

Fostering Women Entrepreneurship As A Solution To Poverty Reduction In Developing Economies : A Case Study Of Ongata Rongai Town

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship today has become an important professional skill to reduce poverty among women in Kenya. Women entrepreneurship has been necessitated by the attempts to empower women and to help them achieve sustainable social economic status. This study analyses the social economic sustainability of women's enterprises. The study examines the key approaches to eradicate poverty and vulnerability of women as they aim to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through entrepreneurship development corresponding to small business institutions. The study also investigates the different strategies adopted in fostering women entrepreneurship as solution to poverty reduction in the developing economy. Indeed a new insight of policy initiative has been proposed, like reducing micro-credit interest rate or distribution of little funding by the government or some donor agencies to cover the high cost of micro finance (MFIs) instead of imposing higher interest rates for encouraging women to sustain into their little enterprise business. This study adopted the case study design. The study targeted the women in business from Ongata Rongai area, Kajiado County, who are actively involved in small and medium businesses. A total sample size of 150 was selected for this study. This study used semi-structured questionnaire method to collect primary data and published materials as a source of secondary data. This study established that women entrepreneurship development is vital to eliminating poverty, empowering women with more advance education and skill and ensuring sustainable development of rural women through micro credit policy, precise government's intervention and group based entrepreneurship business efforts. The study recommends that more jobs be created especially for women in form of small and medium scale enterprises through policy formulation and implementation since SMEs and economic development are related. Also, the government should encourage women to cultivate and nurture entrepreneurial spirit as a way of achieving gainful employment. In addition, the government should encourage the creation of more micro finance banks that are well supported and regulated to render specialized financial support to women and their enterprises.

Key Words: Entrepreneurship, Women entrepreneurship, Poverty Reduction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Fostering women entrepreneurship participation goes beyond poverty reduction, but it is about women liberation and development. True development of women will entail individuals, social, and economic development (Faleye, 2007; Rodney, 1972). These will enable women to harness the resources within their environment and exploit them.

A lot of advantage can be linked to women development and their capacity in entrepreneurship. For example, their attitude to risks in respect to finance and discovery of opportunities within the environment can hamper the contribution of women to entrepreneurial development in Kenya (Ashwin, 2000).

Investment in gender equality yields the highest returns of all development investments women entrepreneurs usually invest a higher proportion of their earnings in their families and communications than men (Brush & Hisrich, 1999).

Increasing the role of women in the economy is part of the solution to the financial and economic crises and critical for economic resilience and growth. However, at the same time, we need to be mindful that women are in the some context bearing the cost of recovering from the crisis, with the loss of jobs, poor working conditions and increasing precariousness. Among the mitigation factors, credit facilities are paramount. Adequate aids entrepreneurship. The effect of such credit advance and loans to women entrepreneurs usually results in improved income, output, investment, employment and welfare of entrepreneurs considering the pivotal role of women in the household and community in Kenya, this impact goes a long way in reducing poverty (Marlow, 1997).

Ultimately, a country's success in empowering women depends on a multi-faceted and responsive approach to its public policy management and implementation, including its macro-economic, finance and trade policies. Many women entrepreneurs in Ongata Rongai face disproportionate obstacles in accessing and competing in the markets. These include women's relatives' lack of mobility, capacity and technical skills in relations to men

(IFAD, 2004). Both the government and the private sector (including NGOs) are engaged in various efforts to empower women entrepreneurs in a bid to grow their enterprises and fight poverty (Aldrich, 1989).

Women entrepreneurs can be divided into different categories. The first category is labelled the "*Jua kali*" entrepreneurs. These women own their business, which is often not registered and is in the informal economy. These include; selling of products in open air or makeshift shed. They have little education (less than secondary level) and are constrained by lack of entrepreneurial and business know-how, access to credit, and awareness of markets and opportunities. They are most likely to employ a few family members, operate from home – based (or *Jua kali* – a Swahili term for hot sun referring to the open air working condition) with limited potential for growth. To obtain credit, they are likely to be part of a women's merry-go-round group of five or six women who combine their savings over a six-month period of time and then start lending, on a very short term basis, to member from the pool. For communication needs they are likely to rely on word of mouth and mobile phone using the cheapest tariff available (Munyua & Mureithi, 2008).

