependent and personally innovative

(Gubta, 2020). They start businesses with their technology skill, intellectual property such as patenting and licensing and coming up with new models (Clark, 2018).

Most women entrepreneurs are susceptible in their decision to accept new technology and when they persist on their decision, it is considered as volitional aspect of it. Women start using new technology if they have the desire to use it, and decide strongly to use it. However, their skills and capabilities to use new technologies is its attractiveness to the target audience. To satisfy this, an individual may adopt and use the new technology if they perceive it as feasible (Lee *et al*, 2011).

Kenya has put innovation at the center of its development strategy primarily through vision 2030 and also through legislations such as National science, technology and innovation act which mandates that R&D speeding be made possible (ROK, 2006).

This research is timely in that it seeks to investigate the preparedness and willingness of women entrepreneurs in Technology adoption as part of facilitation Economic Growth in Kenya. The study considered the rate of women in preparedness and usage of technology and how the adoption is a factor for economic growth in Kenya.

Entrepreneurship Training

The need for a person anticipating to become an entrepreneur in future as a result of skills acquisition cannot be over emphasized (Ibrahim & Lucky, 2014). In general, entrepreneurship has become a major concern to both scholars and policy makers. This is due to the understanding of the significant role it plays in economic and social growth.

Entrepreneurship education has been considered as the avenue responsible in driving innovation, creates employment and is also essential for economic transformation and advancement (Hathaway & Litan, 2014). Many governments have considered entrepreneurship as a panacea that facilitates economic growth and especially in Countries that are still developing (Thornton, 2011).

Entrepreneurship awareness has in the recent past touched almost every country in the world. This has been as a result of the increasing global competition that is based on creativity and innovation (Kelly, 2012). Past studies reveal the important role of entrepreneurship education with regard to creation of successful entrepreneurs particularly in Africa (Njoroge & Gatungu, 2017).

Increased interest in entrepreneurship can as well be attributed to the changing structure of the western economy, the trend to downsize large companies, changing business patterns and the developing market economies such as China, India as well as Eastern Europe (Kelley, 2019). Ability to predict entrepreneurial characteristics draws attention to the significant role

that entrepreneurship training and development plays including the mentorship and the grooming process in the early adulthood (Ibrahim & Ellis, 2002).

Many awards are frequently given to successful entrepreneurs, for instance the earnest and young entrepreneurs of the year awards which reach 50 countries worldwide. The global award for entrepreneurship research which was established in 1996 is also another very important event (Henrekson & Lundstrom, 2010).

Since entrepreneurship is relevant to economic growth, social value as well as job creation it means more knowledge about entrepreneurship can therefore speed up the development of entrepreneurial activity for individual firms as well as the societies as a whole. The entrepreneurship concept is not limited to creating personal or shareholders value with private business; it can also be about creating value for customers' wealth, shareholders' wealth as well as creating benefits for other stakeholders and the society at large (Hitt, 2001). On the other hand, social entrepreneurship which is a type of entrepreneurship aims at solving societal and consequently creating social value (Austin, 2006). It is due to the realization of the importance in contributing to economic growth that entrepreneurship training has become a popular topic in various forums especially where women are involved.

Economic Growth

New product creation and services in the market has been perceived as the main contributors of Economic Growth. New products and services results in employment creation and consequently accelerates economic Growth. The Government of Kenya recognizes the major role played by Small and Medium Enterprises which are largely dominated by Women. In any Economy, one of the central challenges is to improve economic growth and eventually increase the standard of living for its citizenry and growth of the economy as a whole. Traditionally the economic output of a country has always been seen as a function of capital and labor inputs, combined with technical change (Solow 1957). Political Conflicts and internal and external wars interrupt this function (Sala-i-Martin 1997), but these are 'just' contingencies.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

