

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TABLE BANKING AND THE GROWTH OF WOMEN OWNED MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES IN UHURU MARKET, NAIROBI COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Micro and small enterprises contribute a lot to the growth of any country's economy in the world and have been widely accepted as an engine of economic growth and innovation. Most of these enterprises are owned by women who are the largest poor in society and face difficulties in accessing credit from financial institutions to start or expand their small enterprises due to conditions that they cannot meet. The research study therefore assessed the relationship between table banking and the growth of women owned micro and small enterprises in Uhuru market, focusing on access to credit, professional support, networks and access to information which are made possible through table banking framework. A descriptive approach was used to collect data and the target population comprised of selected women owned micro and small enterprises. The sample was drawn from a population of 400 MSEs. Out of this, 300 owners practice table banking. A simple random sampling was used to select 30% from the 300, which formed a sample size of 90 respondents who participated. Data was analyzed using SPSS and the findings from the study brought the results of the variables that the researcher hypothesized as an existing gap that hinder the growth of women owned MSEs in Uhuru Market, Nairobi County. The study revealed that women who own these MSEs obtained their opening capital from personal savings, friends and relatives. They regularly receive funds from their Group (Chama) through

table banking framework. Education and management training was found to be a key factor and technology, financial and management skill are key areas which the women need to be well conversant in order to excel in their businesses. The high cost of developing networks, new business contacts and relationships by women who own MSEs has been a big barrier to the performance of their enterprises and access to business information is important for improved performance, survival and growth. Table banking had positive significant influence on the growth of women owned MSEs. The order of importance from the most to the last in influencing growth was access to information, access to credit, professional support and lastly networking which had a positive but insignificant influence on growth. The study concludes that lack of access to local credit, gaps in the provision of business information on finances, market linkages and other support services constrain the growth of women owned MSEs. Women entrepreneurs should also come together and form business social networks for the purposes of pooling their financial resources together to allow easy access to credit from financial institutions in order to improve the growth of their MSEs. The concept of table banking should be embraced by the government with policies formulated and implemented that address the needs of women who own MSEs.

Key Words: *table banking, growth, women, micro and small enterprises, Uhuru market, Nairobi County*

INTRODUCTION

Micro and small enterprises play a significant role towards economic growth and development of any given economy through its contribution towards job creation and the National gross domestic product GDP (Pelham, 2000). Most of these small enterprises are owned by women and their enterprises are particularly disadvantaged because finding the appropriate source of funding for them is hard. The greatest challenge facing the financing of many Micro and Small Enterprises' is accessibility to finances which slows down operations of these businesses (Turner, 2008).

Women who own Micro and Small Enterprises lack a platform for networking that is essential to the survival of their enterprises. According to Moller, Rajala and Svahn (2005), networking is composed of markets which are interrelated where participants work together to achieve their objectives. The interrelationships among participants in a market can either be direct or indirect. Networking helps in efficient and effective sharing of experiences and knowledge which helps in organizational performance. Networking transforms an MSE into a learning organization.

The success of Micro and Small Enterprises is also linked with the level of education, training and experience of the owner. Training equips owners of MSEs with skills and knowledge of managing their businesses and this improves performance. Through training, the owners can acquire transfer of technology, new concept and better management techniques (Roomi, 2009). According to McGrath and King (2002), entrepreneurs who have high levels of education excel more than the uneducated. Unfortunately most women who own these MSEs are not well educated, resulting to poor management and lack of planning that also contribute to the failure of their enterprises (Sonobe, 2012).

The women also lack access to business information such as new markets, market linkages, new technologies and new concept and this makes it difficult to improve the survival and performance chances of new enterprises or growing an existing one easily (Boyd, 2005). The main factor affecting competitiveness of MSEs is limited accessibility to viable business information for decision making (Hatega, 2007)

Women entrepreneurs in developing countries are faced with barriers that originate from social and economic contexts and this affects accessibility to finances. As such, there is limited economic empowerment that has greatly hampered MSEs development (Inter-American Development Bank, 2010). In Ghana, several challenges have been identified as having significant effect on accessibility to finances among MSEs for example high rates of interests, government red tapes and other bureaucracies (Abor & Biekepe, 2006).