The second category according to Munyua and Mureithi (2008) comprises of women with very small (usually six to ten employees) business, who have minimum education (to secondary level), with previous experience as an employee in a public or private sector enterprise. These business would be registered and operate from legitimate business premises. These women are likely to have access to some level of training and micro-finance and advantage their business, but are still constrained by access to financing. Most of them turn to Sacco's like "Jamii bora" and "Kenya women finance trust. Commercial banks in Kenya still prefer to lend large depositor, and these women are unlikely to have title deeds to meet collateral security requirements, although Equity banks has been able to consider such women with little income. They probably own a mobile phone and use it to manage the business. This category of businesswoman would have growth potential and perhaps even access to international markets.

The third and last category as presented by Munyua and Mureithi (2008) is made up of woman who may have some level of university education; they may also come from an entrepreneurial family with experience in managerial positions. They are likely to have small, medium-sized or large enterprises with growth potential and opportunity to engage in export. They would keep a mobile phone as well as a fixed line to conduct business and would also most probably own and use a computer and the internet.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of entrepreneurship in economic development and poverty reduction especially in developing countries has been asserted in the literature. Davidson (1989) argued that the economy of developing nations can be improved through entrepreneurship development. The researcher however added that economic development is multidimensional; not only dependent on the traditional economies model of factor inputs but issues such as culture, gender, type of enterprise etc. Entrepreneurship is looked at as decision-making process and entrepreneur's success in this wise depends on the situation at hand and the approach adopted. Some decisions require careful analysis while others require application of past experience; and the environment (for example government policies) available at that time can make or mar entrepreneurial decision-making (Carter, 2001).

Entrepreneurial attributes such as motive of venturing into the business and innovative skills, education and networking ability are also vital element to consider in entrepreneurial success. Women entrepreneurship plays an important role in the development and growth of developing countries, the importance of promoting women in economic activities is being increasingly realized in all developed and developing countries. Empowering women by bringing them into the mainstream of development and by empowering their economic status and providing them with employment opportunities for income generation, self employment and entrepreneurship in different social economic sectors is a great way of fighting poverty within the economy (Desai, 1999).

Experience demonstrates that there are a large number of women in Ongata Rongai, capable of and willing to be involved in economic activities. An important tool of women empowerment is macro credit, which has been accepted as an effective tool for poverty reduction. Studies of women in Kenya, has revealed all of the attributes of women entrepreneurs. This has been engaged in commercial or trading activities since pre-colonial times (Akinwumi, 2000). Akinwumi (2000) mentioned two types of women entrepreneurs: *Jua Kali* and formal (who are traders) and formal (who are described as licensed traders). Actually, they are described as very prudent business woman. These women have started to take important political positions in their environment, thus increasing their status and positions due to the wealth gained through trading activities.

Women have demonstrated their abilities and showed that they should be seriously considered as important in the political and economic sectors of the economy as well as poverty reduction since they have been identified as the mothers of their nation. Women entrepreneurship has been found to be a solution in poverty reduction economy (Cliff, 1998).

2.1 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS: COMPARISON OF SELECTED CASES

2.1.1 Women entrepreneurship development of Canada

Canada has a strong framework for fostering entrepreneurship through industry Canada (IC) (i.e., its ministry of industry). Canada has several programs promoted by its provincial government that are exclusively directed towards woman's entrepreneurship. Without disruptive innovations, the Canada economy continues to grow from its trade liberalization strategy. With skill and persistence, the women entrepreneurs increase their relative share in the country's total exports due to national and regional support. Women begin to compose the majority of entrepreneurs in Canada, and the improved environment continues to attract more women to start new businesses (Stevenson, 1992)

In assessing the effects of public policies for entrepreneurship, the scenario exercise shows that are these policies are not a panacea that will bring a country to an advanced stage of economic development. Countries are subject to structural limitations and other economic choices, such as their level of economic integration. Under adverse conditions, these policies can fail to produce effects, not by flaws in policy design, but rather due to structural limitation (Stevenson, 1992)

On the other hand, the absence of public policies that foster entrepreneurship rarely produces positive effects, even considering adverse scenarios. In other words, without government intervention, women entrepreneurs will positively impact economic development.

