FACTORS AFFECTING GROWTH OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES OWNED BY WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS IN KENYA. A CASE STUDY OF GATUNDU WARD LOCATION

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DECLARATION

I declare that this project is my original work and that it has not been presented in any other university or institution.

Signed………………… Date…………………

VONNE NKIROTE MICHENI

Supervisor

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor.

Signed……………………. Date………………………

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family member my mom Florence Kananu my sister Lestutor Kagwiria and my friend Ann Njoki for their moral, financial and spiritual support.

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ABSTRACT

The study's goal was to look into the factors that influence women's participation in SME in Gatundu ward. The descriptive survey research design method was used in the study, with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study used a combination of cluster and simple random sampling; the study area was clustered based on geographical location, and businesses owned by women was clustered based on business type within each location. The sample was consisting of 138 female entrepreneurs from Gatundu ward. The Central bank of Kenya should set up good acquiring guideline which will empower MSME to get to credit offices, modest advances and data linkages to enhance seriousness. Management of the organization requires adequate capital to ensure smooth operation and running therefore individual factors should be considered. The legislature of Kenya ought to decrease the expenses of working together to make more open doors for ladies by making great condition to empower them get from banks and other monetary establishments rather than the current instance of obtaining among themselves to make it more practical this will altogether lessen cost of capital explicitly for ladies claimed MSME ventures to encourage admittance to speculation and working capital. The legislature of Kenya should set up preparing focuses to grant pioneering aptitudes and information in business the board to build high achievement and improve execution on socio-cultural factors. The skills are the most important aspect in effective management and operation of organization thus socio-cultural factors should be the first priority. The administration of Kenya should set up preparing focuses to grant enterprising abilities and information in business the board to expand high achievement and improve women's execution on level of instruction. Competitive advantage of an organization is very important and therefore business should have elaborate planning to ensure continuity. Children requirements should be well catered for to avoid taking funds from business which may lead to fall and premature death of business. Ladies should be sustained socially by husbands, family and friends in order to take advantage of the available resources to promote economic empowerment. The government should support women micro entrepreneurs to form co-operatives to save and access credit more rapidly to improve their enterprises. Women entrepreneurs are encouraged to join stakeholder network groups to socialize and benefit from contacts. Women should be encouraged to form business clubs or women only business organization where they can exchange ideas and experiences. This will help them to have access to more knowledge and customers.The Government should develop policies that protect women from harm and danger from illegal activities. Further, it should do away with strict Bureaucracy in reporting incident as it hinders SMEs growth. The current study was done at Gatundu; similar study can be conducted in the in other counties while maintaining same variables. Equally, introduction of a moderating variable can be considered in future studies. Studies have been carried out in competitive approaches to management leaving a gap in the area of non-profit making government services. Strategic project selection is the beginning of project success. However, further studies need to be undertaken in the field of sustainability of the selected projects.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Barriers to entrepreneurship:	alludes to the circumstances that cause an entrepreneur's endeavors to build a successful businessperson to fail.
Credit access:	A situation in which financial institutions timely offer capital to an entrepreneur or prospective businessperson, with or without securities and on favorable terms.
Economic development:	Initiatives that include, but not restricted to, business and trade intended to boost resources available to the vast majority of the population for their well-being.
Entrepreneurial framework:	These conditions include financial resources, government policies and programs to support entrepreneurial venture, the education and training of those who wish to be or are already entrepreneurs, access to professional support services and physical infrastructure, as well as cultural and social norms within a country's borders.
Entrepreneurship:	Processes by which people recognize and seize opportunity and distribute wealth in order to generate revenue or value.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

VRIN	Valuable Rare Inimitable Non-substitutable

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Countless women run their own businesses around the world. Nevertheless, the global impact of women entrepreneurship is only just getting started. Globally, the number of female business owners is steadily increasing. Women now own more than 25% of all businesses in advanced market economies (Brindley &Ritchie, 1999). In addition, the number of women-owned enterprises in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America is rapidly increasing. Women, for example, generate over 80% of food in Sub-Saharan Africa, 50-60percent in Asia, 26percent in the Caribbean, 34percent in North Africa and the Middle East, and more and over 30percent in Latin America. A woman-owned business employs one out of every four workers in the United States. When it comes to growth, women-owned businesses outpace overall business growth in Canada and the U.S. by a factor of 2:1. (Kitching & Jackson, 2002). Similar results have been reported from Australia as well as parts of Asia, with women starting new businesses at a higher rate than men do and with reduced failures. In some parts of the globe, the transition to a capitalist economy jeopardizes to exacerbate gender inequality.

The United States and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) hosted the conference Growing Economies through Women Entrepreneurship in Paris, France. These events have brought to light the critical role that self-employed females are capable of playing in the global economy if their potential is maximized. "None of our nations can afford to continue the financial shortfalls and impediments that female entrepreneurs encounter," stated “Melanne Verveer, US Diplomat at Large for Global Feminist equality, at the convention. When we boost female's participation in the economy and unlock new their production capabilities, our economic structures' market share and economic expansion can be deeply influenced."

Women entrepreneurs are starting more and more businesses today, and they now account for a quarter to a third of all formal economy businesses worldwide. Most are, however, very small or micro businesses with limited growth potential. Aside from that, women entrepreneurs are under-represented in all types of businesses, with the likelihood of a woman running a large company decreasing as it grows in size. Some women are discouraged from even considering starting a business because of societal attitudes and social beliefs, while systemic barriers mean that many women entrepreneurs are limited to very small businesses, often in the informal economy. In addition to limiting their ability to earn a living for themselves and their families, they are also prevented from contributing their full potential to socioeconomic development and job creation. According to the World Development Report 2011 of the World Bank, removing discriminatory barriers against women could increase productivity by as much as 25 percent in some countries.

The number of women who own and manage businesses in developed countries is estimated to be around one-third (Nelton, 1998). Female entrepreneurs face a bleak future in the global marketplace (Riebe, 2003). Women entrepreneurs not only contribute to the economic development of their countries, but also have a positive impact on the global economy as a result. Women's participation in business has been linked to economic progress and growth in countries where women are active in business (Jalbert, 2000). Entrepreneurial females are having a growing impact around the world (Abdul, 2004). Globally, the number of women who own their own businesses is increasing steadily. Women own more than 25 percent of all businesses in advanced market economies today (Brindley &Ritchie B, 2001)

Female's jobs outside of the home is found to correlate with SME attitudes worldwide. This is according to the World Bank's Doing Business 2008 report. Based on empirical evidence, women are less willing to take risks and cumbersome business practices increase the perceived risks associated with starting a business. Third, because women are considered legal minors in some areas, family laws, according to the report, can influence economic regulations. If a woman business owner wants to go on a business trip, she must get permission from her male relative before she can leave. Their businesses are now burdened with additional bureaucratic procedures. Women entrepreneurs in Kenya are creating jobs and driving economic growth, but they could do more. The number of studies that show countries that fail to address gender barriers are losing economic growth is growing. Middle East and North Africa could have grown more than 0.7 percent per year in the 1990s if it had adopted the same policies as East Asia regarding gender equality in access to education and employment, according to research by the World Bank. African women entrepreneurs are often depicted as poor, uneducated women with few assets of their own and limited access to outside resources. They are more likely to have come from a family of entrepreneurs, to have a university education and travel, to have worked in a large corporation or a previous venture, and to have excellent networking skills.

According to studies, when compared with men, many women entrepreneurs in Africa work in difficult situations. Political insecurity, poor infrastructure, high production costs, and a hostile business environment affect more women entrepreneurs in the region than men. Entrepreneurship is an important component of regional development, and encouraging entrepreneurship is one of the most important ways to accelerate economic and social development. To encourage entrepreneurship, we must understand the obstacles that stand in the way of new ventures. The barriers are not the same for all members of society.

Entrepreneurial activity and business ownership present a variety of challenges for women (McKay, 2001), and many believe that significant barriers still exist for women to start and grow businesses (Carter, 1997). As a result of political and economic reforms, there are still some challenges. Because of other changes, women are being relegated to secondary status. Les inequalities between men and women diminish as countries become more democratic, creating a more productive environment for both men and women. O'Gorman, 2001; Orser et al., 1999) discuss a number of obstacles that many female entrepreneurs face. Buttner and Moore (2005) cite gender discrimination as one of the obstacles to obtaining appropriate training (Walker and Joyner, 1999). (Kleiman, 2008). According to Babaeva and Chirikova (2004), female entrepreneurs face a number of obstacles, including family opposition and cultural conditioning, as cited in McKay (2001). Women's primary role is as a wife and mother in developing countries, where traditional practices still restrict women to their maternal role (McElwee & Al-Riyami, 2003). Inequalities and biases based on gender are prevalent in society and culture, and women are disproportionately affected by them (Barwa, 2003). Culturally embedded knowledge and resources, according to Uzzi (1991), influence the availability of resources to exploit the entrepreneurial potential of women. "Women Entrepreneurs in Kenya Face Lack of Confidence," argues Ayarudai (n.d.). "They Face Lack of Strong Individual Involvement and Reluctance to Take Risks." A lack of role models in entrepreneurship, poverty, and illiteracy all contribute to women's low social standing, which is exacerbated in Kiambu County by their businesses' marginalization and invisibility. Women's aspirations and social and economic fulfillment in Kiambu are hampered by cultural practices that are biased.

Feminist entrepreneurs are also hampered by cultural factors such as gender stereotypes (Still and Timms, 2000), particularly in male-dominated fields. Small business start-up and growth are not limited to gender issues, according to current literature. Financial aspects of venture start-up and management are, without a doubt, the biggest obstacles for women entrepreneurs (Brush, 2004). The availability of capital is cited as the second-most serious barrier to growth for women-owned businesses, after the overall economic climate (Walker & Joyner, 2000). A business plan is also difficult to develop, as is obtaining the necessary financing to start the business. They also have fewer role models to look up to, which is a disadvantage. These findings suggest that women face greater obstacles to achieving success as entrepreneurs (Cooper et al., 2001). The public also views entrepreneurs as having stereotypically "masculine" characteristics, which undermines women's credibility as business owners (Baron et al., 2001).

Contrary to their commercial significance, female entrepreneurs are still underrepresented in the entrepreneurial world. According to Reynolds et al. (2002), men are twice as likely as women to be involved in entrepreneurial activity. There are, however, significant differences between countries. With the help of Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) data, we've found that women's entrepreneurship rates (in terms of nascent and young business prevalence rates) are high in countries like the U.S.A.