Similar challenges are faced by women entrepreneurs in Kenya for example insufficient assets to pledge as collaterals, low levels of incomes, high illiteracy levels and low entrepreneurial skills and experience for effective management of business (ILO, 2010). Specialized financial firms

and institutions have greatly failed to address the financial needs of MSEs especially women entrepreneurs. This has necessitated established of banking groups with no formal rules and regulations in most countries that are developing (Marti & Mair, 2009).

Lack of professional support in terms of education and management training and experience, absence of adequate networks and also lack of access to business information has resulted to failure of some enterprises and slow growth of the existing ones. Table banking is the only forum that assist the women who own MSEs.

Kenya's Vision 2030 views MSEs as the sector to stimulate entrepreneurial skill which will be the driving force in economic growth. However, despite the significant role the sector plays, it has continued to experience many binding constraints that have inhibited its growth and realization of women's full potential. Table banking gives the forum for easy access to credit, access to business information, professional support in terms of education/training and a platform to network, that will be useful in growing the women owned MSEs.

Table Banking Concept

Table banking is a community-based activity associated with accumulation of savings which members can borrow (Brannen, 2010; Casio, 2013). Table banking as a financial support program is a process commonly adopted by low-income earners to internally generate funds through savings accumulation to create a pool of financial resource from which contributing members can borrow funds for development use. Group members under thus table banking meet on a regular basis for example monthly to place their contributions on table and then borrow to interested members (Brannen 2010).

In Kenya, Table banking was introduced by an NGO, the ActionAid International but its development was done by the Poverty Eradication Commission (PEC). Table banking was introduced to alleviate poverty among the poor and especially owners of small businesses. Table banking was first piloted in Bondo and Gatanga constituencies to identify its reliability and validity. The results of the pilot were so impressive although it was adopted by the government. The study therefore assessed whether access to credit, professional support, networks and access to information through table banking influences the growth of women owned micro and small enterprises in Uhuru Market, Nairobi County.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

MSEs play an important role in the Kenyan Economic growth, having the potential to provide employment opportunities to the local citizens, the reduction of poverty, creation of jobs, as well as the capacity to contribute to Gross Domestic Product (GPD). Majority of these MSEs are owned by women. However, despite the important role these Micro and Small Enterprises play, they are still dogged by non-growth (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2007). Past statistics

also indicate that three out of five enterprises fail within the first few months of operation. K'Obonyo (1999) further observed that enterprise size and failure are inversely related, with smaller enterprises facing higher risks of failure than larger ones. In Uhuru Market women owned small enterprises exhibit very low if not retarded growth gauging from the size of the enterprises, the number of employees and the product diversification. This is due to constraints faced in accessing continuous credit from formal banks as a result of tough conditions that they cannot afford, forcing the women to seek continuous capital from alternative sources such as family, relatives, friends, or from the self-help groups that they belong to that practice table banking as it offers affordable, reliable and available credit services.

Majority of the women who own MSES in Uhuru market have low level of education and lack managerial skill training which is key in running the daily operations of their enterprises. The women have no access to information on new markets, new suppliers or new concept to improve productivity of their small enterprises. They also lack sufficient networks that is essential to exploit capacity building or assisting them to progress survival, growth and performance of their enterprises. Table banking is the only forum available for these women who own MSEs where they can easily access capital, professional support, networks and business information required to grow their business. The Researcher hypothesizes these factors at play and the study determined the effect of access to credit, professional support, networks and information through table banking on the growth of women owned MSEs in Uhuru Market. Ignoring or failure to find out the influence of these factors means that the current stagnation of these women owned enterprises will remain and growth may not be realized in the foreseen future. Therefore the research question for this study was: How does the table banking framework influence the growth of women owned MSEs?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between table-banking framework and the growth of women owned small enterprises in Kenya.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To establish the influence of access to credit on the growth of women owned micro and small enterprises.
2. To determine the effect of professional support on the growth of women owned micro and small enterprises.
3. To assess the influence of network opportunities on the growth of women owned micro and small enterprises.
4. To find out the effect of access to information on the growth of women owned micro and small enterprises.