2.2 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN AFRICA (Developing Countries)

2.2.1 Women Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

Statistically, women constitute more than 50% of the Nigeria population and out of this; only about 30% of them involved in entrepreneurship, which can be under the form of micro, small medium and large enterprises, which can be under the form of micro, small, medium and large enterprises (Odoemene, 2003). These enterprises usually tend to have the flexibility and innovativeness that are critical business issues in feminism (Biekpe, 2006). In Nigeria, regardless of women's physical population, educational, economic and social status, they are not well represented in the policy making process, especially in issues of business and work force development. However, given the dynamic nature of the Nigeria environment, a number of changes have emerged, including the recognition of the potential of women and their contribution to the economy. As Mordi et al. (2010) details, roles occupied by the Nigerian woman in the family are as a result of change in the family configuration and setting which allowed women to undertake more practical and functional roles within the society (Odoemene, 2003).

Promoting women entrepreneurship development demands more attention to be focused upon issues that restrict women entrepreneur. Information on gender issues will help with the implantation of supportive practice and programs for monitoring and evaluating the challenges facing women entrepreneurs developing economies and the best way to meet their needs. More emphasis from several researchers such as Odoemene (2003) has been placed on the effect of psychological and factors on their entrepreneurial development.

2.2.2 Women Entrepreneurship Development in Ugandan

Since gaining independence in 1962, Uganda has faced a variety of challenges including political instability, corruption and entrenched gender discrimination. Uganda women continue to lack equal property and marriage rights, and are significantly underrepresented in the public office. In Uganda, 85% of the population lives on less than \$1USD a day and the GN1 per capital is US \$ 300 .women currently make up 48% of the labor force; however the ration of female to male income is. 70. On addition, the adult literacy rate for women is 57%, compared with 77% for men Gender (2004).

Although women constitute a little over one – half of Uganda's population, they rank lower than men in almost every social indicator in the country (UBOS, 2009). However despite this, female competitors are increasingly prominent as employers, customers, suppliers, and competitors in global community. More than one third of people involved in entrepreneurial activities are women (Gadar & Yunus, 2009).

While research shows similarities in the personal demographic of men and women entrepreneurs, there are different in business and industry choices, financing strategies, growth patterns, and government structure of female led ventures. these differences provides compelling reasons to study female entrepreneurship– looking specifically at women founders , their ventures , and their entrepreneurial behaviors as a unique of entrepreneurship (Goffee & Scase , 1985).

2.3 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN ONGATA RONGAI, KENYA

Women entrepreneurs in Ongata Rongai face numerous barriers that prevent them from realizing the full potential of the economic contributions of their enterprises paramount among these is the legal restrictions or cultural practices that prevent them from owning property. As long as they are unable to accumulate tilted assets that can be offered as collateral security for loans, the scale and growth of their enterprise is adversely affected. In this regard, difficulties in accessing credit and lack of adequate financial services have been

identified as the major constraints for women entrepreneurs, and as a gender related barriers that disadvantages women. Imbaya (2004) asserts the imperativeness for governments to review the legal framework within the country, with particular regard to the rights of women in society and with a special emphasis on their entitlement to ownership of property assets. Prevailing cultural and / or social practice, which favors men's ownership of and control over economic resources, must be make them favors men's ownership of and control over economic resources, must be challenged. In addition, effort must be made to empower women economically – to make them aware of the rights they have as well as to support changes in cultural practices that subordinate them male family members, be the husbands, fathers or brothers.

Women operating in different enterprises in Ongata Rongai district, where large proportion of the population live in poverty, face several major constraints. These include their inability to judge the profitability of the operations due to lack of basic accounting skills, insufficient technical and business management skills as well as social cultural constraints (Imbaya, 2004). Several interventions are being carried out by a number of stakeholders to ensure that the sector plays it's fully. Both the government and the private sector (including NGOs) are engaged in various efforts to empower the women entrepreneurs to grow their enterprise, and fight poverty in our community.