Aridity, remoteness, and low social development indexes in Kiambu County are a few of the problems women face in general, as well as the challenges women entrepreneurs face in particular. The majority of Gatundu ward's entrepreneurial women are illiterate or semi-illiterate, which has a negative impact on their business development efforts. This is due to the county's geographic location and social structure. A poor infrastructure, a climate that is unsettling and an unclarified social perception of their business characterize the environment in which they operate. Due to slow growth and limited choices, their businesses are stunted or fail.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In spite of the fact that the Kenyan government acknowledges that women entrepreneurs have not had equal access to opportunities and assets, it has yet implement effective measures to remove these barriers (Athanne, 2011). National MSEs Baseline Survey in Kenya, 1999, found that most of the businesses owned and operated by women were in traditionally feminine fields such as hair styling and restaurants, hotels and retail outlets. It has been observed that women tend to run smaller businesses than men do. Growth with equity and women's entrepreneurial development are important development goals. Women entrepreneurs in Africa face more challenges than their male counterparts, according to studies. For economic development, female entrepreneurs are becoming increasingly important.

"Women entrepreneurs are an untapped source of economic growth," according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2004. Underemployment and unemployment rates are high in Kiambu District because of limited employment opportunities. As a result of the low household incomes, widespread poverty is the result. Due to a harsh climate that makes people extremely vulnerable to weather changes, economic conditions are exacerbated. As a result of insufficient infrastructure, poor communication links, and the absence of essential services such as health and education, the county's socioeconomic situation is extremely precarious. People trade either livestock or livestock products. Financial service providers, especially those in the formal financial sector, are underrepresented in the county.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (2001) reports that women-owned microenterprises grow at a slower rate and are more likely to close than their male counterparts are. Similarly, women in Gatundu Ward experience similar challenges. The number of women working in SME in Gatundu ward varies according to gender. There are approximately 120 women group entrepreneurs registered with the Kiambu office of the Ministry of Gender and Social Development. Each group consists of 4 to 8 women. Only about 20 percent of the entrepreneurs in Gatundu Ward are women. In Gatundu ward, women are marginalized in education, income, and property rights, among other things. As a result of the study's objectives, women's participation in small and medium-sized enterprises in Gatundu Ward, Kiambu County, was examined.

1.3 General objective

The focus of this research is to look at the elements that influence women's engagement in SME in Kiambu County's Gatundu ward.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives

i. To find out how personal characteristics in Gatundu ward influence women's engagement in SME.
ii. To determine how socio-cultural variables affect women's participation in SMEs in the Gatundu ward.
iii. To examine how economic factors influence women participation in SME in Gatundu ward.
iv. To determine how security factors influence women participation in SME in Gatundu ward.

1.4 Research questions

i. How do individual factors influence women participation in SME in Gatundu ward?

ii. How do socio-cultural factors influence women participation in SME in Gatundu ward?

iii. How do economic factors influence women participation in SME in Gatundu ward?

iv. How security factors influence women participation in SME in Gatundu ward?

1.5 Significance of the Study

According to a growing body of research, countries that do not address gender barriers are missing out on significant economic growth. Kenya is unlikely to meet its growth targets unless the gender dimensions of economic development are given more attention. As a result, addressing gender barriers in Kenya could result in significant economic growth for the country. This study's findings could be significant in a variety of ways. First, they may shed light on how women's participation in SME in Gatundu Ward is influenced by individual, socio-cultural, economic, and security-related factors. Institutions that work with women may also find the findings useful in identifying the factors that impede their progress and, as a result, seeking ways to empower women. Women's groups may find the findings useful in determining how women are hindered by various factors and, as a result, have sought ways to address such challenges, according to the study. For students who may wish to pursue academic research in this area, the study's results are also important. Through this work, we gained a better understanding of small business enterprises, which can be used to develop more efficient and equitable growth strategies. The knowledge of the characteristics and constraints of small-scale business operators is critical to the development of effective policies and programs to support small-scale enterprise development over the long term. For Gatundu ward women entrepreneurs to succeed in their businesses, they must first understand the pre-requisites.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This first chapter is the introduction that gave a general overview and background of the research problem. This chapter goes ahead to provide a background to the problem, a problem statement as well as the objectives, assumptions and scope of the study. It is also this chapter that gives direction to the entire research work since all the other chapters are premised on this chapter one.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the empirical works, research gaps to be filled, a summary, and the research's theoretical context.The researcher has additionally looked into writing that is identified with and reliable with the targets of the investigation, is evaluated. Clarification of the current speculations and investigation of the past-set up learning that will diagram the sorted out comprehension of the significant issues and past examinations in the related field of study.

2.1 Theoretical review

2.1.1 Financial Resources and the Resource-Based View Theory

An entity's economic resource is a tool it uses to offset liabilities and acquire other assets that it needs in abundance to achieve its goals (Stacey, 2011). Financing is considered to be the oil for growth by resource-based view theory, despite this. It is, indeed, the firm's lifeblood. This life blood travels through the economic system via the financial system, so faulty vessels prevent the life blood from reaching vital parts of the economic system (Sowah, 2003). Similar to strategic management, the financial resources RBV theory focuses firm efforts on assets accumulation (Degravel, 2012). Financial resources for growth are more readily available when the RBV is higher.

According to Gill and Biter (2012), a small business's ability to survive and grow depends on having access to sufficient financing. YALLAPRAGADA & BOOYANT (2011) studied the major factors that contribute to the success of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and concluded that adequate financial resources were one of those factors. Once again, Chong (2012) examines the factors that influence the success of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) growth as perceived by business owners and managers through the use of a survey questionnaire. A surprising finding was that SMEs must have financial resources to survive. Lack of financial resources is, however, cited as the biggest obstacle to business expansion and growth by entrepreneurs (Byrd et al., 2013). Also, according to Brinckmann et al. (2011), small businesses have difficulty obtaining financial resources to support their growth plans. However, the information asymmetry between business owners and external stakeholders, particularly banks, is causing problems. It is no secret that a small business' early demise is often caused by a lack of financial resources a similar obstacle was also noted in previous literature (Raeesi, 2013 & Chong, 2012). A study of the effects of business failure on owners found that it was beneficial to society and the economy as a whole. Failure causes non-operational businesses to transfer knowledge and resources to operational firms (Ucbasaran et al., 2013). Business failures, according to Ucbasaran, Shepherd, Lockett, and Lyon (2013a), could reduce the costs of surviving businesses through learning processes. Owners of small businesses should, however, consider different financing options because a lack of financial resources is a major factor in the failure rate of small business expansion (Nofsinger and Weicheng, 2011).

The theoretical framework is guided by the theoretical frameworks used in the studies that underpin our meta-analysis. We found that resource-based approaches dominate the field in both our review and the recent bibliometric analysis (Zupic & Drnovsek, 2014). A number of common foundations underlie Penrosean resource-based theory and RBV. Penrose (1959/1995) and Wernerfelt (1984) both view firms as a collection of idiosyncratic resources that can be used to develop products, services, and strategies (Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984). The idiosyncratic nature of resource endowments stems from the specific history and development of resource collections within firms, according to both Penrosean theory and RBV. Although firms operate in identical environmental conditions, heterogeneity in resource allocation across firms can explain performance differences. While there are many similarities between RBV and Penrose's theory (Armstrong & Shimizu, 2007; Barney, Ketchen, & Wright, 2011; Kor & Mahoney, 2004; Mahoney & Pandian, 1992), they also have significant differences.

Valuable, uncommon, and one-of-a-kind Non-substitutable (VRIN) resources generate long-term market advantage because important assets enable organizations to implement effective techniques, while segregating techniques counteract emulation of these techniques (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993). According to Penrose (1959/1995), on the other hand, resources can provide entrepreneurs with a variety of services. In the literature, these distinctions are frequently obscured. Valuable, uncommon, and one-of-a-kind Arguments for non-substitutable (VRIN) and versatility are frequently used. Barney (1991; Nason, Wiklund/Resources and Growth / Wernerfelt, 1984) asserts that firms with VRIN bundles of resources will have sustained competitive advantages and superior firm performance. A firm's ability to create economic value is based on the rarity and value of its resources, while its rents are locked in by their inimitability and insubstitutability (Barney; Peteraf, 1993; Rumelt, 1984). Recent studies evaluating RBV's predictive power on performance have found it to be overwhelmingly positive. "RBV has received only modest overall support," Newbert said.

VRIN resources and performance were found to be closely related in Crook, Ketchen, Combs, and Todd's (2008) meta-analysis. Conceptually, RBV proposes several avenues, even though growth studies are often silent on how VRIN resources are connected to growth. As a result, firms with VRIN resources are able to take advantage of opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to firms without VRIN resources. Examples include the development of new products or the entry into new markets due to special knowledge or technical abilities (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990).

Similar growth strategies cannot be pursued to the same extent by firms lacking these valuable and unique resources (Barney, 2016). In 2001, Alvarez and Busenitz argued that entrepreneurs' cognitive abilities were an inexhaustible resource that facilitated the recognition and exploitation of opportunities. VRIN cognitive ability is required to achieve the same level of success in pursuing new opportunities as those who lack it. VRIN resources should allow firms to achieve sustained growth in addition to creating the potential for first-mover status (Lieberman and Montgomery, 2017). A firm with VRIN resources may be able to continue to generate value in a new sector without fear of market erosion because of the same isolating mechanisms that preserve rent. Importable resources do not have these ex post competition limits (Peteraf, 1993), which are the cornerstones of a sustainable competitive advantage. Opportunity seeking by nonprime resource firms will be limited, both in terms of ex ante opportunities as well as ex post competition protections. Virtual Reality Information Network (VRIN)-enabled firms can take advantage of early market entry advantages and enjoy sustained growth as the market matures. Firms can expand their existing products and services with the help of VRIN resources. Customers benefit more from firms that have VRIN resources than competitors who do not (Peteraf & Barney, 2013).

2.1. 2 Women entrepreneurship theory

An integral part of economic development, entrepreneurship is considered essential to lifting countries out of poverty (Wolfenson, 2001). Economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction in developing countries are driven by entrepreneurship. They were instrumental in accelerating economic growth and industrialization (Harris et al, 2006; Sauser, 2005). It has also been recognized that small business serves as a feeder service for large-scale industries (Fabayo, 2009). They are a source of ideas, energy, and capital for their communities. They create jobs as well as additional work for their suppliers and other business spinoffs (Common Wealth Secretariat, 2002). Mhangami (2011) and Siwadi (2011) both state that women entrepreneurs are the most important players in this sector and that they contribute significantly to economic development. Women entrepreneurs are also becoming more visible in the local economies of developing countries. Over the last three decades, the promotion of women's economic and political empowerment has gained more attention (Yeshiareg, 2007).