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

Social Capital Theory

Social capital is resources enhance collective actions in an organization. These resources include networks, trust and norms in an organization to achieve a common purpose (Kinicki & Williams, 2008). Trust binds together members of a group in an organization. Trust assures that the cooperation from one party shall be reciprocated by the other party. Trust levels indicate cooperation among people (Coleman, 2007). There are five dimensions that form the basis of this theory and these include networks, reciprocity trust, social norms and lastly the personal and collective efficacy (Onyx & Bullen, 2000). These 5 dimensions range in different shapes and combinations. Social capital helps people to take advantage of social interactions in obtaining given benefit. Woolcock (1998) was the first to conceptually examine social capital in economic perspective. The theory suffers from a number of limitations where critics do not agree whether actors are social entrepreneurs who massively invest in development and building of relationships.

Social capital gives networks combined with value systems, belief and norms which enhance unity in a group. According to this theory, networks provide linkages between individuals in groups. However, the networks require a lot of trust among members for different people to cooperate and effectively work together (Coleman, 2007). Social capital through networking is significant element of table banking with loan guarantorship, accountabilities and mentorships standing out as main the benefits (Maria, 2010). Social capital contributes to growth of enterprises by highlighting the importance of cooperation and trust within a firm and the market (Woolcock, 2001; Maria, 2010).

Enterprise Growth Theory

This theory describes the stages and processes of development of an enterprise from one size to the other over a given time period. Enterprise growth indicate development processes which enterprises keep and sustain through enhanced performance (Sun, 2004). The theory sees an enterprise as human beings where they are borne, they grow get mature and latter pass on. Hence, the organizational growth forms the basis of the life cycle of an organization. According to Hanks, Watson, Jensen and Chandler (1993), life cycle stages are interrelation of variables that are similar to an organization. According to Miller and Friesen (1984); there are five linear stages an organization move through that includes birth, growth, maturity, revival, and decline.

Several scholars have indicated many factors leading to failure of enterprises especially small ones. Muthaih and Venkatesh (2012) established experiences, managerial skills, past performance records among others. Women owned MSEs at Uhuru Market may be experiencing capped growth as a result of the inadequate access to continuous credit, professional support in terms of management skill, training, inadequate networks and challenges in accessing business

information. Table banking framework remains their only avenue where these can easily be accessed. This research therefore determines the relationship of these factors on the growth of women owned Micro and Small Enterprises in Uhuru Market, Nairobi County.

Loanable Funds Theory

This theory is found on the notion that loanable funds markets are unified in nature with perfect competition in these markets. Participants in such markets are price takers. There is only one interest rate prevailing in the entire market at a given time period. According to the theory, the equilibrium flow of loanable funds determines the rate of interest charged. Market interest is determined by factors affecting demand and supply for loanable funds (Wicksell, 1970).

The theory relies on the classical analysis of the market in describing an interaction between demand, supply and rates of interest of loans in the market for loanable funds. Some organizations and people are responsible for supplying loanable funds after deciding to save and invest their incomes instead of consumption (Wicksell, 1970). It is the accumulation of these savings that builds up the supply for loanable funds. The demand for investment is the major source of demand for loanable funds and interest rate indicate the price of obtaining such loans. A lower interest rate will increase demand for such loans and vice versa. The desire to finance investments through borrowing makes up the demand for loanable funds (Wicksell, 1970).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Access to Credit