2.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Starting and operating a small business includes a possibility of success as well as failure. Because of their small size, simple management mistakes is likely to lead to sure death of a small enterprise hence opportunities to learn from its past mistakes lack of planning , improper financing and poor management have been posited as the main causes of failure of small enterprise. Lack of credit has also been identified as one of the most serious constraints facing SMEs (Ashwin, 2000) and hindering their development. Education is one of the factors that impact positively on growth of firms (Mordi et al., 2010). Those entrepreneurs with larger stocks of human capital, in terms of education and or vocational training, are better placed to adopt their enterprises to constantly changing business environment (King & McGrath, 1998). Infrastructure as it relates to provision of access roads, adequate power, water sewerage and telecommunication has been a major constraints I the development of SMEs (Ikiara, 2001).

2.5 EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN KENYA

Several interventions are being carried out by a number of stakeholders to ensure that the sectors play its role fully. Both the government and the private sectors (including NGOs) are engaged in various efforts to empower the entrepreneurs in particular women, to grow their enterprises and fight poverty. The following are the interventions.

2.5.1 Formation of Women Enterprise Fund (WEF)

Women enterprise fund (WEF) was conceived by the government of Kenya in 2006 and officially launched in 2007. The principal objective of the fund is economic empowerment. Women enterprise fund reach the target beneficiaries through the partner financial intermediaries and directly through constituency women enterprise scheme (C-WES).

This fund is aimed to enable the government realize the 2030millennium goal (MDG) ON GENDER EQUALITY and empowerment of women. In recognition of the critical role of women play in social-economic development, the WEF has had identified as a flagship project under the social pillar in the vision 2030.it is expected that fund will play a catalytic role in mainstreaming women in the formal financial services sectors . Although women constitute 52 percent of the total Kenyan population, majority of them have been excluded from formal financial service – for example, few have bank accounts, can access money transfer services, etc (Ashwin, 2000).

2.5.2 Establishment of Women's University of Science and Technology

The establishment of Keriri women's university of science and technology is one of the positive affirmative actions taken to empower women in MSEs. This gives young women a chance to study science and technology, the foundations for creativity and innovation and element essential for growth of MSEs. This gives women more access to technical education hence empowers them to enter MSEs. On the other hand, the public university, the entry qualification for women, for degree programs has always a point lower, as part of an affirmative action scheme. This allows for educational opportunities for women. There is an assumption that with the knowledge and skills acquired in life, women graduates will have a better chance of being entrepreneurial (Women Entrepreneurs in Kenya, 2008).

2.5.3 Formal Financial Support for Women Entrepreneurs

In Kenya, formal financial support is provided by commercial bank, non-government organizations (NGOs), microfinance institutions (MFI) saving and credit co-operatives (SACCOs) among others. These employ an integrated approach, disseminating information and building capacity of women's group in effective

management of revolving funds. In so doing, they use women economic empowerment consort (WEEC), and micro finance institution targeting women at the grass root level and in different areas mainly in Kajiado district in rift valley province and in two other districts in central province and Kenya rural enterprises program (K-REP) which operates various micro-finance schemes from the K-REP Bank. Among are the Juhudi, Chikola and Kati Kati loans scheme, supporting men and women entrepreneurs (Women Entrepreneurs in Kenya, 2008). K-REP uses banks both based approach and individual lending, about 50 percent of the total portfolio is for group based and the rest is retail or individual lending. The collateral in the group approach is social collateral – group guarantee rates on such loans have consistently been very high with an extremely low about 2 percent default rate (World Bank, 2004).

2.5.4 Finance from Mainstream Commercial Banks (Add More Banks Like Equity and Family Bank)

Most commercial banks have special products for women entrepreneurs, in most cases offered along with other normal banking facilities however concerns have been raised as to the conditions of access to them and the money borrowed. Other formal banks' lending to SMEs are Standard Chartered, Stanbic and Commercial Bank of Africa or offering wholesale credit to the MFIs (Central Bank of Kenya, 2006).

2.5.5 Informal Financial Support

Informal financial support services includes several variations on merry –G0- rounds (MGRs) and rotating and service credit association (ROSCAS) which have roots in traditional mutual guarantee systems . A typical ROSCA involves a group of 5-10 members and operates on simple principle, namely, regular meeting where each member contributes agreed amount of money and each member gets a turn as the recipient with interest with charged on the loans or earned savings (World Bank, 2004).