As a result of creating jobs, women entrepreneurs in Kenya are essential to the country's economic growth Women-owned businesses, on the other hand, have the potential to do more than they are currently doing. The series of researches indicating that nations that do not recognize gender boundaries lose economic growth is growing. As a result, Kenya is incapable of meeting its development objectives unless it pays greater attention to the equality aspects of economic advancement. Kenya's economic growth could be significantly boosted if gender barriers are removed. Female entrepreneurs in Kenya are creating jobs and driving economic growth, but they could do even more. In spite of the fact that the Kenyan government has acknowledged that women entrepreneurs have not had equal access to opportunities and assets, it has yet effectively addressed these issues (Athanne, 2011).

2.2. Empirical literature review

2.2.1 Influence of individual factors on women participation in SME

Rural economic growth in developing nations, and in particular Africa, rely heavily on women, who are indispensable to the well-being of their households. In terms of food, shelter, health and education for children, this is evident. It is vital that they play a key role in bringing about change in rural communities, as they make up the majority of the population (55 percent). Subsistence farming and other agricultural activities, as well as petty trade or microenterprises, are the mainstays of rural women's incomes. Chicken keeping, growing vegetables in the family garden or small-scale horticulture for the market are examples of agriculture that is primarily practiced at home (Antal & Israeli, 2003).

Women's entrepreneurship can be influenced by a variety of factors. Personal, financial, and business characteristics are cited as the most important ones in the literature (Naser et al., 2009). Several of these factors are discussed in the sections below. According to a large body of literature, women's personal characteristics are one of the most important factors that affect women's entrepreneurial activity. (Nearchou-Ellinas and Kountouris, 2004) indicate that women tend to start their businesses later in life. Trihopoulou & Sarri, 1997) and glass ceiling factors may be responsible for this late entry into the workforce (Kephart & Schumacher, 2005). Other studies, on the other hand, indicate that women are starting businesses at a younger age. Recently, researchers in Nigeria found that nearly half of their sample of female entrepreneurs started their businesses between the ages of 19 and 24. (Mordi et al., 2010). A person's age has an impact on how they interact with their environment and their daily activities. It is possible that the entrepreneurial practices of young people will be influenced by their aggressiveness, impatience, and willingness to take risks In some cases, a young person with business-owning parents may be expected to join the business, as not doing so would create a void. If we accept that entrepreneurs need ideas, opportunities, resources, skills, and motivation in order to succeed, then the social structures and situations in which they are expected to operate will have an impact on their decision-making. There is evidence that period has an influence on overall entrepreneurial skills, as well as on the entrepreneurial behavior itself (Simon, 1998). Many people under the age of thirty may lack organizational experience, while those over forty-five may lack the necessary energy. As Longenelker (2016) points out, there are no hard-and-fast rules when it comes to the appropriate age to start a business.

In terms of education, the majority of studies are inconsistent when it comes to women business owners and education. Women entrepreneurs have a high socio-cultural factors, according to findings from various studies. Sarri and Trihopoulou (2005), in their study of women entrepreneurs in Greece, found that the average socio-cultural factors was quite high, with at least 42 percent of women entrepreneurs in Greece being graduates. It has been reported that well-educated women are less likely to become entrepreneurs (Naser et al., 2009) at an OECD conference held in July 2004 (Naser et al., 2009), which suggests that women entrepreneurs have a low education level. Due to a lack of adequate education and training, women are unable to participate fully in SME. The girl child was not afforded the same educational opportunities as boys, especially in rural areas. As a result, the girl child's performance in later life was affected. As a result of their social isolation, women in rural areas and marginalized areas such as Kiambu do not have prior work experience, nor do they have access to enterprise information and marketing facilities that men do. To run a successful business is nearly impossible for women who are wives and mothers and who are also "managers" of the home front because of their chores. These factors are in addition to their family status and power structure (Carter, 2000).

There is a lack of reliable information about local markets and economic segments, as well as an ever-increasing market growth for wide range on the part of clients. This, along with a lack of financial knowledge management, insufficient resources, and a lack of support from spouses, are all limitations (Woldie & Adersua, 2004). A woman's ability to negotiate/bargain favorably, manage debtors, keep proper records, and balance her home and work responsibilities are other factors that influence her participation in entrepreneurship (Woldie & Adersua, 2004). Currently, women in South Asia have limited access to vocational and technical education. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), women have less access to schooling on average than men. Low female education enrollment, dropout rates, as well as low socio-cultural factors portray South Asia. While women entrepreneurs tend to be married with children (Nearchou-Ellinas & Kountouris, 2004), their late entry into SME is also explained in part by this fact. Family responsibilities are deeply ingrained in the minds of women in many parts of the world. They are expected to do all the household chores, as well as take care of the children and other family members. In addition, they are overburdened with family responsibilities, such as paying extra attention to their husbands, children, and in-laws (Schein & Mueller, 1992). In such a situation, it will be very difficult to maintain focus and successfully run the business (Schein & Mueller, 2012).

In both developed and developing countries, women are also prevented from becoming successful entrepreneurs because of their family obligations. Few women are able to devote all of their time to their business because they are responsible for their children, their home, and their elderly family members (Starcher, 1996). It is believed by financial institutions that women entrepreneurs can quit at any time and go back to being housewives. This forces them to rely on their own savings and loans from family and friends. Among other things, women in India place a higher value on family ties and relationships. Wives must strike a delicate balance between work and home. Success in business depends more on the family's support of women in business and management. When it comes to women's business aspirations, family interest is a key factor. There is a lot of pressure on women to run a home, care for children, and take care of their husbands and families. When women have to care for children, often as single parents, a negative economic development has a negative impact on them (Morris & Brenan, 2003). Responsibility for providing for extended family and relatives is another challenge. Small business financial resources are often intertwined with personal finances, so family obligations are met with business earnings. Due to the fact that these funds would have otherwise been used for expansion and growth, their demands tend to drain savings and income made by the business. In the enterprise (or the family), some of them provide services, but their support costs usually outweigh the services they provide (Powell & Graves, 2003).

2.2.2 Effect of socio-cultural factors on women participation in SME

Institutions in a country are shaped in part by cultural values. The decision to become self-employed is likely influenced by values and beliefs (Mueller & Thomas, 2000). Entrepreneurship can also be linked to more deeply rooted cultural values. As Hofstede (2001) points out, there are several cultural indicators, including power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term versus short-term orientation, that can be used to determine cultural differences. Entrepreneurship has been studied in relation to power distance, individualism, and uncertainty avoidance (Wennekers et al., 2002). In the research, gender issues in economic ventures have been well documented (Brush, 2007). De Bruin, Brush, and Welter (2006) report a dramatic increase in the number of women entrepreneurs in recent years, but the number of male entrepreneurs remains nearly twice as high as that of female entrepreneurs (Watkins & Watkins, 2001). Women are more likely than men to undertake (or not continue pursuing) entrepreneurship, according to entrepreneurship scholars (Lituchy & Reavly, 2004).

According to the literature on entrepreneurship, men and women's entrepreneurial activity differ dramatically and persistently (Carter, Anderson, & Shaw, 2001). scholars argue that culturally constructed and discovered views on gender and entrepreneurial activities limit women's ability to accumulate socioeconomic, cultural, human and financial capital, and restrict their ability to accumulate savings and investments, have credit scores alluring to providers, or engage the interest of loan officers, angel investors, and venture capitalists, according to the study (Gatewood, 2005). According to experts, these characteristics impact the types of ventures that men and women entrepreneurs start, along with the venture's subsequent development. According to Carter et al., women entrepreneurs are more likely than men to own businesses that are smaller, slower-growing, and less profitable, which reinforces the stereotype that men and women in self-employment are not equally successful (Carter & Williams, 2003).

Different jobs are classified as masculine or feminine based on gender stereotypes in society, which influences people's aspirations and inclinations toward such jobs (Cejka & Eagly, 1999). In mathematics and science, men are assumed to be more inclined than women to participate and excel, while women are more inclined toward the arts and languages (Nosek, Banaji & Greenwald, 2002). Scholars studying the relationship between gender and career choices argue that men and women's interests reflect their knowledge of gender-related features associated with the work (gender-role stereotypes) as well as their identification with masculine or feminine characteristics (gender identification).

According to organizational literature, upper management is considered a "manly business," whereas secretarial jobs are considered "woman's work" (Heilman, 2001). They reflect and promote sexism in the workplace (Marlow & Carter, 2004). It is therefore believed that men and women have different characteristics when it comes to occupations that are dominated by members of either gender. Male stereotypes dominate when it comes to the jobs that carry power, prestige, and authority in a society (Marlow, Carter & Mirchandani, 2004). In spite of the fact that many women are achieving success in business, they are still constrained by the gender values, norms, and stereotypes that permeate the environment in which they operate. Due to their reproductive roles, women tend to be in charge of the household's business and unpaid work (domestic responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning and caring for children and other household members). This means they have less free time and are less mobile. A woman's main duty in society is to be a good housewife and mother. Moreover, women are often viewed as being inherently weak, passive, and irrational (Schein and Mueller, 1992).

Women's participation in SME is also influenced by their religious orientation. In order to survive, both men and women can work in or outside the home. Ulama (Islamic clergy) cite An-Nisa 34 as proof of male superiority over women, as well as a reason why women should not be involved in public life or leadership positions: Males protect and maintain women because God has given them more (physical) strength than females and because they support them with their own resources." It is stated in Surat al-Ahzab that women are to remain at home. While males and females share equal rights in the public sphere in other verses of the Koran and hadiths (At-Taubah 71).

Head of the Aceh Syari'at Office Abubakar (2005) argues that under Aceh's Syari'at regulations, women have the same rights as men to participate in public life and politics. Due to their familial obligations, he believes that women are safer at home and away from public places. According to him, Islam provides equal opportunities for men and women. If women have less space in daily life for public activities (politics, economy, etc.), he argues that this is not because of Islam but because of how people perceive and act.

An additional social and cultural barrier to women participating in SME is discrimination. Discrimination is common among women entrepreneurs who approach banks for financing. Women report that bank officials tend to ignore them in meetings and prefer to speak with their husbands or male business partners instead of speaking to themselves. Many women are discouraged from approaching banks because of gender bias. As a result of their disillusionment, some women give up on seeking bank financing and instead turn to informal savings groups for financial assistance. A credit discrimination issue is cited by Gray (1996) as a major concern for women during the start-up phase. Female landownership is prohibited without the consent of her husband or father. Women rarely inherit land and other property in their own right, despite 1981's revisions to inheritance laws. Therefore, title deeds, which are still the most common form of security for borrowing money, are not available to these individuals. Only a small percentage of Kenya's land (5-6%) is owned by women; the rest is held in joint names, usually with the husband (World Bank report). A certain amount of risk is always involved in entrepreneurship. For rural women, gender stereotypes about themselves, a lack of confidence, and a lack of assertiveness appear to be major roadblocks. There is a great deal of resistance to taking risks. Family resistance is a major deterrent to business start-up for women in patriarchal societies. This goes against the independent spirit of entrepreneurship. Common Wealth Secretariat Women are also less educated than men, which makes them less well-suited to managing a business (2002).