According to the European Commission Report (2013), accessibility to finances is the greatest determinant of performance among MSEs. The report indicates that there are variations in the needs of MSEs as it regards financing as compared to larger businesses. MSEs are made irrelevant due to insufficient equity capital for small firms in many exchange markets. Cost availability of credit indicates the monetary value paid by entrepreneurs to borrow capital from a financial institution. According to Hallberg (2002), costs to information access and risks of the businesses are factors increasing the cost of credit and therefore interest rates. The research done by Joseph, (2013) cites that access to credit is a vital element for the improvement of MSE. It is evident that most SMEs are denied credit because of the high risk associated with them as they lack adequate resources to pledge as collateral (Kihimbo, 2012). There are several ways under which credit constraints operate in Kenya. First, there is inadequate accessibility to long term sources of capital for MSE and this forces women entrepreneur to go for schemes like self help groups where the interest rates are convenient. In Kenya, financial constraint is among the challenges facing MSEs (Wanjohi & Mugure, 2008) and women owned Micro and Small Enterprises are therefore more vulnerable to failure due to this financial constraint. Table banking is the only platform where women can easily access credit.

Professional Support (Education and Training)

Entrepreneurship education and training involves the development of personal skills and behavior change (Roomi, 2009). It refers to skills, knowledge and mental capability of entrepreneurs. Training modifies the behavior of entrepreneurs while at the same time adding skills and experience to entrepreneurs. This helps them to effectively perform their duties and responsibilities. Skills help owners of business to gain competitive edge over other businesses (Roomi, 2009). Inaccessibility to training facilities among women entrepreneurs limits their ability to manage business activities (Roomi, 2009).

A large number of women owning small businesses in Kenya have insufficient levels of educations, knowledge and skills that indicates growth and performance of businesses especially MSEs. This affects their decision making abilities and their general management styles and approach to issues (Hill 2000). These poor managerial skills of SME owners make planning a challenge. Such managers are not responsive to environmental forces that have far reaching effects in performance of their businesses (King & McGrath, 2002). This leads to collapse and failure of MSEs. Research findings from different scholars and researchers have indicated a link between managerial skills and growth of small enterprise. According to Okpara and Wynn (2007), insufficient managerial experiences and training has resulted into failure of businesses. Therefore, women owners of MSEAs require managerial skills trainings which enhances their business operations and therefore performance of their MSEs which they own or manage (King & McGrath, 2002). Table banking provides a platform for professional support that will be useful in running their micro and small enterprises.

Networks

Networking is the cultivation and establishment of relationships by SMEs owners with other successful MSEs and companies. Exploitation of technologies is one of the reasons why MSEs form alliances and cooperate with other large institutions through networks (Groen, 2005). Networking can be achieved through establishment and building of relationships that can either be formal or informal. Networks are seen as vital assets that are intangible in nature (Will, 2004). Normally, entrepreneurs are key players in these networks and they get involved in executions of deliberated activities in their enterprises. Networking grows entrepreneurs and helps in equipping proper skills and experiences (Carter, Wilson, Shaw & Lam, 2007). In generally, there are low levels of social positions among women compared to men and this affects their ability to form networks. Traditionally, women form networks suited to their family affairs and this may hinder their accessibility to finances. Social networks help in empowering women in ownership of their businesses through equipping them with skills and knowledge of the same (Maria, 2011).

Access to Information

Sound utilization of timely and relevant business information critically contributes towards sustainability and performance of businesses in economies. Inaccessibility to business

information is a hindrance for competitive advantage among owners of MSEs (Hatega, 2007). Different entrepreneurs have varying information needs for making informed decisions on managing of their enterprises (Moyi, 2000). SMEs owners require relevant and timely information on trends of businesses, market niches, regulatory and legal aspects and technological advancements for growth of their businesses (Boyd, 2005). Access to business information facilitates exploiting available business opportunities that accelerate growth of enterprises. Accessibility to information among women entrepreneurs helps them in adapting their firms and enterprises to ever changing environments for growth. Inadequate access to information among owners of business is a threat to business owners (Boyd, 2005). Many owners of MSEs continually rely on physical or private contacts to obtain market related information despite advanced technologies that provide large pools of business information.

Table Banking

The origins, name and use of “table banking” trace from early civilization when money would be exchanged at tables known as “Trapezes”- first identified in Greece; when ancient banking practices were conducted. During the ancient practice of table banking, money collectors would receive and document amounts deposited by individuals and lend it out to borrowers (Casio, 2013). A more recent kind of bank was found in Italy; termed as “banks of deposit” which shared common traits as the bible-based examples, which exhibited traits of operation principles and standardization entailing interest on loans: no interest was charge on group members.