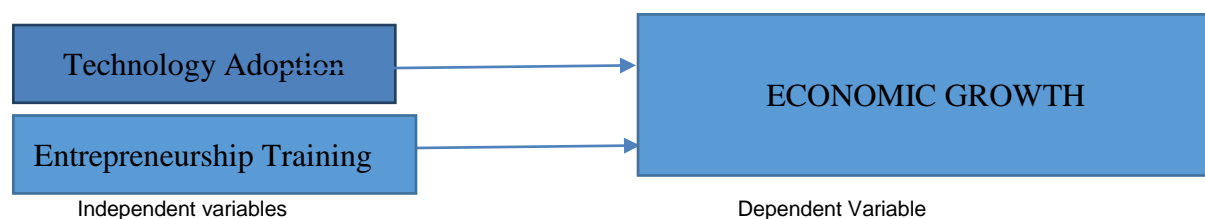


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

The Theory of Entrepreneurial Passion

The theory of entrepreneurial passion was advocated by Cardon (2009). The theory argues that once an entrepreneurial passion has been stimulated as a result of engagement in entrepreneurial activities, it results in an elaborate definite experience which involves an engagement of brain and body which can be expressed in appraisals and cognitions and also physiological and behavioral responses (Russell, 2003). The theory advocates that the perception of the emotional experience that the brain and the body responses has been stimulated by passion does not act independently, but on the contrary it is articulated and is synchronized and sustained overtime (Damasio, 2001). It can therefore be argued that the experience of passion aids an entrepreneur's effort in adapting environmental challenges.

Risk Bearing Theory

Frank Knight (1972) developed the risk bearing theory. It introduced the dimension of taking risk as a central attribute of entrepreneurship. It was adopted from early economics such as Richard Catillon and J B Say. In this theory, uncertainty is considered as one of the factors of production. It holds on the function of entrepreneur as acting in anticipation of the future events. The theory explains that an entrepreneur does earn profit as a reward for risk taking. Entrepreneurs are specialized in responsible direction and control while dealing with uncertainty as others furnish them with productive services for which the entrepreneur guarantees a fixed remuneration is the argument behind the risk taking theory (Praag, 1999).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive Research design was used in this study. The design is appropriate because it enables the study to access a relationship that exists between variables in Quantitative terms. The design enables the researcher to analyze inter-relationship among a large number of variables in a single study. It reveals how to analyze several variables singly or in a combination of a particular phenomenon being studied. The design is good at providing information concerning the degree of relationship between the variables under study. It can be used to identify variables worthy of experimental investigation.

Population of the Study

The study targeted small and micro enterprise Women in Murang'a County. The selected women operate different types of businesses. The study obtained a data of registered women owned enterprises from the Municipal Council.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Out of the list of registered 206 women-owned enterprises from Murang'a Municipal Council. A stratified sampling method was used to generate 62 respondents from five industries. 30% of the total population was used to get the samples as it is the sample recommended for a sample that's more than 30 responds (Orotha, 2005). From each stratum, a simple random sampling technique was used to generate 7 from service Industry, 6 from Agro-based Industry, 11 from clothing and textile industry, 4 from transport and 34 from Industry. Simple random sampling method was used as it is useful in obtaining a representative sample.

Table 1: Target Population in Murang'a Town / Sampling Procedure

Type of Industry	Total population-30%	Total Sample Size
Kiosk operators	108	34
Transport	14	4
Agro-based	20	6
Service	26	7
Clothing and Textiles	38	11
Grand Total	206	62

Research Instrument

Questionnaires were the research instrument used in the research. The Questionnaire was on both structured and semi structured format. The questionnaires were administered during the day for purpose of accessibility and to ascertain high rate of coverage. One of the advantages of Questionnaires is that they can be administered to a large number of respondent at the same time and it ensures uniformity.

Data Collection Procedure

Primary Data was collected using open ended and closed questions. The data collection instrument was prepared for the targeted respondents.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using Advanced Inferential statistics. The collected data was coded to enable the researcher to carry out statistical analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20).

Limitations of The Study

Although the study assured respondent of confidentiality, the study was limited on how truthfully the respondent answered the questions. The research was carried out in Murang'a

County, an area mainly dominated by one community. Its limiting to authentically prove that the findings can be replicated to another community living elsewhere in Kenya.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Analysis is the computation of certain measurements along a pattern of relationship that exist among the group data (Kothari, 2009). It is the process of understanding the meaning of information that has been collected by bringing order so as to make a conclusion. Data analysis involves reducing the accumulated data and putting it in a manageable size. This is achieved as a result of developing summaries and applying statistical techniques (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). In this study, the primary data collected was edited, coded, classified and then tabulated. The statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 20 was the tool used to do the analysis for the study. Data processing refers to processing of editing coding, and tabulating the collected data so that they can be analyzed (Kothari, 2009).