2.2.3 Influence of economic factors on women participation in SME

A lack of capital, difficulties in transportation and marketing, perishability of some commodities and competing demands related to household chores are among the challenges women entrepreneurs face in running their businesses. Finding staff with the right skills and willing to work for a small firm is another challenge. Women's participation in SME is also impacted by a lack of adequate access to finance. Women entrepreneurs in Kenya have the most difficulty accessing financing due to collateral requirements. This makes it very difficult for women to provide collateral to banks in Kenya. As a result, the majority of women who start businesses in rural areas and require financing do not have the collateral necessary to obtain bank loans. Entrepreneurs who are caring for dependents have limited opportunities to save or expand their business (Athanne, 2011). Financing a business venture is without a doubt one of the biggest obstacles for women entrepreneurs (Zororo, 2011).

Women's access to finance is a critical issue. Women entrepreneurs have a difficult time getting credit, especially when starting a business. Loan officers' negative perceptions of female entrepreneurs can lead to women being denied credit more often than men (Mahbub, 2000). New markets can only be penetrated with the help of expertise, knowledge, and contacts. Women are often unable to effectively market goods and services because they lack the training and experience necessary to do so. This means that women-owned SMEs are frequently incapable of taking on both manufacturing and marketing tasks. Additionally, they are often unfamiliar with international markets and lack knowledge of what is considered acceptable internationally. Deterrent and obstacle for many small and medium-sized businesses is the high cost of establishing new business contacts and relationships in a foreign market. Women may also be afraid of or encounter prejudice or sexual harassment, and their ability to travel to meet new people may be restricted (UNECE, 2004).

Finance and credit laws and practices discriminate against women entrepreneurs, and they lack information on how to get a loan, lack collateral, and/or are subject to discriminatory laws and practices (2002). A new business's start-up or expansion can be hampered by a lack of financial resources. A woman's growth is further limited by her lack of business contacts, her lack of knowledge of how to deal with government bureaucracy, and her lack of bargaining power. They often have trouble accessing information because most women entrepreneurs operate on a small scale and are not members of professional organizations or part of other networks. The majority of existing networks are dominated by men and are not always welcoming to women, preferring instead to be exclusive in nature. It is often difficult for a woman to engage in social networking after regular working hours, even if she does so. As a result, there are very few networks where a woman can join, gain confidence in herself and move forward. Women are also deprived of knowledge and exposure to positive role models due to a lack of networks. Men and women are equally invisible in sectors and sub-sectors that are heavily dominated by women (Mahbub, 2000). Politicians and policymaking bodies are largely inaccessible to most women. Large companies and men have greater access to policymakers, who are viewed as peers by both groups. Women are less likely to be members of mainstream business organizations and to hold leadership positions in these organizations, which limits their ability to influence policy through lobbying. Also, women's lack of access to information restricts their ability to make informed decisions in policy-making (UNECE, 2014).

ILO (2018) added that women entrepreneurs' performance is impacted by a number of factors, including: vulnerability to adverse effects of trade reform; restrictions on assets (land); lack of information to exploit opportunities; and Poor mobilization of women entrepreneurs; a lack of management skills; and a lack of awareness among young women of entreprenurial opportunities. A woman's financial and social needs compete with her business's capital, Makokha (2016) writes. There are some entrepreneurs, according to Kinyanjui (2016), who find it difficult to obtain loans because they have to show credit records and they don't fully understand the requirements for obtaining and paying back loans. It is common for microfinance institutions in Kenya to offer loans that are small in amount and with no grace period, as well as short-term loans with high interest rates. There are many short-term loans taken out by women entrepreneurs as a result of this. MSE entrepreneurs' financial needs are only partially met by loans, according to studies (Women Entrepreneurs in Kenya, 2008). Many women entrepreneurs consider formal financial support to be prohibitively expensive, and they only turn to it as a last resort. Stonge and Stevenson (2009). Entrepreneurs who are caring for dependents have limited opportunities to save or expand their business (Farartri, 2016).

2.2.4 Effects of security factors on women participation in SME

Due to increased fear, reduced quality of life, and vigilantism, insecurity has many negative socioeconomic implications that can erode social capital. Kenya's pastoralist communities occupy the largest percentage of the country's total land area (more than 70 percent). Animal husbandry communities in Kenya make up about 20 percent of the country's total population (7.5 million people out of a total population of 38,610,097 million) (Kenya Population and Housing Census, 2019). Northern Kenya is home to most of these people, who live in the vast arid and semi-arid region. In addition, they keep cattle, camel and a goat as well as sheep and donkeys (Kratli, & Swift, 1999). They are a nomadic ethnic group that is extremely mobile. Turkana, Samburu, Pokot, Borana, Rendille, Orma, and Somali clans are the most common among them. As they search for pasture and water for their livestock, they move from one location to another. In addition to Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda, their movements are not confined to a single area or even country. Their neighbors view these movements as a major source of miscommunication and conflict (Kratli, & Swift, 2013).

A large portion of northern Kenya's arid lands is plagued by conflict and banditry, and firearm use is on the rise among pastoralist communities, according to Khadiagala, 2013. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Kenya, such violence claimed more than 354 lives in 2009. Drought management officer Paul Kimeu told IRIN that spears and arrows are no longer being used to attack people in the Isiolo region in the northeast. Occasionally, highly sophisticated guns are used, which increases the number of fatalities." From mid-October to late

December, OCHA says the short rainy season increases the likelihood of cattle raiding and conflict because this is when pastoralists replenish their herds and important lifecycle events take place, increasing the demand for animals. Since neighboring war-torn countries now have weapons entering Kenya, raids are becoming more dangerous and sophisticated. Now, conflicts in the region go beyond traditional raiding to include economic and political aspects. In particular, the pastoralists' remoteness and nomadic nature have complicated conflict resolution efforts. Women's business enterprises in these areas are negatively impacted by this type of scenario (Mburugu, & Hussein, 2012).

Over and above, women in many cultures are the ones who stand to gain the most from economic development, and they are disproportionately affected when these resources are diverted during conflict. In spite of the fact that evacuation is in many ways desirable, it can cause considerable hardship. Evacuees are generally exposed to foreign-and often inadequate-living conditions, which makes them more susceptible to accidents, injuries, and disease than the general population at large as contraception is generally not readily available, and women are likely to be cut off from many basic health services, there may also be an increased risk of pregnancy. Women will have a difficult time participating in entrepreneurship when there is a sense of insecurity. Lost human lives and property. Large communities displaced and livelihoods disrupted. Increased hostility between communities. Environmental degradation and threat to water catchment areas. The comfort of predictable daily routines and expectations is shattered by insecurity (United Nations, 2014).

2.3 Summary and Research Gaps

Table 2. 1: Research Gaps

Researcher	**Area of Study**	**Methodology**	**Key Findings**	**Knowledge Gap(s)**	**Focus of Current Study**
Kongolo (2010)	Women in MSMES	Case Study	Small business owners face the same obstacles	The study did not clearly show difference obstacles faced by women in SMES	study will be to investigate the factors that influence women participation in SME
Rhamilan (2013),	SMEs performance	Case study	SMEs are greatly affected by government, capital and location	The study did not consider individual factors, social culture and economic culture	study will be to investigate the factors that influence women participation in SME
Normah (2017)	Government activities and SMES	descriptive research	The concentration of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises relationship with the dominant economic activities	The study did not clearly state relationship of SMES owned by women with the dominant economic activities	study will be to investigate the factors that influence women participation in SME
Kinyua (2016)	Factors affecting MSMEs owned by youths	Case Study	Youth abilities, Security and finance enhances performance of MSMEs	The study did not consider women in business	study will be to investigate the factors that influence women participation in SME

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Independent variables

Dependent variable

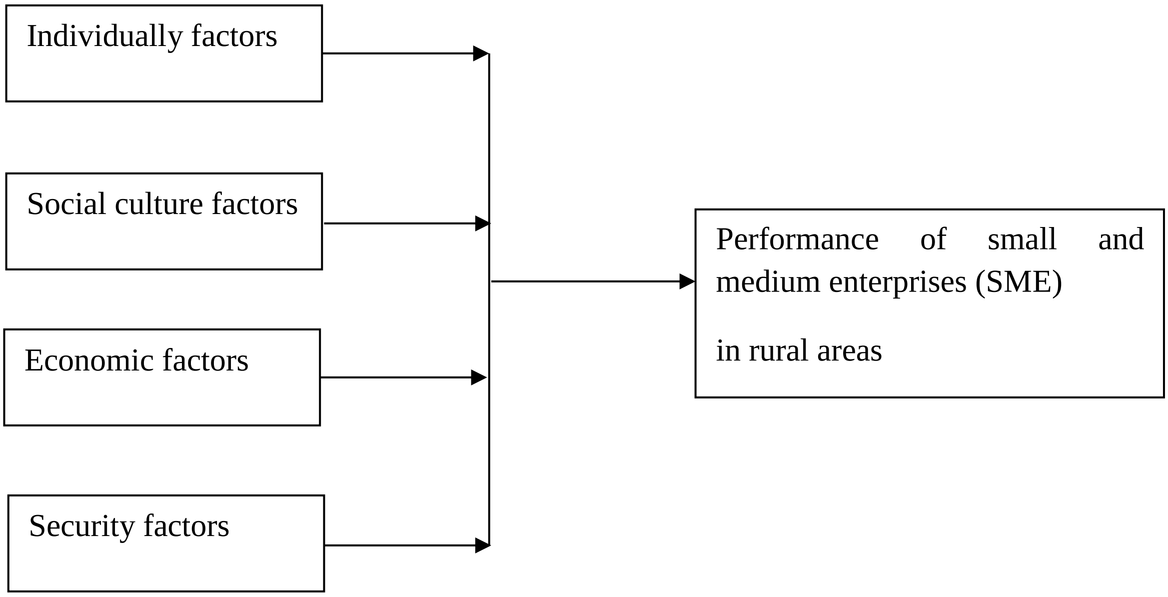

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

2.5 Operationalization of Variables

Table 2. 2: Operationalization of Variables

Variables	**Indicators**	**Measurements scale**
Individual factors	• Socio-cultural factors • Age • Marital status • Level of motivation	1-5 1 = Strongly agree to 5 = Strongly disagree
Sociocultural factors	• Religion • Culture • Gender roles • Family responsibilities	1-5 1 = Strongly agree to 5 = Strongly disagree
Economic factors	• Access to credit • Financial institutions Business rivalry • Financial instability • policies	1-5 1 = Strongly agree to 5 = Strongly disagree
Security factors	• Political instability • Inter-clan relationships • Police post • process	1-5 1 = Strongly agree to 5 = Strongly disagree

2.6 Chapter Summary

A literature review of empirical studies, a summary and gaps, a conceptual framework, and variable operationalization are discussed in the chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

A detailed description of the research design is provided in this chapter It describes research methodologies, such as what will be done and how. These include the research design, target population, sample and sampling techniques, instruments, pilot study, data collection procedures, data analysis and presentation, ethical considerations and a chapter summary at the end of the chapter.