Table banking is a community-based activity associated with accumulation of savings which members can borrow (Brannen, 2010; Casio, 2013). Table banking as a financial support program is a process commonly adopted by low-income earners to internally generate funds through savings accumulation to create a pool of financial resource from which contributing members can borrow funds for development use. Table banking is a collaborative partnership addressing limited access to financing promotion of low income community bracket; a “participatory action” approach intended to enhance desired empowerment outcomes. It is viewed by economists as an equity fund (Brammem, 2010). In Uhuru Market, majority of the women who own the MSEs are members of groups that practice table banking. The study therefore determine the relationship between table banking and the growth of women owned MSEs.

Growth of MSEs

Growth of a firm is defined as an increase in size over a given period of time (Dobbs & Hamilton, 2007). Growth can be measured by increase in quality and expansion to other markets. Growth prospects of firms may result from increase in demand for its goods and services. As a result of these changes in the level of demand, a firm rearranges internal to accommodate these changes in demand patterns of customers (Dobbs & Hamilton, 2007).

A study was done by Achtenhagen (2010) to assess the growth of an enterprise. The researcher identified that business growth can be measured in terms of high sales volumes, number of staffs, market entry and penetration, diversifications of products and increased value of firms. Increased number of staff was however not necessarily seen as an indicator of growth of a firm. According to Davidson (2010) growth is related with accessibility to new markets for technology based businesses in view of diversification. Growth can also result from integration of processes and functions within the value chain system in an organization. This integration can either be vertical or horizontal.

The demographic characters of founders and capital base at initial stage of the business coupled with strategies of growth are significant determinants of growth among small enterprises (Coad, 2013). Growth is also due to proper management and utilization of resources of an organization (Coad, 2013). For growth of an organization using available resources, it is important to plan on how to effectively use these resources. According to Wright and Stigliani (2012), an organization needs to establish trust among people with cognitive abilities to enhance growth.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this study, conceptual framework depicted the relationship between access to credit, professional support, networks and the access to information on the growth of women owned MSEs.

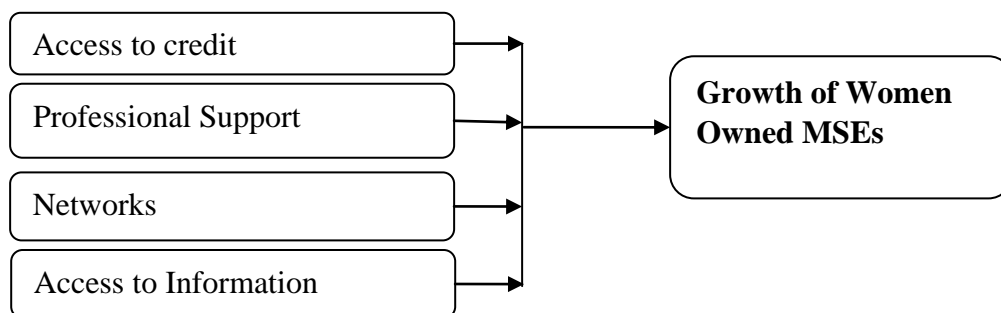


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study adopted a descriptive approach to collect data from respondents. Data from Nairobi County and the market offices revealed that there are four blocks in Uhuru market that hosts 400 MSEs. Other 100 MSEs operate outside the blocks in extended structures. Among the total, 400 MSEs are owned by women. The researcher established that the owners of 300 MSEs belong to groups that practice table banking. The researcher therefore focused on the owners of these 300 MSEs. In line with this, the researcher used a simple random sampling to select a sample from a total population of 300 women owned micro and small enterprises who participated in the study, computed as: $(30/100 \times 300) = 90$ respondents. In each of the selected women owned micro and small enterprises, the owners were given a questionnaire to complete.

