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RESEARCH ARTICLE

**A CROSS-CULTURAL REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL MOTIVATION
ON THE SUCCESS OF FEMALE SMMES OPERATORS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- Previous researchers have drawn attention to the link between entrepreneurial motivation, strategy and business success. Most of the studies on the characteristics of women entrepreneurs have focused on a comparison of male and female entrepreneurs with regards to demographic characteristics, psychological orientation or motivations, and business practices (Fenwick, 2001). Notwithstanding the fact that the number of women venturing into entrepreneurship is almost proportionate to the number of men, studies have shown that female-owned businesses are less likely to survive than male-owned businesses (Kalleberg and Leicht, 1991). This study investigates the poor survival rate of female-owned SMMes in South Africa through an analysis of women’s entrepreneurial motivation in the country.

Design/methodology/approach- This qualitative study is exploratory and the method of data collection was mostly based on of face-to-face interaction with participants. Personal interviews were conducted with female entrepreneurs over a period of five months, following which focus group discussions were conducted (with female entrepreneurs). It focuses on exploring the link between entrepreneurial motivation and the business success of female-owned and managed SMMes in South Africa. Cross-cultural differences are also explored and the arguments are examined inductively and deductively using thematic content analysis. Samples comprise 128 female entrepreneurs drawn from the four government identified races (Black Africans, White, Indian and Coloured). Data was collected by means of open-ended interviews.

Findings- The results showed a link between motivation, business strategy and business success. It also showed evidence of “serial entrepreneurship” and confirms the findings from previous research that South African female entrepreneurs were more “necessity” than “opportunity” driven. It highlights a need for intervention programs that include motivational training for South African women desiring growth and sustainability in business.

Originality/value- This study offers insight into the factors that influence South African women’s decision to create a new venture and their possible link to the strategies they adopt to grow and sustain their businesses, as well as the link between their motivational factors, strategies and business success.

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INTRODUCTION

There are significant differences across gender lines with respect to new venture creation, and according to international studies the number of women involved in new business start-ups worldwide is still significantly and systematically lower than men (Bosma and Levie, 2009; Langowitz and Minniti, 2007). Evidence suggests that women pursue different start-up processes and are more likely to balance work and family roles, handle conflicts and consider time and space constraints as they create new ventures (Brush, 1992; Carter *et al.*, 2003; Havenga, 2009). Men, on the other hand, are more likely to become entrepreneurs and research is yet to show a country in which women are more entrepreneurial than men (Langowitz and Minniti, 2007; Minniti *et al.*, 2005).

Previous studies on the characteristics of women entrepreneurs have focused more on a comparison of male and female entrepreneurs and most have concluded that men

and women have more similarities than differences in relation to demographic characteristics, psychological orientation or motivations, and business practices (Fenwick, 2001). Most of these entrepreneurs (male and female) are married, between the ages of 30-45, are often the first born child, and have an entrepreneurial father (Chaganti, 1986; Hisrich and Brush, 1984). While conducting a study using the current population surveys at the time, similarities in the average age of male and female entrepreneurs as well as in motivations for entrepreneurial activities were found (Evans, Leighton and Wharton, 1989). The motivating factors for entrepreneurial activities between men and women were found to be the same: a desire for independence, personal satisfaction and achievement. Only in Pakistan was there similarities in motivation between male and female entrepreneurs in their desire for freedom, security and satisfaction (Shabbir and Di Gregorio, 1996). Despite the fact that the number of women venturing into entrepreneurship is proportionate to the number

of men, studies have shown that female-owned businesses are less likely to survive than male-owned businesses (Kalleberg and Leicht, 1991).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Early exploratory research on female entrepreneurs has compared and contrasted the character and motivation of female entrepreneurs with those of male entrepreneurs (Carter, Anderson and Shaw, 2001b). Most of the research shows that men and women have different intentions for new venture creation and the gender difference in entrepreneurship can be explained in motivational theories that lead to different self-employment choices between men and women. Research also shows that women are less inclined towards traditionally male-dominated careers or business sectors, either because of low self-esteem or because of their perceptions of being less capable in these male dominated sectors (Baughn *et al.*, 2006; Hackett *et al.*, 1992; Wheeler, 1983). A pilot study of female entrepreneurs (Schreier, 1975) showed that male and female entrepreneurs had much in common, with the major difference being in their choice of business sectors. Women chose sectors that traditionally reflected high levels of female employment i.e. services and retailing.