The data was collected from women in the service sector, traders, agro-based sector as well as textile and clothing. Out of the 62 respondents that the study targeted, 54 respondents participated in the study. This was 87% response rate of the target group.

Table 2: Response Rate

TYPE OF INDUSTRY	TOTAL POPULATION	SAMPLE SIZE 30%	RESPONSE RATE
Trade	108	34	28
Transport	14	4	3
Agro-Based	20	6	5
Services	26	7	7
Clothing and Textiles	38	11	11
Grade Total	206	62	54

Descriptive Results

Education and Training

The study investigated on the effect of education levels on women operating micro and small enterprises in Murang'a County. The responses indicated that 39% had acquired education up to primary level. 28% had secondary school Education and 17% had up to college level and 13 % had University level of Education and only 3% had up to a Masters level of Education.

Contribution of Skills Acquired and how they impact on their Businesses

The respondents were asked on how the acquired influenced the performance of their businesses. 46.3% greatly felt that Education they acquired played a vital role to the

performance of their businesses. 26% felt it contributes to only a great extent. 17% moderately agreed and 7% indicated that the influence was to a less extent and 3.7% felt that there was no influence at all.

Unique Skills

The study investigated on whether the women possessed any skills that is helpful to their enterprises. 59% indicated they owned unique skills, 41% indicated they did not possess any skills unique to positively impact their enterprises.

Impact of Technology

Influence of Technology on Business Performance

The study sought to find out how technology adoption influenced women owned enterprises. 52% indicated that technology influenced business performance. 19% felt that technology influenced businesses to a great extent while 11% felt it influenced to a less extent while 7% indicated that technology does not influence the performance of their businesses. The respondents also felt that technology is changing very fast and its becoming hard to cope and adopt with the changing technology.

Ability to access and use the internet

On whether the women in small and medium Enterprises used the internet, 57.5% indicated that they were unable to use the internet to do business and were not aware of the E-business, 42,5% indicated that they had ability to access the internet

How often they use the internet to do business

The study found that 27.8 % of women in small and medium enterprises used the internet, and 72,2% of the respondents indicated to have never used the internet neither bought nor sold any products using the internet.

The extent Technology contributed to their business Performance

The study investigated on the contribution of technology in business performance. 33% strongly agreed that technology positively contribute to business performance, 24% strongly agreed, 19% agreed 15% disagreed and only 9% disagreed on the importance of technology adoption in business performance.

Table 2: Technology adoption and Business Performance

Very Strongly Agreed	33%
Strongly agreed	24%
Agreed	19%
Disagreed	15%
Highly Disagreed	9%

Table 3: Technology is Emerging too fast

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	6	9.8	9.8	9.8
Disagree	5	8.2	8.2	18.0
Neutral	22	36.1	36.1	54.1
Agree	8	13.1	13.1	67.2
Strongly agree	20	32.8	32.8	100.0
Valid Total	61	100.0	100.0	

32.8% strongly agreed and 13.1% agreed that new technology is emerging too fast that women in small and medium enterprises are unable to keep up with it. 36.1% are neutral while 8.2% and 9.8% disagree and strongly disagree respectively

Mobile Telephony Has Assisted In Business Performance

32.8% and 26.2% strongly agree and agree respectively that mobile telephony has greatly assisted in business performance. 27.9% are neutral. 11.5% disagree while 1.6% gave no response.

Table 4: Mobile Telephony and Business Performance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	7	11.5	11.5	11.5
Disagree	17	27.9	27.9	39.3
Neutral	16	26.2	26.2	65.6
Agree	20	32.8	32.8	98.4
Strongly agree	1	1.6	1.6	100.0
Valid Total	61	100.0	100.0	

Business Would Do Better If I Was More Creative And Innovative

27.9% agreed while 14.8% strongly agreed that a business would do better if a person was more creative and innovative. 36.1% are neutral and 13.1% disagree while 6.6% strongly disagree that a business would do better if one was creative and innovative. 1.6% gave no response.

Table 5: The place of Creativity and innovation in Business performance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	4	6.6	6.6	6.6
Disagree	8	13.1	13.1	19.7
Neutral	22	36.1	36.1	55.7
Agree	17	27.9	27.9	83.6
Strongly agree	9	14.8	14.8	98.4
Total	1	1.6	1.6	100.0
Valid	61	100.0	100.0	

Creativity And Innovation

31.1% agreed 13.1% strongly agreed that they wish they tried on creativity and innovation. 34.4% were neutral. 14.8% disagreed while 4.9% strongly disagreed. 1.6% gave no response.