3.1 Research Design

Data collection and analysis plans are used to obtain desired information with sufficient precision (Miles & Huberman, 2004). For this study, a descriptive research design was used. As the name implies, descriptive research involves the collection of information without altering the environment. Quantitative and qualitative research methodologies do not neatly fit into the definition of descriptive research. Instead, descriptive research can incorporate elements of both, often within the same study. In descriptive research, the type of research question, design, and data analysis that will be applied to a given topic are discussed (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

3.2 Target Population

Studies of study populations are conducted on a group of individuals who share a common trait like age and gender. Demographic data is used to determine the study's target population. Surveyed populations are known as study populations (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Gatundu ward has around more than 200 SMEs owned by women. The population of interest in the study will consist of SMESs owned by women in Gatundu ward, Kiambu County.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The limited samples do not accurately represent the accessible population. It was decided to employ the percentages of 30 % for populations of 100-1000 people, 10 percent for populations of 1000-

10000 people, 1 percent of more than 10000 people and 100% of less than 100 people to get a representative group. 3.1 shows the demographics of the target audience.

Table 3. 1: Sample Size

Population Category	**Target population (N)**	**Sample population (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
Management	**200**	**100**	**100**
Total population	**200**	**100**	**100**

A sample size of 10% of total population which is 100 respondents will be selected for the study. The study will employ random sampling to select respondents.

3.4 Research Instrument

This refers to the tools which were used to gather information and how they will be developed. In order to collect data from the respondents, questionnaires were used. Nature of data to be collected, time available, and study objectives was determined which tools are used.

3.4.1 Questionnaires

The study used primary data which were collected through self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaires included both open-ended inquiries designed to elicit appropriate information for qualitative data analysis and closed-ended questions intended to evoke relevant answers for statistical analysis. The questionnaires were administered through “drop and pick later” method.

The respondent will be given ample time to answer questions, and he or she will use semi-structured questionnaires to avoid misinterpretation or misinterpretation of the results. The questionnaire used a five-point likert scale, namely Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD), with scores ranging from 5 to 1. Comparing responses will allow the researcher to draw conclusions. Researcher uses questionnaires to collect a large amount of data in an extremely short period.

3.5 Pilot Study

Investigators can use pilot testing to determine if the questionnaire yielded desired results, according to Dawson (2002) In accordance with Polit and Beck (2003). Pilot test was conducted in order to evaluate adverse event and feasibility in small scale prior to the actual performance of a full research.

3.5.1 Validity

If there are any questions about content or face validity, they were brought to the attention of the supervisor at the university, who reviewed and offer advice. The lecturer's advice and comments were used to improve the instrument's content and appearance. It was also given to independent experts in consultation with a statistician for face and content validity as well as conceptual clarity and investigative bias evaluation.

3.5.2 Reliability test

The researcher used the test re-test method to determine the reliability. During in the test-retest, the major purpose was to examine the adequacy and readability of inquiries on the instruments designed, the significance of the knowledge wanted, the vocabulary adopted, as well as the substantive validity of the instruments depending on the replies supplied by the respondents'.

3.6 Data collection procedure

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the university. Once the research proposal is approved the researcher proceeds to Gatundu, Kiambu County to seek consent to conduct the study. Following approval, the researcher arranged to meet with the respondents in Gatundu Ward to familiarize himself with them, as well as to seek permission from the organization's management for the intended date of data collection. Participants will be contacted after their participation has been confirmed. Participants was given ample time to complete all of the questionnaires before they are dismissed. A data analysis team will then collect the questionnaires and analyze them.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

It was necessary to alter the survey data in order to encode it as well and evaluate it using the Statistical Package for Social Science version 21. To ensure that the research would be both descriptive and analytical in nature, descriptive statistical analysis were used throughout the investigation. Frequencies and means were utilized as descriptive and inferential statistics. A clear image of the study results could be seen at a glimpse by presenting the approximated probabilities and average as tabular, charts, as well as bar graphs.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

These are the observed set of conduct when carrying out a research project in order to determine the unacceptable and acceptable code of behaviours.

3.8.1 Informed Consent

For the study to be ethically compliant, permission will be sought from the relevant authorities. As proof of the study's purpose, the university provided a letter of introduction.

3.8.2 Voluntary Participation

People cannot be coerced into taking part in research if the researcher adheres to the principle of voluntary participation. A person's informed consent is required for research, according to this definition. In order to make an informed decision on whether or not to participate, participants must be made aware of the study's objectives (Trochim, 2006).

3.8.3 Confidentiality

For the study to be ethically compliant, permission will be sought from the relevant authorities. Authorities were informed of all study-related activities, including the study's sole purpose of learning.

3.8.4 Privacy

A high level of confidentiality and privacy will be observed and the findings of the study will only be submitted to the Management University of Africa and Kiambu County government. Information provided by informants was presented in such a way that it cannot be traced back to the individuals who provided it, except by the researcher, who may need clarification during data analysis.

3.8.5 Anonymity

To remain anonymous, respondents' ethnic or cultural backgrounds are kept secret and their names and other sensitive information about them are withheld or omitted from public disclosure (Mugenda, 2009).To ensure anonymity all the respondents was be coded and was therefore not required to write their actual names on the questionnaires .This helped in protecting their identity.

3.9 Chapter Summary

It describes the study's methodology, including the research design, sample population and sample size, the tools used to collect data, and how the data was analyzed. This section is divided into three sections.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

In chapter four, the data had been analyzed quantitatively. Data analysis is the procedure of examining, reshaping, and evaluating information in order to highlight valuable knowledge, make indicative findings, and announced that it plans.

4.1 Presentation of Research Findings

4.1.1 Response rate

The researcher aimed to determine how many participants took part in this research out of the actual quantity segmented. Table 4.1 summarizes the results.

Table 4. 1 Response rate

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Response	94	94
Non- response	6	6
Total	**100**	**100**

A total of 94% of respondents responded, while only 6% did not. More over 34 of the total respondents sampled for the survey were in favor of the study, so this was a positive result. In the opinion of Kothari (2010), a sample size of 50 percent or more is sufficient for analysis and interpretation.

4.1.2 Background Information

To guarantee relevancy, this section contains the participants' personal details. Table 4.2 summarizes the results of the study.

4.1.2.1 Age of respondents

The researcher wanted to find out the age of the respondents and the findings shown and presented in the figure below 4.2

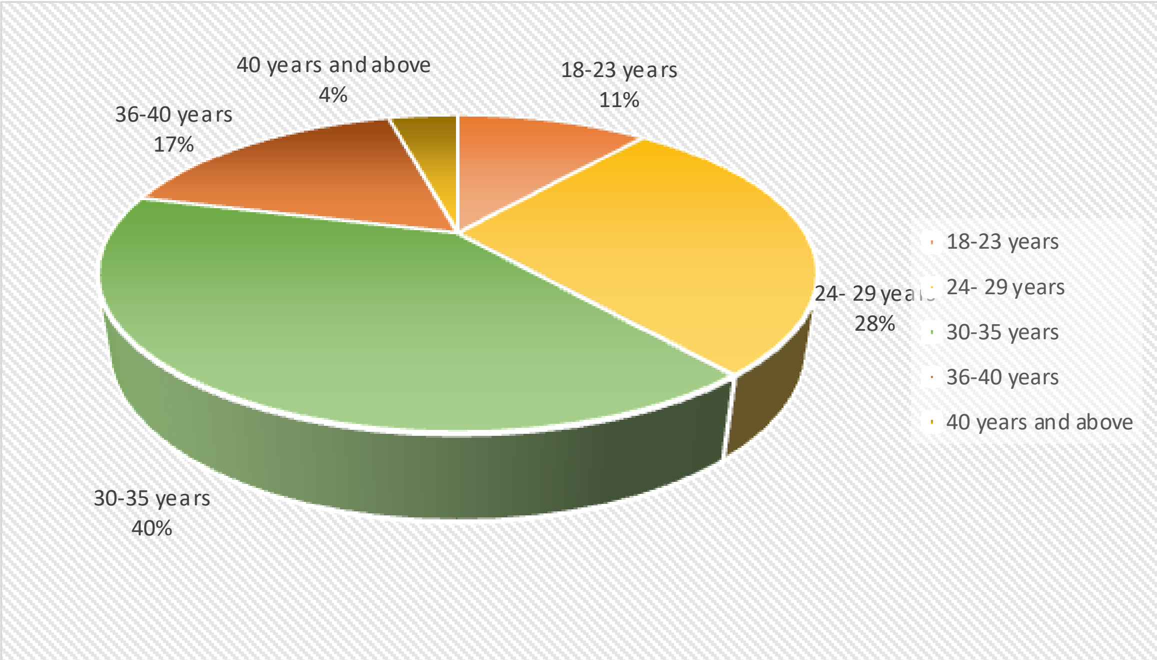

Figure 4. 1 Age of respondents

Survey participants between the ages of 18 and 23 made up 11% of the sample, followed by those between the ages of 24-29 and 40. For the research, there was an equitable outcome of ages to ensure that the opinions of each age group on the longevity of family businesses past multiple generations were obtained.

4.1.2.2 Gender of respondents

To do this, the researcher collected data from participants in order to determine their gender. The results were presented on a table. Table 4.3 summarizes the results of the study.

Table 4. 2 Gender of respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	40	43
Female	54	57
Total	**94**	**100**

It was discovered that women made up 57 percent of those who took part in the study, while men made up 43 percent. This affirmed that the research managed to meet the limit of the Kenyan constitution's 2010 1/3 gender rule, indicating a true reflection of gender.