The study used a questionnaire. The process of data analysis involved organizing; analyzing and summarizing qualitative and quantitative data that related to variables in the research questions. Data received was edited to ensure completeness and consistency using a code book that was developed prior to data entry. Coding involved the assigning numerals to responses collected from the field so as to facilitate grouping of responses into a limited number of classes/categories with similar description. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 was applied in analyzing data collected from the field using the model: $Y = a + \beta X_1 + \beta X_2 + \beta X_3 + \beta X_4$, where (X) is independent variables, (Y) is dependent variable with (a) being constant.

RESEARCH RESULTS

A total of 90 questionnaires were administered to women owned small enterprises in Uhuru Market, out of which 66 of them were fully executed and returned translating to response rate of 73%.

General Information

Majority 34 (51.5%) of the respondents were 45 and above years, 24 (36.4%) were between 35-44 years and 8 (12.1%) were between 25-34 years. On the highest level of education, majority 41 (62.1%) of the respondents had secondary education, 15 (22.7%) had primary education and 10 (15.2%) were college level education. Data on the length of time that the respondents had been working with their enterprises was collected. From the finding, 1 (1.5%) of the respondents had worked in the enterprises for a period less than 1 year, 18 (27.3%) indicated a period between 1-3 years, 23 (34.8%) indicated between 4-7 years and majority 24 (36.4%) indicated 8 years and above. 8 (12.1%) of the enterprises had 2 years, 14 (21.2%) had 3 years, 10 (15.2%) had 4 years and 34 (51.5%) had over 5 years. On average, majority of the respondents had worked in the enterprises for more than three years which is adequate time for them to learn enough information on the organization. This shows that they were well informed of the way their organizations operated hence were well suited to respond to the study instrument.

From the findings, it was established that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that their opening capital was from personal savings, friends, relatives as shown by a mean of 4.72 and a standard deviation of 0.448. This shows that most of the small enterprises start-up capital was obtained internally by the entrepreneurs. The respondents disagreed that their enterprise can easily get regular capital when needed from the bank as indicated by a mean of 1.74 and a standard deviation of 0.916. This shows that the enterprises could not acquire finance from the banks due to the requirement by the financial institutions. On whether they usually accessed capital from UWEZO Fund/KWF Trust Fund, the respondents were in disagreement as shown by a mean of 1.75 and a standard deviation of 0.657. This implies that the women enterprises had difficulties in accessing UWEZO Fund/KWF Trust Fund as credit is given to developed groups. The respondents strongly agreed that they required giving collateral for any loan from the banks/financial institutions as shown by a mean of 4.75 with a standard deviation of 0.431. This

shows that most of the financial institutions advance their loan with collaterals which the women entrepreneurs were unable to raise.

Owners were also asked whether the enterprise had a bank account in its name or in another name and whether the women had access to the account in case the account name belonged to another person. To this end, the enterprises had own bank accounts. Constraints in accessing credit from these financial institutions were also confirmed due to the length of time it took the women to start the business. Generally, collateral still remain as the constraint.

Professional Support

The respondents disagreed that they are well educated as indicated by a mean of 2.13 and standard deviation of 1.162. This shows that most of the women entrepreneurs had basic level of education which was a barrier in the management of their enterprises. As to whether the respondents were trained on management skills to run a business, majority disagreed as shown by a mean of 2.15 with a standard deviation of 1.162. This shows that the women entrepreneurs had inadequate training in business management skills. The respondents were in agreement that they had attended workshops through their groups (Chama) as shown by a mean of 3.65 with a standard deviation of 0.936. This shows that the training they receive in workshops and seminars was critical in their success. The researcher's view was that education and training was necessary as it enables one to gain competence to run any kind of enterprise especially the MSEs towards productivity, which enhances growth. This can be accessed through table banking framework.