Despite the gender differences in entrepreneurship, research shows that a common motivation for men and women's venturing into entrepreneurship is the desire for independence and the need to control their own destiny. A study of 58 female entrepreneurs and 43 male entrepreneurs in London showed a significant difference in their background and experience (gender wise). Men chose businesses that were related to their prior work experience (i.e. same industry) thereby making self-employment a similar occupation with the added benefit of independence and autonomy. Women, on the other hand, were found to have little or no relevant experience as they venture into entrepreneurship, especially in the non-traditional sectors (Watkins and Watkins, 1986). It was therefore concluded by Watkins and Watkins (1984) that a lack of prior work experience influenced women's choice of establishing a sustainable business venture, thereby forcing them into sectors traditionally considered to be female.

Gender differences on entrepreneurial motivation

Gender differences exist in entrepreneurial motivation. According to Fischer, Reuber and Dyke (1993), if differences exist between male and female entrepreneurs, then it is necessary to have empirical evidence that compares men and women from the same population. This view is supported by a study by Cromie and Hayes (1988), where the different social orientations of men and women prior to research was considered rather than assuming that the findings based on a study of one gender would be applicable to the other gender.

Goffee and Scase concluded from a survey carried out in 1985 that, more often than not, women are totally excluded from entrepreneurship research or at least considered to behave in the same way as men. However, there are those who argue that the possibility of a significant difference in the social orientations of men and women, by virtue of gender, cannot be overlooked and should be seriously considered in any research (Mitchell, 2004).

According to Buttner and Moore (1997), in order to extend knowledge concerning entrepreneurial motivation, it is preferable to conduct studies on women rather than drawing

conclusions about models of entrepreneurship from studies carried out using male samples alone. Women are motivated by "pull" factors like the desire for independence, more challenges and self-determination and actualisation. They cherish the notion that they can determine their destiny by using their skills and experience.

A study of female entrepreneurs in Africa showed that the major motivating factors for entrepreneurship were family circumstances, the need for economic independence, the need for a more challenging career path and the desire to improve socio-economic status (Kuiper, 1993). He also found that female entrepreneurs in sectors other than agriculture participated more in the SME sector. The study found that although most female entrepreneurs operated in the retail sector, others were involved in wholesale, handicraft, small industries and services. Unlike their Western counterparts, South African women are among the poorest of all, making small businesses a lifeline. Women become entrepreneurs either because of family tradition, because their husband's income is insufficient for the family needs or because they are the sole providers for their families.

Findings from various researchers show that the most common entrepreneurial motivations for women are independence, desire for achievement, financial difficulties, the need to improve family conditions and a desire to contribute to society. The most common entrepreneurial motivation factor for men has been found to be financial. The examination of global entrepreneurial behaviour shows a huge gender gap. Global figures show that men are more likely than women to be entrepreneurs and this gap is evident even in the early stages of entrepreneurial activities as well as the established business stages; it also exists regardless of the economy of the country (low or high-income level). The gender gap, however, is more pronounced in high-income economies than low or middle-income economies. These differences can be explained, as stated earlier, by the differences between "necessity" and "opportunity" entrepreneurship (Allen *et al.*, 2007; Allen, Meyer, Glencoe/McGraw-Hill., 2006; Bosma and Levie, 2009; Reynolds *et al.*, 2003) and the "pull" and "push" factors (Orhan and Scott, 2001).