Table 6: Creativity and innovation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	3	4.9	4.9	4.9
Disagree	9	14.8	14.8	19.7
Neutral	21	34.4	34.4	54.1
Agree	19	31.1	31.1	85.2
Strongly agree	8	13.1	13.1	98.4
Total	1	1.6	1.6	100.0
Valid	61	100.0	100.0	

Personality And Attitude On Business Performance

32.8% agreed while 4.9% strongly agreed that personality and attitude have no relationship with their business performance. 31.1% are neutral while 19.7% disagree. 11.5% strongly disagreed that personality and attitude have no relationship with their business performance.

Table 7: Personality & attitude and business performance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	7	11.5	11.5	11.5
Disagree	12	19.7	19.7	31.1
Neutral	19	31.1	31.1	62.3
Agree	20	32.8	32.8	95.1
Strongly agree	3	4.9	4.9	100.0
Valid	61	100.0	100.0	

WOMEN AND MEN HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO EITHER SUCCEED OR FAIL IN BUSINESS

26.2% agreed while 24.6% strongly agreed that women and men have equal opportunities to either succeed or fail in business. 36.1% are neutral. 6.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed that women and men have equal opportunities to either succeed or fail in business.

Table 8: Women and men have equal opportunities business

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	4	6.6	6.6	6.6
Disagree	4	6.6	6.6	13.1
Neutral	22	36.1	36.1	49.2
Agree	16	26.2	26.2	75.4
Strongly agree	15	24.6	24.6	100.0
Valid	61	100.0	100.0	

Women Should Be Accorded Support To Ensure Success

36.1% agreed while 14.8% strongly agreed that women in small and medium enterprises are majority and should be accorded support to ensure success. 31.1% are neutral, 13.1% disagreed while 3.3% strongly disagreed whereas 1.6% gave no response.

Table 9: Women Should Be Accorded Support To Ensure Success in Business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Disagree	8	13.1	13.1	16.4
	Neutral	19	31.1	31.1	47.5
	Agree	22	36.1	36.1	83.6
	Strongly agree	9	14.8	14.8	98.4
	No response	1	1.6	1.6	100.0
		61	100.0	100.0	

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found that 66.7% women operating micro and small and medium enterprises had less than college education. The low level of education is a disadvantage to the women because the women have a challenge of keeping their business records as well as taking stocks and having ability to be creative and innovative in business. Above basic education is important in that it can enable women to have an understanding on E-commerce and operating business online

Education exposes an individual in that women would gain administration and financial literacy. They will gain provision for practical customized business advice and support for businesses in areas such as identifying business opportunities and on how to develop a business plan.

An education curriculum at any level ought to emphasis skills that enhances knowledge needed to excel in business in order to contribute to economic growth.

The study concluded that on matters technology, only those with a certain level of education made use of modern technology. The study concluded that mobile telephony is the main technology used by women in small and medium enterprises. The study revealed that M-pesa positively contributed to business performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The education curriculum should emphasize acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. Trainings on Financial literacy ought to embrace. Women operating business should be exposed on how to develop a business plan. Mentorships is also important in accelerating business performance. Successful entrepreneurs ought to see the need to mentor the upcoming entrepreneurs.

Training programs on the use of technology ought to be emphasized among women operating in small and medium enterprises. Through positive adoption of technology, the women operating businesses can embrace E-commerce and they can start operating business on line. Multi- media could come up with successful profile of women entrepreneurs at various stage of their business life. This can be done through production of videos of successful women entrepreneurs. Profile can elaborate on effective strategies that would enable them overcome obstacles on pursuing opportunities and how they can craft their enterprises for growth and eventually for economic growth. In general, an entrepreneurial culture should be inculcated among women in business. There is a difference between business person and an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship emphasizes innovation and creativity, an element that is lacking among women operating businesses in Kenya. Economic growth of any Country does not happen without an emphasis on entrepreneurship. If Kenya is to attain the level of a developed Country, then Entrepreneurship ought to be embraced at educational level as well as trainings for those already in business. The CBC system of Education is one way toward the right direction of identifying skills of learners from a very early age and should be embraced.

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