Networks

The respondents were neutral on whether they had been guaranteed for a loan by people in their network. This is shown by a mean of 3.10 with a standard deviation of 1.437. This shows that most of the respondents had not formed sufficient strong ties in network that they could count on to guarantee them for loans. As to whether they had received beneficial knowledge through their network, the respondents were in agreement as shown by a mean of 4.25 with a standard deviation of 0.563. The respondents had received ideas and skills to manage their enterprises through their networks. On whether the enterprise had gained sales through referrals from networks, majority of the respondents were neutral as indicated by a mean of 2.78 with a standard deviation of 0.952. This finding concurs with Carter, Wilson, Shaw and Lam (2007) that the more networking activities an entrepreneur (owner) engages in, the larger his personal network. The respondents were in agreement that they had found a business mentor in their network as shown by a mean of 3.39 with a standard deviation of 0.926. This implies that the women who owned the MSEs had formed networks which through them receive business mentorship. The respondents also agreed that their network contacts were increasing as indicated by a mean of 4.40 with a standard deviation of 0.678.

From the findings, majority of the respondents indicated neutral on whether they had found new markets/linkages for their enterprise through their group as shown by a mean of 3.40 and standard deviation of 1.022. This shows that the women who own MSEs were still establishing new markets and trying to link with others through their networks. The respondents were neutral on whether they were able to access data easily as shown by a mean of 3.36 and standard deviation of 1.017. This indicate that the entrepreneurs had limited access to information on their businesses and this concurs with Lakwo (2006) that women with access to information are better placed to adapt their enterprises to constantly changing business environments and growth.

Regarding to whether they had found new concepts for their enterprise through the group, majority of the respondents indicated neutral as shown by a mean of 3.43 and standard deviation of 0.930. This shows that the entrepreneurs were still in the process of accessing new concepts to develop and establish their business through their networks. The respondents were in agreement that they had gained new knowledge and methods of improving their enterprise through table banking networks as indicated by a mean of 4.27 with a standard deviation of 0.668. The respondents agreed that they had used new information to improve their enterprise as indicated by a mean of 4.42 with a standard deviation of 0.609. This implies that the new concepts and information they were receiving from their networks through table banking framework had transformed their businesses.

From the findings, the respondents agreed that the number of customers had increased as shown by a mean of 4.09 and a deviation of 0.889. This shows that the increase in the number of customers signify the expansion/growth of the enterprises. The respondents were also in agreement that their enterprise profits had grown as indicated by a mean of 3.62 with a standard deviation of 0.924. This implies that the women owned enterprises had improved in their management of the resources and maximization of their sales. The respondents agreed that the number of products sold had increased in the last two years as shown by a mean of 3.71 and a deviation of 0.855. This indicates that the increase in the number of sales could have been attributed by the product diversification. On whether the number of employees had increased, the respondents indicated neutral as shown by a mean of 3.50 and a deviation of 0.948. Increase in the number of employees results from the expansion of the enterprises. The respondents were in agreement that the enterprises were selling different products as indicated by a mean of 3.80 and a deviation of 1.070. This implies that the enterprises had diversified their products due to the market demand.

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

As shown in Table 4.10, access to credit factors had the strongest correlation of 0.790 and a significance value of 0.000 which is less than 0.005 at the 5% level. Professional support had a correlation of 0.849 and a p-value of 0.000 less than 0.005. Access to information had a correlation of 0.833 and a p-value of 0.000 less than 0.005. This showed a positive and significant correlation with the growth of the MSEs. Access to credit, professional support and

access to information were significance and had strong Pearson correlation coefficients. Networking had a moderate positive Pearson’s correlation coefficient of 0.560 and a significance p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.005.

Table 1: Correlation Co-efficients

		Growth of Enterprises	of Access to Credit	Professional Support	Networks	Access to Information
Growth of Enterprises	Pearson Correlation	1	.790	.849	.560	.833
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	66	66	66	66	66
Access to Credit	Pearson Correlation	.790	1	.751	.489	.689
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	66	66	66	66	66
Professional Support	Pearson Correlation	.849	.751	1	.573	.810
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	66	66	66	66	66
Networks	Pearson Correlation	.560	.489	.573	1	.530
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	66	66	66	66	66
Access to Information	Pearson Correlation	.833	.689	.810	.530	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	66	66	66	66	66