Women's entrepreneurial motivation factors

Studies on female entrepreneurial intentions have identified a number of individual factors that motivate women to become entrepreneurs, which can be categorised into two parts: (1) demographic and (2) psychological, i.e. attitudes or values (Ashley-Cotler and King, 1999). Demographic variables that influence entrepreneurship include gender (Matthews, Moser, 1996). A demographic profile of women entrepreneurs drawn from the 1984 study of 468 women by Hisrich and Brush (1984), in an attempt to examine the entrepreneurial motivation of women, showed that the "typical female entrepreneur" was a first born child born to middle class parents, most probably has a degree in Arts, is married with children and probably works as a teacher, an administrator or as a secretary. She would have undertaken her first business venture after the age of 35 and the motivations included the search for job satisfaction, independence and achievement. This profile differs greatly from the profile of rural South African female entrepreneurs. Most of these women were raised according to strict traditional values, had little or no

education, were married off at a very young age and have little or no experience of urban life. This could explain their apparent involvement in traditional and low-income activities, given their lack of knowledge, skills, prior work experience, socio-cultural and “opportunity” factors. A high motivation factor for these women is the desire to earn a cash income (Kongstad and Monsted, 1980).

According to Carter, Anderson and Shaw (2001a), women exhibited a relative attachment to conventional entrepreneurial ideals in the form of individualism and self-reliance and were willing to accept conventional gender roles which made them sometimes subordinate to men. However, women’s entrepreneurial motivations have evolved over the past two decades and psychological factors are playing a more significant role in motivation than the demographic. Research shows that women’s entrepreneurial motivations are largely due to (1) personal factors, (2) social factors and (3) economic factors.

Women give up well-paying employment in order to pursue more challenging, more fulfilling ventures, with profit being a secondary motive (Buttner and Moore, 1997). The need for achievement, the propensity to take risks (Brockhaus and Horwitz, 1986), and the desire for personal control (Greenberg, 1988) have been identified as personal motivation factors for women’s entrepreneurial activities. Jalbert (2000) agrees that most women venture into entrepreneurship to be independent, self-fulfilled and to have the freedom to explore their creative abilities with total control over their time and their business.

The need to exercise one’s personal values without organisational constraints, and the desire for more freedom, autonomy and balance have also been identified as motivating factors for women’s entrepreneurial activities (Lee-Gosselin and Grise, 1990).

In South Africa, women’s motivating reasons and factors pushing them into business are the following:

- Government policies that are focused on helping and improving the lives of previously disadvantaged individuals (PDI) such as women.
- The emergence of more role models for female entrepreneurs.
- There is growing competition between male entrepreneurs and female entrepreneurs, motivating women to prove themselves.
- Networking with other female entrepreneurs provides them with tools to improve. There are enough opportunities for networking that are still grossly underutilised.
- Women want financial independence and freedom to do things their own way, and due to apartheid many have had little opportunity to do so. Many have subservient roles that they have previously been relegated to (domestic roles).
- Female entrepreneurs desire the flexibility that their own business provides, allowing them to organise work around their familial responsibilities.
- Women who have hit the glass ceiling or are unable to progress in their career due to their level of education and training would normally consider self-employment as a means of escape.

- Women have a passion to work with people (i.e. are people and services oriented).
- The need to support their families.
- Female entrepreneurs can offer and deliver the same services as corporate companies at less cost to clients.
- Women start their own businesses to avoid corporate politics because women are not natural corporate political players.
- Women want to take care of their children and extended family and to still be able to provide for them financially.
- Business presents an opportunity to develop, realise potential and gain experience.
- Women can make a name for themselves in businesses that require feminine understanding, such as house cleaning (Maas and Herrington, 2007: 39).

The “Pull” versus the “Push” factors in women’s entrepreneurship

The need for flexibility is also another personal factor that can motivate women to become entrepreneurs. The long and inflexible working hours in some areas of paid employment make it difficult for the women to balance their professional and family life, particularly women with children (Heilman and Chen, 2003). In most cases, women put family responsibility first and are willing to trade off higher earnings to achieve the flexibility that come with self-employment. Part-time employment is a preferable alternative for many women where it is available, but often they are forced into self-employment because of a lack of both full-time and part-time employment. This condition, according to Heilman and Chen (2003) and Botha (2006), constitutes the “push” factor of entrepreneurial motivation; they argue that there are “push” and “pull” factors of entrepreneurial motivation for women. The “push” factors refer to negative influences such as unemployment or loss of employment (retrenchment) that force women to become entrepreneurs in order to survive. This category of entrepreneurs is also regarded as “necessity” entrepreneurs. The “pull” factors refer to more positive influences like the identification of a business opportunity, the availability of government support in certain sectors of need and the influence of a mentor or role model. This category of entrepreneurs is regarded as “opportunity” entrepreneurs. The study by Ghosh and Cheruvalath (2007) shows that “opportunity” entrepreneurs make up only one-fifth of all female entrepreneurs. In South Africa, despite the low representation of “opportunity” female entrepreneurs, this category is responsible for creating over 70% of the jobs created by female entrepreneurs. The reason for this could be found in the fact that these “opportunity” entrepreneurs are able to grow and sustain their businesses, making them viable. Another reason could be that the “opportunity” entrepreneurs invest time and money to understand the business environment, and they have prior knowledge and work experience, which is invaluable to business success.