4.1.2.3 Academic qualifications

This was to find out the academic qualifications of the respondents in the study and the results were presented on the table. The findings were presented on figure below

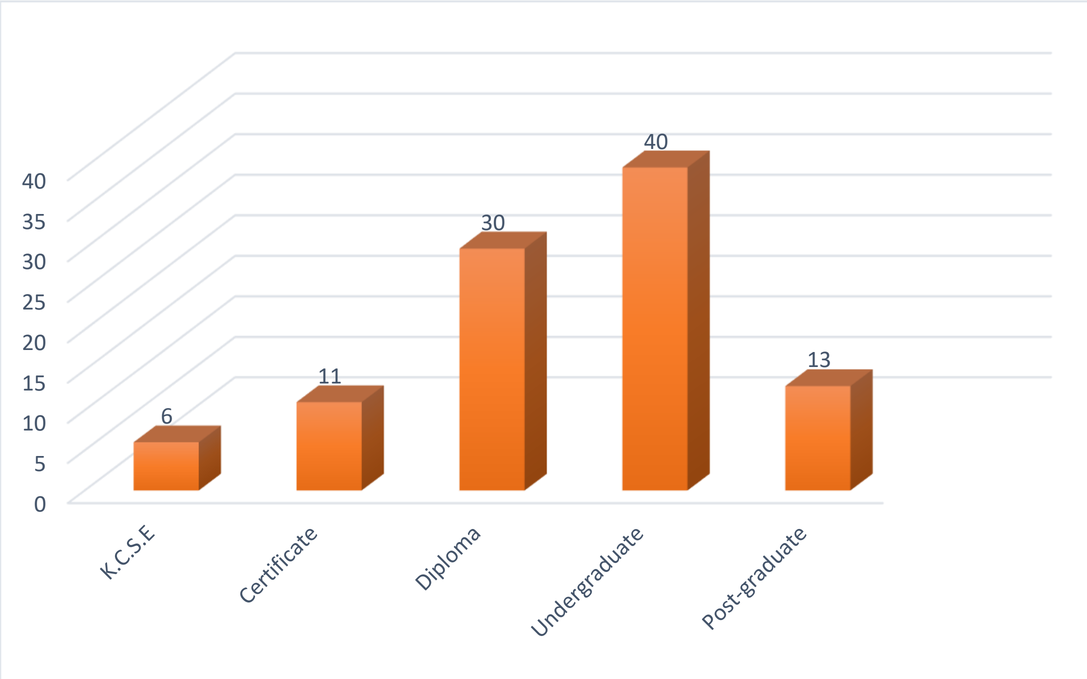

Figure 4. 2 Academic qualification

The results indicated that those respondents with K.C.S.E academic qualifications were at 6%, Certificate course at 11%, Diploma at 30%, undergraduate at 40% and then those with post-graduate at 13%. Majority of the respondents were degree and diploma holders indicating a fair understanding of performance of micro, small and medium entreprises (MSME).

4.1.2.4 Current position

The position that respondents hold in the organization was sought to be determined and the data presented on the table as shown;

Table 4. 3 Current position

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Management staff	20	21
Inventory staff	40	43
General staff	34	36
Total	**94**	**100**

The current position respondents held in the organization was determined to be that management staff were at 21%, marketing staff at 43% and general staff at 36%. The departmental positions were well represented in the study to meet the sought objectives of the study from the positions held. The academic qualifications of the respondents, experience and expertise in a field of interest in the study is crucial in obtaining the relevant information for the study (Parahoo, 2010).

4.1.3 Individual factors

4.1.3.1 Individual factors on procedure required

The researcher sought to establish the extent at which individual factors is determined by procedure required. The data obtained was figured as shown;

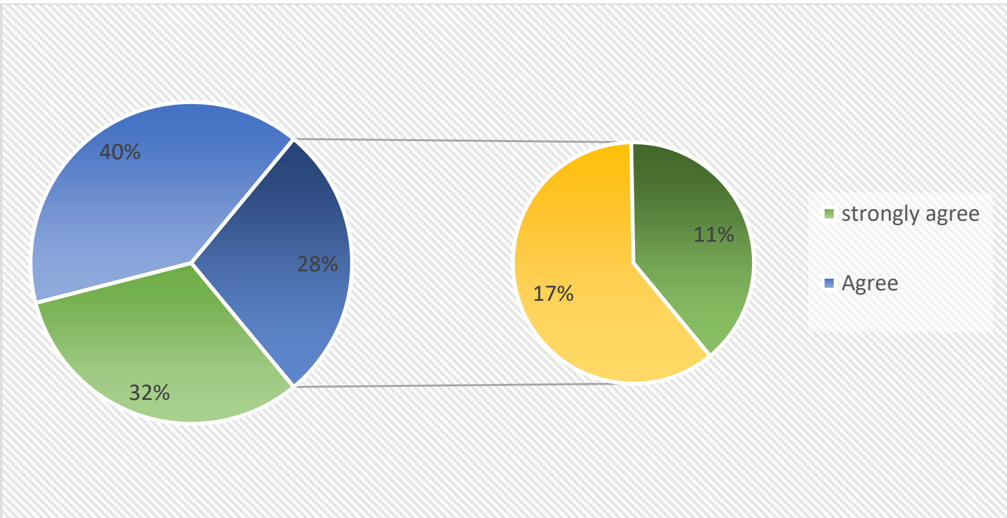

Figure 4. 3Individual factors on procedure required

The study noted that individual factors are determined by procedure required according to 72% who agreed while the remaining 28% of the respondents did not agree.

4.1.3.2 Individual factors on rate of loan

This was to determine the extent at which rate on loan helps in individual factors in organization. The results were presented on the table as shown;

Table 4. 4 Individual factors on rate of loan

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Great extent	43	46
Moderate extent	23	26
Less extent	16	17
No impact	11	11
Total	**94**	**100**

The rate on loan was noted to help in individual factors in organization to a great extent according to 46%, moderate extent at 26%, less extent at 17% and no impact at 11%.

4.1.4 Socio-cultural factors

4.1.4.1 Socio-cultural factors on quality skills

The study sought to determine whether socio-cultural factors help on quality skills for effective organizational performance or not. The findings were presented on the figure as shown;

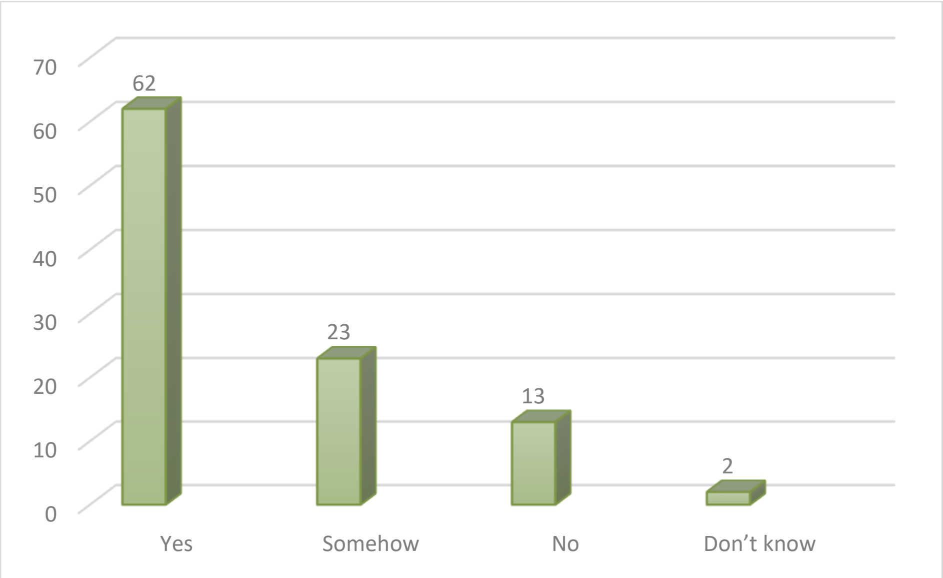

Figure 4. 4 Socio-cultural factors on quality skills

The study established that socio-cultural factors helps in quality skills for effective organizational performance according to 62%, somehow at 23%, no at 13% and don't know at 2%.

4.1.4.2 Socio-cultural factors on feedback

The extent at which socio-cultural factors helping in reducing time for feedback and follow up in the supply process was sought and the data presented on the table as shown;

Table 4. 5 socio-cultural factors on feedback

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Great extent	52	55
Moderate extent	24	26
Less extent	12	13
No impact	6	6
Total	**94**	**100**

The results indicated that socio-cultural factors helps in reducing time for feedback and follow up in the supply process to a great extent according to 55%, moderate extent at 26%, less extent at 13% and no impact at 6%.

4.1.5 Economic factors

4.1.5.1 Economic factors on school going

The study aimed at determining whether number of school going children reduces organization performance or not and the findings were as shown;

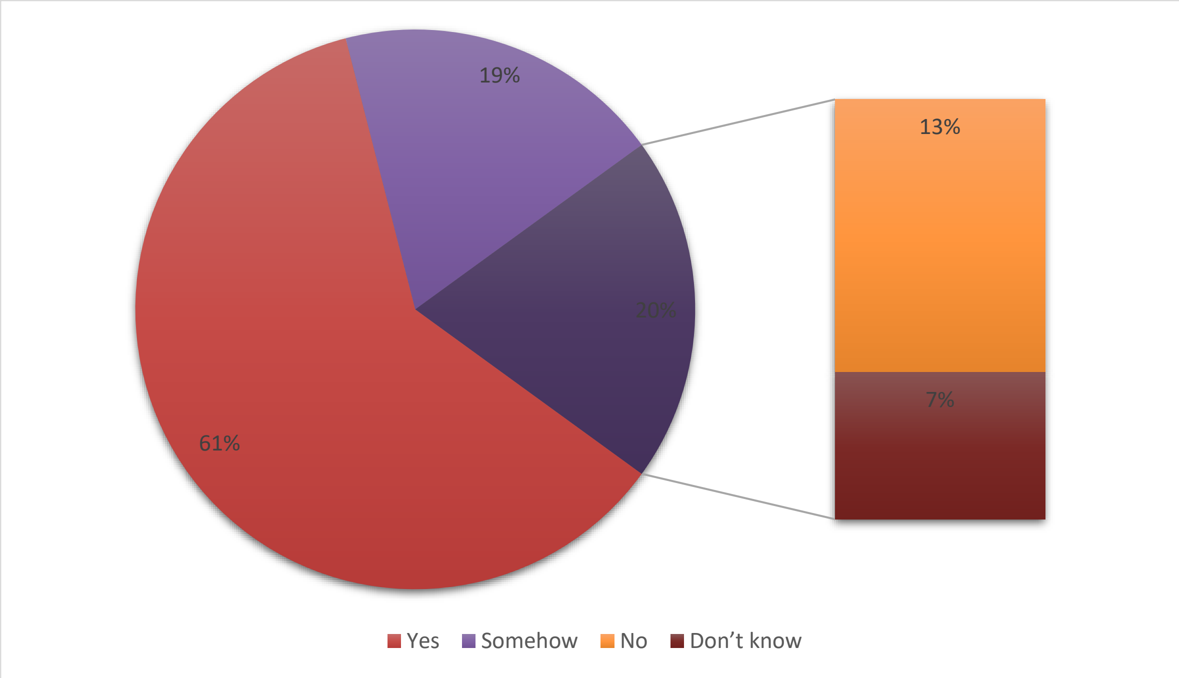

Figure 4. 5 Number of children on school going

The study noted that number of school going children reduces organization performance according to 61% of the respondents, 19% for somehow, 13% for no and 7% for don’t know.