2.5.6 The Role Played by the NGOs

NGOs play a major role in empowering women entrepreneurs. Organizations such as care international, world vision, plan international are working such as relief and welfare, technical innovation, national development, public health, agriculture, advocacy, grassroots development agencies and other networks which are highly helping the women entrepreneur in Kenya.

2.5.7 Business Development Services

A business development service comprises non-financial services that are aimed at capacity building. They include training service, marketing and institutional support. Management training of MSEs Focuses on building the capacity of entrepreneurs, by transferring of relevant knowledge and skills needed to successfully run the enterprises. These include skills in financial management, marketing, human resource management and entrepreneurship training. In Kenya the institutions offering such are Christian industrial centers (CITCs), federation of Kenya employers (FKF) voluntary service overseas (VSO) Kenya institute Kenya institute of management (KIM), Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology(JKUAT) ,the national polytechnics , the Kenya institute of business training (KIBT) number of NGOs using donor funding.

2.5.8 Access to Infrastructure

According to 1999 national MSE survey, efforts made to alleviate the problem of infrastructure are; construction of industrial areas in Buru Buru in Nairobi by NCKK, construction of Nyayo sheds by the ministry of research, technical training and technology and construction of 600 sheds in five urban areas by the government of Kenya with assistance from the German society of technical cooperation (GTZ) and the current government rural – electrification program. The recent establishment of courier companies such as Securicor courier and easy coach courier, and the coming of Safaricom, orange and Airtel mobile have also helped to improve infrastructure (Government of Kenya, 2003).

2.5.9 Donor Initiative

In Kenya donor strategy for support women entrepreneurs has been mainly that of using intermediaries , such as NGOs and government , many micro finance institutions are funded by donors for lending o to entrepreneurs such as Kenya women finance trust (KWFT) , ecumenical church loans fund (ECLOF) and K-REP . The FNIKISHA initiative is a joint effort by UNDP – Kenya and equity bank to promote women entrepreneurs in the country. Some commercial banks also act as intermediaries to extend credit to the women entrepreneur either under loans guarantee scheme or other arrangements for examples for micro finance institutions (AMFI) which is an umbrella organization for microfinance institution in Kenya and receives funding from United States agency for international development (USAID) for its operations. Among the key donors supporting women's entrepreneurship are; Japanese international corporation agency (JICA), GTZ, USAID and United Nations development programme (UNDP). JICA is supporting women in agriculture, specifically in horticulture, in several areas of the country through training (World Bank, 2004).

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in rift valley province, Kajiado County, Ongata Rongai town using survey design. Ongata Rongai is located between Kiserian and Karen town, and comprises of a collection of various women entrepreneurs who work and do business in Ongata Rongai town. This indicates that the diversity of culture and tribes within Ongata Rongai are fully represented and will reflect diverse of Ongata Rongai women entrepreneurs.

A purposive sampling procedure was used which involved the going to the respondents at their place of business. Questionnaires were administered to those available at the time of visit. A sample of 150 respondents was administered questionnaires for over a period of three weeks .a returned rate of 74 questionnaires or 49 questionnaires percent of the respondent was recorded. These were the ones considered valid and properly filled by the respondents. The questionnaire included items relating to personal bio data, perception, challenges and contribution of women to poverty reduction.

The case study design was adopted in this study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a case study is an in –depth investigation of an individual groups, institution or phenomena. The researcher used it because it provided a detailed examination on his study and it was most appropriate method of collecting data concerning fostering women entrepreneurship as solution to poverty reduction in developing economy.

The study targeted the women in business from Ongata Rongai area, Kajiado County, who are actively involved in small and medium businesses. Sample survey research design adopted in the course of the study since it is relatively impossible to study all the elements that made up the unemployed population of women residing in Ongata Rongai town.