The “necessity” entrepreneurs are thrust into entrepreneurship with little or no preparation by their personal circumstances and they begin their entrepreneurial journey with little or no knowledge of the business environment. For this category of female entrepreneurs, government aid and intervention is often not enough to keep their businesses afloat and they contribute to the high rate of businesses that fail within the

first five years. Moreover, most Black South African women are “pulled” into entrepreneurship by the incentives or grant provided by the government by the BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) project. According to Preisendorfer *et al.* (2011), over-dependence on the BEE project fund has further weakened Black-owned businesses because emphasis is laid on the availability of funds rather than the ability of the entrepreneur.

It should also be noted that female entrepreneurship thrives in countries with low-incomes and a high birth rate, therefore economic factors cannot be overlooked. For women in these countries, entrepreneurship is a lifeline because there are little or no available jobs that can remove the cultural, as well as institutional, constraints and still enable them to provide for their families. The low per capita income in countries like South Africa gives women few options to make a living, thereby creating “necessity” entrepreneurs. Therefore countries with more economic security, welfare payments and job stability have more opportunity and fewer necessity entrepreneurs (Minniti and Arenius, 2003). According to Verheul *et al.* (2004), richer countries that are more technologically advanced, or advancing like South Africa, create a need for services and opportunities for female entrepreneurs in the service sector.

It can therefore be concluded from the literature on South African female entrepreneurs that they are more often than not “pushed” than “pulled” into entrepreneurship by the economic conditions and social standing. Given that motivation is vital to success, and that women’s entrepreneurship is as much a result of circumstances than innate tendencies, it therefore follows that some form of intervention or support structure may be required to achieve business success. According to the reports from the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry, South Africa) summarising South African women’s motivation for entrepreneurial activities, it is concluded that there is a link between entrepreneurial activities and career choice.

The key indicators for entrepreneurial motivation in the South African context include the education and training level attained, individual wants and desires, career-entry

expectations and self-sufficiency (Scherer, Brodzinski and Wiebe, 1990), peer influence and aspirations (Scherer *et al.*, 1990), socio-economic background and the ability to overcome cultural conditioning and learning experiences (Birley, 1989), different motivations and orientations (Brush, 1992) and racial and cultural factors.

A summary of the relevant literature on the “push” and “pull” factors of female entrepreneurial motivation is presented in Table 1, details of which can be found in the studies of Kock (2008), Lebakang (2008) and (Meyer, 2009).

The Link between Entrepreneurial Motivation and Business Success

The purpose of this study is to analyse entrepreneurial motivation for South African women to understand the stimulating factors behind the decisions of women to engage in entrepreneurial activities. This is relevant because, according to Buttner and Moore (1997), the entrepreneur’s motivations have been found to correlate with their measurement of business success. It also correlates with their business strategy. As stated earlier in the literature, entrepreneurs are said to be motivated by “pull factors” (internal needs) and “push factors” (external circumstances). The “pull factors” relate to the entrepreneurs desire for independence, to be one’s own boss, to pursue a hobby or natural inclination and express one’s own creativity as well as engage in a passion. In contrast, the “push factors” are associated with elements of necessity such as forced or early retrenchment/redundancy, inability to secure employment, lack of job satisfaction or poor remuneration. When entrepreneurs are “pulled” into entrepreneurship, they have been shown to be adequately prepared and have a better understanding of the business environment than those that are “pushed” into entrepreneurship. The “push” entrepreneurs more often than not embark on their entrepreneurial journey “ill-prepared” for the challenges of the business and little knowledge of the dynamics and workings of the business environment. Without intervention, such entrepreneurs become “survivalist” entrepreneurs or fail completely.