4.1.5.2 Economic factors on non-school going

This was to explore whether number of non-school going children leads to proper planning and management or not and the findings were tabulated on the table as shown;

Economic factors on non - school going

Table 4. 6 Number of children on school going

Category	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Strongly agree	48	51
Agree	30	32
Disagree	12	13
Strongly disagree	4	4
Total	**94**	**100**

The results established 83% agreed that number of non-school going children leads to proper planning and management while 17% did not agree to this.

4.1.6 Security factors

4.1.6.1 Security factors on law governing MSME

This was to determine whether law governing MSME allows fair and open competition in trading procedures or not and the findings were presented on the table as shown;

Security factors on law governing MSME

Table 4. 7 Number of children on school going

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	58	62
somehow	19	20
No	10	11
Don’t know	7	7
Total	**94**	**100**

The results postulated that 62% agreed to law governing MSME allowing fair and open competition in trading procedures, 20% for somehow, 11% for no and 7% did not know.

4.1.6.2 Security factors on legal requirements

The researcher sought to establish the extent at which security factors on legal requirements affects business set-up and operation and the data was presented on the table as shown;

Table 4. 8 Security factors on legal requirements

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Great extent	50	53
Moderate extent	20	21
Less extent	15	16
No impact	9	10
Total	**94**	**100**

The study noted that legal requirements by government affects business set-up and operation according to 53%, moderate extent at 21%, less extent at 16% and no impact at 10%.

4.2 Limitations of the Study

Participants occasionally requested service charges in order to provide the necessary statistical data or would not be confident. The analyst, on the other hand, described clearly the aims of the research as well as the significance of taking part in the study with none form of payment or duress, and that their involvement was completely voluntary. As a result, the most of of them participated; exceeding the vulnerability assessment is the process for the research.

A few participants were concerned about disclosing confidential documents about their supervisor and thus chose not to give more information that they regarded private in nature and required safeguarding.

4.3 Chapter Summary

The study concentrated on survey research results by displaying information from every parameter under different sub-headings to allow for specific experimentations. The findings were presented in properly marked charts and figures, from which an understanding as well as some comments was made to, make clear the research results for ease of interpretation in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents outline of the findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to establish the factors influencing the growth of women owned businesses in Kenya in rural areas. The specific objectives of the study were to: Determine how socio-economic factors affect the growth of women owned businesses, establish how individual factors affect the growth of women owned businesses, economic factors and find out how security influences the growth of women owned businesses. Each section on the questionnaire was set up to work out frequency distribution. The response from the respondents was used to answer the research questions. Using the percentage and frequency distribution, the most significant issues of each category of factors were identified and ranked. In a bid to obtain a concise picture of the data, the data was organized, summarized and presented in form of tables, figures and graphs.

The study results indicate that majority of respondents (57%) operated from Gatundu market and that most of the respondents (24%) mainly dealt with curio shops as the category of products. The study also shows that (48%) of respondents indicated that their businesses were started in between the years of 1996-2000. Majority of the women respondents (40%) are between the ages of 31-35. Majority of the women in handicraft businesses are literate with 64.6% having high school education. This is followed by 16.5% with diplomas then 10% with primary education. The least are those with university education which form only 8.8% of the women. These findings therefore indicate that over 70% of the women in these businessesdo not have college education.

The results indicate a negative relationship between family issues of the founding entrepreneur and firm growth, holding other independent variables constant. According to the statistics, half of the women were married, 21.7% of them were single and the rest were either widowed or separated with

13.7% in each category. Statistics showed that 74.8% of the women reported that their husbands were supportive of their businesses whilst 25.2% of the women reported not to get any support from their husbands. According to the statistics over 70% of the women use 25% of their income on school fees, while, 12.8% of the women spend half of their income on fees and 16.5% spend 75% of their income on fees. It also indicates that 66.5% spend a quarter of their income on medical expenses whilst 33.5% spend half of their income on medical expenses. The findings also show that 46.9% of the women spend a quarter of their income on food, 37.1% spend half of their income on food and 16% use three quarters of their income on food.

The findings show that the problem of financing ventures for women in the handicraft businesses is a major problem to women entrepreneurs in general. Statistics indicated thatslightly over 50% of the women access loan facilities but out of those who access the loans, only 23% of them manage to invest all the money into the business. It also showed that 57.6% of the women invest 75% of the loan into the business, 12.9% of then invest only half whilst 6.5% invest a quarter of the loan into the business.

According to the findings shown earlier, over 40% of the respondents were in the age group 31-35 years, 28.5% were between 25 years and 30 years, another 27.3% were in theage group 36-40 years and only 2.8% were between 41 years and 50 years. Majority of respondents (90%) felt that they had good leadership traits adequate for doingbusiness, while those who were not good leaders cited the major reason as poor marketingskills. Secondly was the desire to grow; 90%, of them wished to expand their business, others wanted to get more money while others wanted to open and expand their business by opening larger markets for their goods. Most of the women said they had the desire to grow.

According to the statistics, there was a very significant association between the age of the businesswoman and practicing good business management practices. Furthermore, the frequency distributions shows that as women get older less of them employ good business practices i.e. bookkeeping and budgeting/growth projection whilst more of younger women utilize the good business management practices.

According to the statistics half of the women are married, 21.7% of them are still single and the rest are either widowed or separated with 13.7% in each category. Statistics showed that 74.8% of the women reported that their husbands were supportive to their businesses whilst 25.2% of the women reported not to get any support from their husbands. The findings also indicated that most of the women, 32.6%, rely on proper display of products to make customers aware of the presence of the products. This is followed by good customer service and hawking products at different places e.i 21.2% and 17.4% respectively. According to the findings 44.6% of the women run their businesses alone, 19.3% used relatives to run the business, 18.9% run their businesses together with their husbands and 17.3% have employed people to run the business on their behalf. In order to increase sales and ensure growth for the business 74% of the women sometimes organize meetings with their employees to plan on how to increase the sales and grow the business while on the other hand, 26% do not hold any meeting to strategize on how to increase sales and growth of the business.

5.3.1 Individual factors and performance of SMEs

In looking at the effects of personal qualities on the growth of women-owned businesses, the study revealed that women entrepreneurs are risk averse, lacking confidence and unambitious. This contradicts the research results of Langowitz and Minniti (2007), who discovered that female entrepreneurs are highly enthusiastic and self-determined. They also have a strong sense of self-control and accomplishment. Hisrich (1992) discovered no difference between the sexes in enterprises' risk preferences, contradicting the widely held belief that female entrepreneurs are averse to risk.

Some of the respondents felt that they had good leadership qualities and the desire to achieve, while a big percentage felt otherwise and they should not be ignored. Without good leadership qualities and the desire to achieve, one is likely to perform poorly in almost everything including running her own business and this will not lead to business growth but failure.

5.1.2 socio-cultural factors and performance of SMEs

The findings show that the majority of the women have high school education and below just a few of them had college education and even a much smaller percentage had university education. This is in accordance to (Women entrepreneurs in Kenya, 2008) that Kenyan women have low levels of education. In addition, a recent universal primary education policy has led to the equalization of education opportunities for boys and girlsat primary level.

Out of this, recent ILO research (2007, ILO) reported that more than half of participants have completed secondary and higher education education. Yet only a small percentage of students were trained in company planning or entrepreneurship skills. It is difficult for potential entrepreneurs to get important business information and articulate their demands, as well as deal with regulatory and other issues such as bureaucracy due to a lack of business and entrepreneurial skills. This is in line with (Heffernan, 2003), who argues that women lack the credentials required to compete with males in the employment market because of their poor academic backgrounds. In contrast, Matthews (1995) reports that most female attended university education; nonetheless, most of these graduates have less interest in owning a small business than male graduates.

5.3.3 Economic factors and performance of MSME

A second goal of the study was to determine whether domestic responsibilities affect the performance of women-owned MSMEs, as the presence of children in the home is thought to affect women's engagement in the corporate sector. Studies reveal that mothers with 3-5-year-olds make up the bulk of the population, followed by those with kids over 5 years and then those with none (and lastly, mothers with 3-5-year-olds). Most of these women come from families with young children, which limits their involvement in business operations. Women are unable to make successful business judgments due to a lack of equilibrium between their dual roles (Anshuja, 2007). Women street vendors with infants tied on their backs are common in Nairobi, Kenya. Between caring for children and running their hawking businesses, they have to strike the right balance. Women's involvement in the corporate sphere is influenced by the presence of children in the household (mainly pre-schoolers). A study by Blau et al. (1988) notes the importance of pre-school kids is most likely to lower women's labour force participation rate rates. This can be especially true in cases where a woman is as well educated as or better educated than her spouse. Women in this situation would be expected to look for other sources of money (Standing 1978).

Some experts believe that if a woman is intelligent, she is more likely to marry an educated guy who is wealthy, although others disagree. High-earning men tend to discourage their wives from working because they have less financial motivation (Boserup, 1970). Work and fertility are investigated by Psacharopoulos et al (1989). According to their findings, women who have high Economic variables will have more work to undertake, either explicitly (more farm work to support the family) or indirectly (more household chores) (more paid work to cater for them). Thus, women's company owners may be hindered by the pressures connected with running a business and completing household obligations (Wendy, 2007). When it comes to women going into enterprise, some males are opposed to it, and end up pushing their wives to stay home. If the husband's blessing is needed for a woman to start her own business, then it is a requirement. How well a woman does in the entrepreneurial sector might be influenced by her cultural milieu. Culture has an impact on the performance of women-owned small businesses in this study because of factors like husband support and training, as well as customs, social conventions, attitudes, and beliefs.

The scientists, as per Hayton (2002), believe that societies with elevated amounts of individuality, lower rates of uncertainty avoidance, high rates of masculinity, and low power distance encourage entrepreneurship. This study examined how the Ashanti group of people in Ghana's cultural beliefs affect the development of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). However, traditional succession systems, taboos, and marital customs have a detrimental effect on small enterprises, according to findings from an academic study published in the Journal of Small Business Management (JSM) in 2007. The ethnic heritage of businesspersons has an impact on company choices, according to Roger (1990). Social networks and ethnic relationships play an important role in corporate strategy success, as well as the structure of social systems themselves.