Since it is practically impossible to study all small and medium enterprise owners in Ongata Rongai area in Kajiado County, the researcher adopted random sampling technique to select samples adopted for this study. A total sample of 150 respondents was selected for this study. The SMEs selected for this study included food vendors and restaurants, Boutique shops, agro vet /chemist shops, green grocery kiosks, Mitumba (second hand clothes) dealers and spreads across Rongai town thus from Rimpa area to Masaai lodge.

The pilot study took place in Ongata Rongai town. According to Orodho (2005) a pilot study can reveal deficiencies in the proposed experiment or procedure and these can then be addressed before tie resource expended on large scale studies. Data was collected using the questionnaires both opened and close ended questions. The questionnaire helped to gather information from the respondent.

4.0 FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Findings

This paper focused on the effect between women entrepreneurship and poverty in Ongata Rongai. It seeks to identify an effective means of poverty reduction, expand the understanding of business and social profile of women entrepreneurs. The first task was to discuss the demographic characteristic of the 150 respondents. The survey results reveal that most respondents in this study were between the ages of 25 to 35 that account for which is 56 percent of the respondent.

In Ongata Rongai, the active working class falls within this age bracket. That is why majority of women entrepreneurs fall within the age bracket. The result reveals that just 10 percent of the respondents fall within the age bracket of 55-65 years. This can also be explained because in Kenya, at the age bracket most Kenyan are in longer active at wok; it is the retirement age bracket. The results reveled that most of the women that is, 43 percent have spent 5 to 10 years in business, while 5 percent have spent above 20 years in the business. From the data collected 5 percent have postgraduate degree, 8 percent have bachelor's degree, 14 percent have diploma and 31 percent have secondary school leaving certificate, while 20 percent have primary school certificate and 14 percent have no informal education. Majority of the women entrepreneurship covered in this are sole proprietors very few have partnership with another women. The data collected also revealed that 31 percent got their initial capital through Sacco's and merry-go-round.

A total of a hundred of (150) copies of the questionnaires were administered out of which seventy four (74) copies representing (49%) of the questionnaires were properly completed and retrieved while seventy six (76) copies representing (51%) were not retrieved .

13% of the sample were of the group between 19- 25 years respondents representing 56% of the sample size were of the age group 25-45 years, sixteen while respondents 21% of the sample size were of the age group 45-55 years while options 55-65 years attracted eight (8) respondents representing (10%) of the sample. thus, majority of the respondents were of the group 25-45 years.

Ten (10) respondents representing 14% of the sample size were single , thirty six (36) respondents 48% of the sample size were married while fifteen (15) respondent representing 20% of the sample size were divorced/ separated and thirteen (13) respondents represents 18% of the sample widows /widower.

Table 4A shows that ten respondents representing 8% of the sample size were informal education , fifteen (15) respondents representing 20% of the sample size primary certificate holders , twenty –three (23) respondents representing 31% of the sample size were secondary holders , ten (10) respondents representing 14% of the

sample size were diploma holders , six respondents representing 8% of the sample size were bachelors holders , while another six (6) respondents representing 8% of the sample size were professional .thus majority of the respondents were secondary certificate holders.

Table 5A shows that twenty (20) respondents representing 27% of sample size have been on the job for less than five years , thirty two (32) respondents representing 43% of the sample size have been on the job for a period of 5-10 years , ten (10) respondents representing 14% of the sample size have been on the job for a period of 16-20 years while option 20 years and above attracted four (4) respondents representing 5% , thus majority of the respondents have been on the job to ten (5-10) years

Among the respondents, majority of women entrepreneurs (18%) were found to be vegetable vendors followed by second-hand dealers (14%), food vendors and restaurants dealers (13%), green grocery kiosk was also among the favored business. The table 6- also shows that women are becoming in non-traditional like agro vet and chemist entrepreneurs.

Analysis of data reveals that majority of the women have good opinion of their contribution to entrepreneurial development in Ongata Rongai. This is evident in their response to the statement that there is a link between women entrepreneurship and poverty production. 25 respondents representing 33% of the sample strongly agreed, 28 respondents representing 38% agreed, 14 respondent representing 19% of the sample undecided , 5 respondent representing 7% of the sample size disagreed while 2 respondents representing 3% of the sample strongly disagreed with the statement . Thus, majority of the respondents agreed to the statement. Questionnaires analysis further revealed that women consider some factors to constitute risk to their involvement in entrepreneurial development. Such factors are in tandem with the response observed by the researcher.