Table 1 “Push” and “Pull” (opportunity versus necessity) factors of women entrepreneurial motivation

| Motivational Factor | Relevant Literature |
|---|---|
| “Pull” Motivational Factor | |
| A need to be independent | Hughes (2006); Smith-Hunter (2006);Greene, Hart, Brush, Gatewood and Carter (2003); McClelland, Swail, Bell and Ibbotson (2005); Bradley and Boles (2003); Baeva (2004); Jalbert (2000); Orhan (1999); Chavan and Agrawal (1998); Marlow (1997); Hisrich and Peters (1995); and McKay (2001). |
| Desire challenging opportunities | Hughes (2006); Buttner and Moore (1997). |
| Improve financial situation | Hughes (2006); Marlow (1997). |
| Self-fulfilment | Segal, Borgia and Schoenfeld (2005); Hughes (2006); Bruni, Gherardi and Poggio (2004); Jalbert (2000); Buttner and Moore (1997). |
| Need to be own boss | DeMartino and Barbato (2003); Hughes (2006); Bradley and Boles (2002). |
| Flexibility | Segal <i>et al.</i> (2005); Carter <i>et al.</i> (2003); Hughes (2006); Lombard (2001). |
| Pursue personal hobby | Bradley and Boles (2002); Marlow (1997). |
| Social status and need for recognition (personal achievement) | Eckel and Grossman (2002); Mallon and Cohen (2001). |
| Influence of family members and role models | Anna, Chandler, Jansen and Mero (2000). |
| “Push” Motivational Factors | |
| Lack of job satisfaction | Ghosh and Cheruvalath (2007); Segal <i>et al.</i> (2005); Bradley and Boles (2003); Tanguchi (2002); McKay (2001); DeMartino and Barbato (2003); Catley and Hamilton (1998); Marlow (1997); Lee-Gosselin and Grise (1990). |
| Loss of job and inability to find employment | Segal <i>et al.</i> (2005); DeMartino and Barbato (2004); McKay (2001); Hughes (2006). |
| Insufficient household income | McClelland <i>et al.</i> (2005); Georgellis and Wall (2004); Hokkanen and Autio (1998); Autio (2005). |
| Glass ceiling | Ghosh and Cheruvalath, (2007); Demartino and Barbato (2002); Lee-Gosselin and Grise (1990). |

METHODOLOGY

This research design is cross-sectional, which involves the analysis of data that has been collected at a particular time. It is descriptive in nature and not longitudinal nor experimental. Taking into consideration the research objectives, the cross-sectional design was chosen to enable the researcher to study multiple actions and differentiate between cause and effects. The sample was drawn from the various business women's associations in South Africa and from the different major cultures, considering that this study is cross-cultural (Black, White, Indian and Coloured).

Data Collection and Analysis

The method of data collection for the first part of this study was mostly based on face-to-face interaction with participants. Personal interviews were conducted with female entrepreneurs over a period of five months, following which focus group discussions were conducted with the female entrepreneurs. While some of the respondents belonged to some of the networks mentioned earlier, a good number did not belong to any network. The secondary data was obtained from the review of literature. The entire data set was collected over a period of 10 months (from March 2014-Dec 2014).

In choosing a data analysis method, the theoretical or analytical areas of interest in the study have been taken into consideration. Given the objectives of the study, a thematic approach was chosen to analyse the qualitative data because, according to Braun and Clarke (2006: 6), this form of data analysis tends to provide a more detailed analysis of some aspects of the data and less description of the overall data; it organises and describes data sets in rich, minimal detail. Also, coming from the constructionist paradigm of this research framework, thematic analysis cannot be separate from 'discourse analysis' or 'thematic discourse analysis' which allows for broader assumptions, structures/ meanings to be theorised behind what is actually expressed in the data (Braun and Clark, 2006: 8).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondents in this present study were asked during interviews and focus group discussions to talk about what motivated them to become entrepreneurs. The responses were categorised into 20 clusters, 9 of which are considered to be "pull factors" and 11 of which are considered to be "push factors". The pull factors are categorised using the classification developed by Glancey *et al.* (1998) and Kuratko *et al.* (1997). This is consistent with the literature that suggests that more of South African female entrepreneurs are "necessity" entrepreneurs rather than "opportunity" entrepreneurs. The data shows that 38% of the respondents were motivated by "pull factors" while 62% were motivated by the "push factors".