As shown in table 1, access to credit factors had the strongest correlation of 0.790 and a significance value of 0.000 which is less than 0.005 at the 5% level. Professional support had a correlation of 0.849 and a p-value of 0.000 less than 0.005. Access to information had a correlation of 0.833 and a p-value of 0.000 less than 0.005. This showed a positive and significant correlation with the growth of the MSEs. Access to credit, professional support and access to information were significance and had strong Pearson correlation coefficients. Networking had a moderate positive Pearson’s correlation coefficient of 0.560 and a significance p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.005.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.904 ^a	.817	.805	2.07160

From the findings, R was 0.904 which implies that there was a positive relationship between all the four independent variables. R² was 0.817 implying that 81.7% of the variation in the dependent variable was explained by the independent variables while 18.3% of the variations were due to other factors. This implies that the regression model has a very good explanatory and predictor grounds.

Table 3: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1170.716	4	292.679	68.199	.000 ^b
Residual	261.784	61	4.292		
Total	1432.500	65			

From the finding, the significance value was 0.000 which is less than 0.05 thus the model is statistically significant in predicting the independent variables influence on dependent variable. The F critical at 5% level of significance is 2.51. Since F calculated (value = 68.199) is greater than the F critical (2.51), this shows that the overall model was significant.

Table 4: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	5.859	2.105		2.783	.007
Access to Credit	.337	.103	.278	3.275	.002
Professional Support	.285	.093	.329	3.065	.003
Networks	.068	.089	.051	.761	.450
Access to Information	.502	.139	.347	3.604	.001

The opportunities made possible by table banking, namely access to credit ($\beta = 0.337$, $p < 0.002$), professional support ($\beta = 0.285$, $p < 0.003$) and access to information ($\beta = 0.502$, $p < 0.001$) had a significant positive influence on the growth of women owned enterprises as p values were less than 0.05. However networking ($\beta = 0.068$, $p > 0.450$) had no significance influence on the growth of women owned enterprises. Therefore: $Y = a + \beta X_1 + \beta X_2 + \beta X_3 + \beta X_4$, where (X) is independent variables, (Y) is dependent variable with (a) being constant becomes: $Y = 5.859 + 0.337 + 0.285 + 0.68 + 0.502$.

CONCLUSIONS

The research concludes that lack of access to local credit, gaps in the provision of business information on finances, market, market linkages, price, new technologies, government regulations, policy and other support services constrain the growth of women-owned MSEs. Networking is an integral component of personal interaction, tapped and learnt from other members of the social networks. The respondents benefitted from the networks created, not only for themselves, but also with other customers. These networks enabled them to exchange business information with those entrepreneurs who are doing well and act as role models and encouragers. Lack of business information and adequate networks denied women entrepreneurs' important opportunities necessary for an efficient running of the business which would ultimately have improved their growth. Professional support had enabled respondents to learn new concepts to help their enterprises. Table banking is the only framework where women can interact to form networks, access credit, business information and get professional support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Increased access to financial services for women in micro and small enterprises could be critical for economic empowerment. Women entrepreneurs lacked access to credit facilities and therefore the government should intervene by formulating favorable credit policies that support the growth of small and micro business enterprises and create awareness of UWEZO Fund so that many women can benefit. Women are the majority in entrepreneurship development and thus empowering women with more education and management skill training could develop a strong foundation on the business development and the study recommends continuous professional support to improve the overall management of their enterprises.

The study also recommends that women entrepreneurs should come together and form business social networks for purposes of pooling their financial resources together and hence forming an easier and cheaper way to source credit for their businesses. Coming together will enable them to get credit from Kenya Women Finance Trust that offers credit to groups. Increased networks also give women opportunities, connections, raising their profiles, positive influence, generation of referrals and increased business, friendship and satisfaction in helping others. They also gain a chance of awareness and exposure to good role models/mentors and this will assist in growing their enterprises, hence success and sustainability will be achieved.

The study finally recommends that the concept of table banking should be embraced by the government and policies formulated and implemented, as this will make it easy for women to access capital and at the same time safeguard their savings.

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