Table 1D reveal that the majority of the successful entrepreneurs surveyed for this study founded their current business with money from Sacco's / merry-go-round, family and friends and personal savings. Less common source included business partners; bank loans government

Table 2D shows that 26 respondents representing 35% of the sample disagreed, 19 representing 26% strongly disagreed, 14 respondents representing 19% of the sample don't know, 10 respondent representing 13% of the sample agreed while 5 representing 7% of the sample strongly agreed with the statement. Thus, majority of the respondents disagreed about the question

From the table above, it can be informed that women entrepreneurs do not have adequate support terms of incentives and infrastructure from government. The greatest challenge for Kenyan – women is lock women is lack of incentive. Women in entrepreneurial activities need money both for start –up and expansion. Finance could be in form of equity or from external source. But the support in most cases do not go round and many of the commercial or development banks are reluctant to grant loans , demand for high interest rate and also demand collateral of landed property or other assets .

From the above table, the researcher discovered that apart from the contribution of women entrepreneurs in educating their children, desiring to be independent, earning more money, utilizing their own skills and better status in the society, women also perceive their involvement in entrepreneurship to contribute to employment creation, skill and economic development. This evidence and their response to the statement shown the table above majority of the women believes that the engagement of women entrepreneurial activities is for the benefit of fighting poverty ad able to support their families and reduce poverty. This will help unemployed women from the street, prostitution, gender based violence of all forms and incidence.

From table 2E, majority of women entrepreneurs their business are not registered and are in the informal business *Jua kali*, these include selling of products in open air or market shift shed . Fewer women entrepreneurs have registered business and operate from legitimate business premises.

This is because county council has proved to be very big challenged to women entrepreneurs in Ongata Rongai. Being a woman seems to exaggerate that fact since most women are harassed by the county council official when they come to inspect the business premises or the shed, moreover, women may be less likely to meet and negotiate bribes with the predominantly male council officials. Business licensing is an issue for many women entrepreneurs who perceive the process as lengthy and complex for them.

Table 1A: Analysis of Response rate

S/N	Administered Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage
1	Returned	74	49%
2	Unreturned	76	51%
	Total	150	100%

Source: researchers field survey, 2012

Table 2 A: Age

Feature (Age)	Code	Frequency	Percentage
19-25 Years	1	10	13%
25-45 Years	2	42	56%
45-55 Years	3	16	21%
55-65 Years	4	8	10%
Total		74	100%

Source: field survey. 2012

Table 3 A: Marital status

Feature	Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Marital Status			
Single	1	10	14
Married	2	36	48
Divorced/Separated	3	15	20
Widow/Widower	4	13	18
Total		74	100

Source: field survey, 2012

Table 4 A: Educational Background

Feature	Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Educational Background			
Informal Education	1	10	14
Primary Certificate	2	15	20
Secondary Certificate	3	23	31
Diploma Certificate	4	10	14
Bachelor's Certificate	5	6	8
Master's Certificate	6	4	5
Professionals	7	6	8
Totals		74	100

Source: Researcher's Field survey, 2012

Table 5 A: Years as Business

Feature	Code	frequency	Percentage
Years in business			
Less than 5 years	1	20	27
5-10 years	2	32	43
11-15 years	3	10	14
16-20 years	4	8	11
Above 20 years	5	4	5
total		74	100

Source: field survey, 2012

Table 6A: Type Of Business

Name of the enterprises	No. of business	Percentage (%)
Food vendors and restaurants	13	18
Boutiques shops	9	12
Agro vets/chemists shops	8	11
Green grocery kiosks	12	16
Mitumba (second-hand) dealers	14	19
Vegetables vendors	18	24
Total no.	74	100

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 1B: Women Entrepreneurs Contributes to Poverty Reduction and Economic Growth

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	25	33
Agree	28	38
Undecided	14	19
Disagree	5	7
Strongly disagree	2	3
Total	74	100

Source: field survey, 2012

Table 1C: Factors Hindering Ability of Women to Actively Participate In Entrepreneurial Development