The data also shows that the motivational factors for the Indian entrepreneurs were the "pull factors", and none of them indicated behaviours that reflected "familism". Another interesting finding is that 14% of the entrepreneurs indicated that they were motivated by their previous employment to start a business similar to their previous employers.

"I was working in a clothing factory and it gave me the courage to start designing my own clothes to sell." (Dressmaker)

"I learnt the trade from my previous employers and I started on my own after I was retrenched". (Retailer)

"My previous job motivated me to start my own business". (Pre-school Owner)

"I worked at Southern Sun Hotels and decided to be my own boss so I opened my own business after gaining experience in hotel management while I worked there". (Bed and Breakfast Owner)

While financial gains were identified as a motivating factor, they did not appear to be a particularly strong motive for venture creation for a lot of the entrepreneurs. Only 2% indicated that they had started their own businesses because they were earning too little money, and only 5% indicated the need to supplement income as their motivating factor. One entrepreneur said, "I make more money than working for someone else", and another one added, "I wanted to work for myself as I was not earning enough from my previous job". Only ten entrepreneurs indicated that the motive for venturing into entrepreneurship was due to reaching a "glass ceiling". According to one of them,

"I was in corporate life for many years, and I thought that I had reached a ceiling there so I opted out, and I started to do project management and then I met my business partner, she's got an IT background, she had a business development background and so we started the business!". (Business consultant)

Considering the fact that the sample for the study was comprised of female entrepreneurs, it is surprising that only 17% of the entrepreneurs indicated reasons associated with a familism competency:

"My kids were very sick so I just felt it was better for me to be home. That is why I started the business". (Retailer)

"I had two young kids and I wanted to work for myself". (Pre-school Owner)

"I needed flexibility because of my young children and I gained experience from work, so I decided to start my own business". (Restaurant Owner)

Eight participants (8%) also indicated that the need to pursue their passion was the motivation for entrepreneurial motivation. The desire to do something they loved that gave them flexibility and independence was a strong "pull factor", while the need to achieve was indicated by only one (1 %) entrepreneur. According to one entrepreneur,

"I got to be independent while doing something I loved". (Pastry Chef)

One intriguing motivation that was cited by one of the entrepreneurs was the need to help SMEs. She was surprised by the "lack of service delivery" by small businesses and decided to help them better their services and become employers. According to her,

"My business actually started because someone was doing building work at our house and I was getting irritated with them because of their lack of service delivery, lack of commitment, lack of professionalism, lack of admin, efficiency, and I thought to myself 'surely these people are entrepreneurs and they need to run their businesses better if they want to grow. I don't want to be their client if they are so

useless'. So I then started an investigation and I started realising the challenges that entrepreneurs faced. I knew that I'm good at it and that developed into an admin support service". (Business Consultant)

Similarly, another entrepreneur had this to say:

"I've always been involved in entrepreneurial support services since day one. I support entrepreneurs, that's what I always wanted to do. I'm very passionate about our entrepreneurship because I think our country relies on it. The big corporations don't employ people really and I think if we want to be successful and have a future for our children, we should support people who are entrepreneurial and make sure that their businesses are successful. I think that is why I started it". (Business Consultant)

The data showed that 87.2% could be considered as "serial" entrepreneurs, i.e. have been engaged in entrepreneurial activities on more than one occasion. 12.8% could be regarded as "novice" entrepreneurs with no prior entrepreneurial experience (Westhead and Wright, 1998). In most cases, the reasons for the failures of their previous businesses could be linked to their motivation.