5.3.3 Economic factors and performance of SMEs

The findings also indicated that promotion is crucial to the success of any business, irrespective of company size or gender. SME's performance is severely hindered by their incapacity to expand their markets outside their immediate area or to compete. As the International Labour Organization found in a 2007 report, small and medium-sized enterprises (SSEs) are hindered in growing employment and enhancing the quality of jobs in order to create more decent work by an inadequate market alternatives.

For the most part, women are reliant on the marketplace, which has a limited number of purchasing power for most of the women there. Most women, on the other hand, are constrained by conventional roles, family responsibilities, and cultural norms, which prevent them from traveling vast distances to conduct business To make matters worse, women are disproportionately represented in areas that are marked by fierce rivalry. According to Biekpe (2004), many women enter into enterprises that their neighbors or acquaintances are already involved in, and this is no exception. An important task is to identify areas where women may easily take advantage of possibilities, given their abilities and responsibilities.

Most respondents suggested that government's support and recognition of the role and importance of micro and small enterprises should be clearly manifested in security factors documents on this sector thereby supporting the observation of Sessional Paper No. 1 (1994) on Recovery and Sustainable Development to the year 2010 which clearly emphasized government recognition of the significance of the small scale and Jua Kali enterprise sector to employment and income creation. In addition, the government should pass legislation on MFI bill so as to improve the policy and regulatory environment governing MFIs.

5.3.4 Security factors and performance of MSME

The significant expenses of working together is among the main considerations adversely influencing intensity are significant expense of money explicitly for female-claimed endeavors, admittance to venture and working capital is as yet viewed as a key imperative. This examination found that that greater part of the respondents feel that the significant expense of account is the most critical key to rivalry. of the respondents believe that security and debasement are critical, trailed by the degree of salary, conveyance channels while the quantity of 35 merchants was the least significant factor to finishing. Therefore, on the off chance that the significant expense of fund is managed, at that point this can achieve sound finish through admittance to credit offices for ladies SMEs. When gotten some information about their wellspring of data, the reactions show that self-improvement and ladies bunches are the most famous wellsprings of data for ladies business people, trailed by companions and finally by the media. The Kenyan government is recognizing the significance of further reinforcing the MSME segment in its advancement system. Kenya's Vision 2030 gave in 2007, which focuses on a normal yearly development pace of 10% to hoist Kenya into center pay nation status, has distinguished the travel industry, farming, assembling, discount and retail exchange, business measure off shoring and monetary administrations as need sub-divisions with a specific potential to produce development. The Vision 2030 additionally features the need to help the enormous casual area in the nation and seriousness increment at firm level so as to adequately address profitability, work, and salary and open income. Fortifying miniature and little undertakings, explicitly focusing on sexual orientation issues and tending to local incongruities, should encourage comprehensive development and address the striking financial awkward nature. Specific consideration ought to be given to interests in the bone-dry and semi-dry terrains (ASAL) regions, to networks with a high destitution frequency, to jobless youth, ladies and weak gatherings. 5.4 taking everything into account, it ought to be perceived that market elements in the cooperation of ladies and the exhibition of SMEs claimed by them is unpredictable and impacted by different social, monetary and social real factors. The achievement and execution to a great extent relies upon how ladies can adapt to these real factors and how strategy producers and actualizing organs comprehend these real factors. Something else, ladies will keep on opening up organizations without legitimate information and pioneering aptitudes will keep on offering little accomplishment in the running and the executives of their organizations.

5.2 Conclusion

On individual factors, the study concluded that the access to credit facilities is determined by procedure required. The conclusion determined that the rate on loan helps in individual factors in organization to a great extent.

On socio-cultural factors**,** the conclusion was socio-cultural factors helps in quality skills for effective organizational performance. It was also concluded that socio-cultural factors helps in reducing time for feedback and follow up in the supply process to a great extent.

On economic factors, the study noted that economic status of the county and number of children going to school reduces organization performance. Also the conclusion was that number of non-school going children leads to proper planning and management.

On security factors, the conclusion agreed on government law governing SME allowing fair and open competition in trading procedures. The conclusion also noted that legal requirements by government affect business set-up and operation.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Individual factors

The Central bank of Kenya should set up good acquiring guideline which will empower MSME to get to credit offices, modest advances and data linkages to enhance seriousness. Management of the organization requires adequate capital to ensure smooth operation and running therefore individual factors should be considered. The legislature of Kenya ought to decrease the expenses of working together to make more open doors for ladies by making great condition to empower them get from banks and other monetary establishments rather than the current instance of obtaining among themselves to make it more practical this will altogether lessen cost of capital explicitly for ladies claimed MSME ventures to encourage admittance to speculation and working capital.

5.3.2 Socio-cultural factors

The legislature of Kenya should set up preparing focuses to grant pioneering aptitudes and information in business the board to build high achievement and improve execution on socio-cultural factors. The skills are the most important aspect in effective management and operation of organization thus socio-cultural factors should be the first priority. The administration of Kenya should set up preparing focuses to grant enterprising abilities and information in business the board to expand high achievement and improve women's execution on level of instruction.

5.3.3 Economic factors

Competitive advantage of an organization is very important and therefore business should have elaborate planning to ensure continuity. Children requirements should be well catered for to avoid taking funds from business which may lead to fall and premature death of business. Ladies should be sustained socially by husbands, family and friends in order to take advantage of the available resources to promote economic empowerment

The government should support women micro entrepreneurs to form co-operatives to save and access credit more rapidly to improve their enterprises. Women entrepreneurs are encouraged to join stakeholder network groups to socialize and benefit from contacts.

Women should be encouraged to form business clubs or women only business organization where they can exchange ideas and experiences. This will help them to have access to more knowledge and customers

5.3.4 Security factors

The Government should develop policies that protect women from harm and danger from illegal activities. Further, it should do away with strict Bureaucracy in reporting incident as it hinders SMEs growth.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

The current study was done at Gatundu; similar study can be conducted in the in other counties while maintaining same variables. Equally, introduction of a moderating variable can be considered in future studies. Studies have been carried out in competitive approaches to management leaving a gap in the area of non-profit making government services. Strategic project selection is the beginning of project success. However, further studies need to be undertaken in the field of sustainability of the selected projects.

5.0.1 Recommendations for Improvement

5.0.1.1 Effect of Socio-Economic Factors on Growth of Women Owned Businesses

Women Enterprise Fund should make provisions in its policies and procedures to support the Kenya individual women micro entrepreneurs through trainings to improve financial literacy for women entrepreneurs. Funds should be set aside specifically for vocational training for women who are already in business and the training curriculum needs should be tailored towards giving the women the right small business management skills.

Married women should be given support by their spouses in respect of finances, motivational encouragement, advice and actual involvement in the running of business. Women need to be trained on how to cushion their businesses from family interference.

Micro finance institutions should provide access to credit for women entrepreneurs at the level of micro and small-scale enterprises, through innovative programs and financing arrangements that go beyond the conventional approaches. More loan facilities should be availed to women and the access to the facilities made simple and without discriminations.

5.0.1.2 Effect of Personal Characteristics on Growth of Women-Owned Businesses

The government should provide special programmes to train, capacity build and mentor women particularly in entrepreneurship to change women's mind-sets to make women owned enterprises more competitive and continuously work towards providing conducive business environment.

It is recommended that a series of conferences for women entrepreneurs be hosted in Kenya, focused on transferring knowledge and skills, facilitating networking, and promoting the exchange of experiences among women.

5.0.1.3 Effect of Support on Growth of Women-Owned Businesses

5.0.2 Recommendations for Further Studies

Future study should focus on the following areas: Insight into the perspectives of women and men in the SSE industry Clearly, there is a need to better understand how women and men perceive their experiences in the SSE industry. Finding out whether there are gender-based differences in this area would be valuable.

Insights on the women's desire for growth apparently, women choose to launch a range of micro -entrepreneurs rather than expand established companies into small and medium sized organizations. The veracity of these claims should be determined by rigorous empirical research. Develop finance models for small businesses (SME's. They do not have the security and capability to review loan requests, thus they cannot get bank loans. The necessity to discover and disseminate models that may be employed by small firms is therefore evident.

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APPENDIX II: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Kindly answer all the questions by ticking in the boxes and writing in the open spaces on the response that well describes you.

1. Please indicate your gender

   Male ☐

   Female ☐

2. Kindly indicate your age category

   Below 30 years ☐

   31- 40 years ☐

   41- 50 years ☐

   Over 51 years ☐

3. For how long have you been working in the organization?

   Less than 2 years ☐

   3-5 years ☐

   6-10 years ☐

   Over 10 years ☐

4. Socio-cultural factors

   Diploma ☐

   Degree ☐

   Masters ☐

   Doctorate ☐

5. Nature of business/operation

PART II: INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

Using a scale of 1-5 tick the appropriate answer from the alternatives provides for each of the respondents.

1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree

Management Variables	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
i. Managerial competency affect women led SMEs					
ii. Creativity is key to the success of women led SMEs					
iii. Innovation affect women led SMEs					
iv. Strategic decision-making techniques is key to the success of women led SMEs					

7. List other management skills factors which affect women led SMEs

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PART III SOCIOCULTURE FACTORS

1) What is your level of agreement with the following statement? Use a scale of 1 – 5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3= neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree

Economic Variables	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
i. Religion has affected my business operation					
ii. The culture impact growth and operation of small and medium enterprises					

iii.	The female gender requires more utilities than male gender thus affecting SME performance if many					
iv.	I am able to access market through the group's membership					

PART IV: ECONOMIC FACTORS

Using a scale of 1-5 tick the appropriate answer from the alternatives provides for each of the respondents. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither, 4= Agree 5=Strongly Agree

Economic Variables	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
i. Borrowers in women led SMEs have been unable ii. to manage their finances					
iii. Inflation affect women led SMEs					
iv. Foreign exchange rate fluctuations expose majority of the SMEs to foreign exchange risk.					

7. List other economic factors which affect women led SMEs

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PART V: SECURITY FACTORS

Using a scale of 1-5 tick the appropriate answer from the alternatives provides for each of the respondents.

1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree

Government factors	1	2	3	4	5
i. Inter clan relationships affect women led SMEs					
ii. Fear, and non-existence of police posts affect women led SMEs					
iii. Security acquisition process Policy affect women led SMEs					
iv. Political instability from political activities pose adverse effects on women led SMEs					

7. List other Security factors which affect women led SMEs

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****** God Bless You******