NO.	Factors	Frequency	Percentage
1	Poor management skills	5	7
2	Poor planning	6	8
3	Inadequate finances	15	20
4	Inadequate education, training and counseling	11	15
5	Poor infrastructure	5	7
6	Poor technology	3	4
7	Poor social networks	8	11
8	Legal restrictions	9	12
9	Cultural restrictions	12	16
Total		74	106

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2012

Table 1D: Source of Finance for Business

Main source of funding	Code	Frequency	Percentage
Personal savings	1	15	20
Sacco/merry-go-round	2	23	31
Friends & family	3	15	20
Business partners	4	5	7
Bank loans	5	8	11
Government loan	6	6	8
Others	7	2	3
Totals		74	100

Source: researcher's field survey, 2012

Table 2D: Government Is Doing Well Providing Incentives To Women Entrepreneurs?

Description	Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	1	5	7
Agree	2	10	13
Disagree	3	26	35
Strongly disagree	4	19	26
I don't know	5	14	19
Total		74	100

Source: researchers field survey. 2012

Table 1E: Women Involvement in Business Activities

Reasons	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Women entrepreneurs creates more employment opportunity	10	14
Reduce (fight) poverty	18	24
Women are able to support themselves, and stop depending on their spouses and family members	15	20
They are able to educate their children	13	18
Desire to be independent	4	5
Earning more money	7	9
Better status in the society	3	4
To utilize own skill	4	5
Total	74	100

Source researcher's fields work 2012

Table 2E: Major Challenges That Women Face Being an Entrepreneur

Challenges	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
How to get capital/source of capital	18	14
How to choose the location	10	24
Society's outlook at the women entrepreneurs	15	20
Personal mobility (transportation of goods)	13	18
Management of time (balancing work & home)	4	5
Dealing with the males	7	9
Problem with the customers	3	4
How to market their products	4	5
Total	74	100

Source: researcher's field work 2012

Table 4E: Business Licensing

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Have business license	28	38
No business license	46	62
Total	74	100

Source; researcher's field work 2012

4.2 Conclusion

As means to respond to the needs of the poor and tackle poverty, government has come to, in recent time plays a dominant from the strategy intervention. Arguments have been canvassed for its desirability, efficacy and other wise. Clearly, capital and assets are needs for poor desire to engage in productive activities. And ways of making these available without promoting a culture of dependency would be a progressive way to approach poverty. This is more so with respect to women who do not have rights and opportunities to possess and obtain assets and capital.

Their participation in the productive activities is further curtailed as they are saddled with more responsibilities without corresponding remuneration. And when poverty is prevalent and its duration too long, peace and stability can be threatened. This is so as people bound to respond to deprivation and seeks means to alleviate them.

The world's reaction to fight poverty can be assumed to mean its acceptance that it is ethically unacceptable and politically untenable. Poverty coupled with unemployment it's the principal source of human insecurity and social instability. Somavia (1999) recons "we can continue to hold the trust of the people of Ongata Rongai only if we make their needs our priority. We know that poverty, lack of productivity employment and social disintegration are an offence to human dignity. We also know that they are negatively reinforcing and represent a waste of human resources and a manifestation of ineffectiveness in the functioning of the markets and economic and social institutions and processes". Therefore the challenge to alleviate poverty amongst society has assumed s global challenge. This is eloquently encapsulated in the UN millennium development goals (MDGs).

4.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusion stated above, the researcher therefore recommended that for the present and future governance to achieve impressive development, more jobs should be created especially for women in form of small and medium scale enterprises through policy formulation and implementation since SMEs and economic development are related.

The government should encourage women to cultivate and nurture entrepreneurial spirit as a way of achieving gainful employment. The government should review and expand its skill acquisition programme by create additional skills acquisition centers in addition to the already existing in order to boost skill acquisition and entrepreneurial should be ex-rayed in order to identify lope holes therein so as to enhance the achievement of its objectives.

Lastly, attaining the status the of the economic development of the western world, Kenya as an economy should make itself SMEs driven economy that is adequately supported by the needed fund. In addition, the government should encourage the creation of more micro finance banks that are well supported and regulated to render necessary financial supports.

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