Women Entrepreneurship in Namibia: Challenges and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the use of the marketing mix and the service profit chain frameworks by woman entrepreneurs in Namibia and evaluated the factors responsible for encouraging women to become entrepreneurs. The study further explored the nature of challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs in Namibia. The data was analysed through SPSS. The study revealed a new trend of young educated women entrepreneurs in Namibia that earn a very basic but steady income that allows them to be self-sufficient and independent. The study further revealed that the lack of entrepreneurial, financial, and marketing skills and the lack of adequate government support were among the major challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs in Namibia. Despite these challenges, the study concluded that the women entrepreneurs in Namibia have a positive entrepreneurial outlook which contributes to their entrepreneurial resilience and growth prospects.

KEYWORDS
Marketing Mix Framework, Service Profit Chain Framework, SPSS, Women Entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

The growing number of women-owned businesses is concentrated in the retail and personal service industries. With increasing competition, women find themselves having to compete with established female players in the industry as well as with their male counterparts. To excel and to position themselves in an ultramodern era, women entrepreneurs must strive to harvest benefits from the marketing mix strategies and the service profit chain.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Marketing refers to the interactive process that requires developing, pricing, placing and promoting goods, ideas or services to facilitate exchanges between customers and sellers to satisfy the needs and wants of customers (Kotler, 2012). The problems and constraints experienced by women entrepreneurs have resulted in restricting the expansion of women entrepreneurship. The major barriers encountered by women entrepreneurs are related to the fact that they are women. Male members of the public think it is a big risk financing the ventures run by women. Women entrepreneurs face stiff competition.

DOI: 10.4018/IJAMSE.2019070101

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from the men entrepreneurs who easily involve themselves in the promotion and development area and carry out easy marketing of their products with both the organised sector and their male counterparts. Such competition ultimately results in the liquidation of many women entrepreneurs (Goyal & Parkash, 2011). Thus, regardless of the nature of a business, at the centre of marketing is the process of satisfying the needs and wants of customers, hence this study aims at exploring women entrepreneurship practices including the use of the 7P’s of the Service Marketing Mix Framework and the Service Profit Chain Framework as means of achieving competitive advantage. The study further aims to explore the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Namibia.

OBJECTIVES

The following are the research objectives of this study:

- To explore the use of the marketing mix framework by women entrepreneurs in Namibia;
- To evaluate the factors responsible for encouraging Namibian women to become entrepreneurs;
- To investigate the Service Profit Chain of woman entrepreneurs in Namibia;
- To explore the relationship between the uses of the Marketing Mix Framework and women entrepreneurial success (Service Profit Chain) in Namibia;
- To critically examine the problems faced by women entrepreneurs in Namibia.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study may contribute to Knowledge creation in the areas of Woman Entrepreneurship, Marketing Mix, and Service Profit Chain. The findings will not only add to the academic conversation in these topical areas but inform training needs requirements for woman entrepreneurs in Namibia and beyond.

The published work is set to give knowledge to the entrepreneurs and thus improve their business and marketing skills leading to job creation and a sustainable economy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Entrepreneurship

“Entrepreneurship is a personal journey that begins in the mind of an individual” (Allen, 2016, p.27). This is because, according to Allen (2016) business is fundamentally about people, their hopes and dreams, how they interact, make decisions, plan, deal with conflict and much more. Hence, Entrepreneurs are known as catalysts of change and development that play a pivotal role in the economic progress and growth of the country (Nair, 2016). Although there is a considerable amount of literature about “Entrepreneurship”, there is a lack of consensus on what it is supposed to mean (Kobia and Sakalie, 2010, Nair, 2016). According to Huq et al., (2016) “Entrepreneurship” can be conceptualised as a process in which there is individual innovativeness and risk-taking propensity in strategic decision-making. It is also defined as the practice of creating value through distinctive resource blending that makes use of opportunity (Morris et al., 2001). It is further defined as the process of conceptualising, organising, launching and through innovation, nurturing a business opportunity into a potentially high growth venture in a complex, unstable environment (Rwigema & Venter, 2004)

Reasons and Challenges for Women Entrepreneurship

Hisrich et al., (2008) stress that entrepreneurial intentions are the motivational factors that influence individuals to pursue entrepreneurial outcomes, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is the conviction that one can successfully execute the entrepreneurial process while perceived desirability is the degree to which
Alignment of Business Strategy and Information Technology Considering Information Technology Governance, Project Portfolio Control, and Risk Management