"In the past I owned two day cares and pre-schools. Which I had for 15 years, the two of them together and those were both successful and I sold them 4 years ago. I started them because when my daughter was young, I struggled to find the right pre-school so I decided to open the kind of school I wanted my child to attend. She is grown now so I saw no need to keep on running the school. That's why I sold it and opened this practice instead". (Trauma Counsellor)

This kind of sentiment was echoed by most of the serial entrepreneurs who suggested they closed their businesses after the need that motivated the business was satisfied. Given the above discussions, it could be argued that there is a link between entrepreneurial motivations, strategy and business success in relation to female-owned SMMEs in South Africa. This could explain why there are not enough female-owned businesses that have lasted more than two decades.

Most of the participants who had been involved in entrepreneurship for over a decade have not been involved in the same business, with some indicating that they had been involved in over five different business ventures. On all these occasions, the reasons had been the same: the motivation for the business was met and there was no need or desire to continue.

Also, the results showed that for female entrepreneurs whose motivation was an "inability to find employment", there was a tendency to oscillate between entrepreneurship and paid employment, often returning to entrepreneurship when they are retrenched. For some of the participants who indicated that their motivation was "flexibility and the need to care for young kids", as soon as the kids were grown, they returned to paid employment only to venture back into entrepreneurship due to loss of job or retrenchment. Therefore, these SMMEs did not have long-term business growth strategies (only survival strategies). Whereas, with participants who indicated that their motivation was "a gap in the market", "a need to create employment", "a need to create a legacy" or "industry experience gained from working", they expressed a desire to grow their businesses and possibly pass them on to the next generation.

In summary, commonalities exists with respect to the entrepreneurial motivations of the Black and White participants. For these two cultural orientations, discussions around motivation centred on "familism", need for independence and flexibility and maintaining a balanced life, while for the Coloured and Indian participants, discussions about motivation centred around the need to create a legacy or carry on the family tradition (of the 9 participants that indicated that their businesses were inherited, 6 were of the Indian culture). For the Black and White participants, the desire to create a better environment for their families and ensure the security of their families was strongly demonstrated. Given that the sample for this study was composed solely of females, it is therefore difficult to confirm the argument of Buttner and Moore (1997) which suggests that "entrepreneurship as a career option is gender-blind".

Table 2 Business Motivation for South African Female SMMEs operators

| Business Motivation Base: All Respondents | Cultural Orientation | | | | Total Participants N = 128 |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| | Black N = 64 | Coloured N = 38 | Indian N = 10 | White N = 16 | |
| Need to be own boss* | 9 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 12 |
| Industry experience gained from working* | 9 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 12 |
| Inherited business from parents* | 2 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 9 |
| Natural inclination/ hobby* | 5 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| Retrenchment | 3 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 8 |
| Need to create employment | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| Supplement Income | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Need to be at home to care for babies* | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| Need to support my family | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| To create a business legacy* | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Identified a gap in the market* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Need for challenge | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Financial Independence | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Lack of employment | 15 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 27 |
| Need for flexibility with time* | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Poor Remuneration | 10 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 16 |
| Lack of job satisfaction | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Reached the glass ceiling | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 10 |
| Need to achieve | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| To meet unmet need* | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Total Respondents | 64 | 38 | 10 | 16 | 128 |

Note: * indicates the "pull factors" while the others are the "push factors".

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main focus of this study was to evaluate the link between entrepreneurial motivation and business success of female South African SME operators. A qualitative approach was used for data collection. Given the exploratory nature of this research, open-ended questions were used in the interviews and evidence of previous business activities was uncovered. The findings confirm a link between entrepreneurial motivation, strategy and business in female-owned and managed SMMEs in South Africa. Therefore it is recommended that intervention programmes include entrepreneurial motivation training to help female entrepreneurs identify and articulate the factors influencing their choice for venture creation and to encourage a broader vision of creating and sustain business growth by developing long-term business strategies for success. Policymakers can encourage and motivate female entrepreneurs to look beyond meeting individual needs to creating jobs and contributing to the national economy and poverty-alleviation, thereby making a significant difference to the GDP of South Africa.

There are some limitations to this study: (1) the findings of this current study relate only to female SMME owner-managers actively involved in the management of their business and businesses that were not franchises or formed part of a larger firm. Therefore, the applicability of these findings to franchise owners, businesses that form part of larger organisations and businesses not managed by the owners require further investigation.

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