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Female Entrepreneurs Performance: A Systematic Literature Review of Forces Influencing the Performance of African Female Entrepreneurs

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Ewoh Ethel Reuben**

Female Entrepreneurs Performance: A Systematic Literature Review of Forces Influencing the Performance of African Female Entrepreneurs

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The role of entrepreneurship has been known for many decades as the most important factor contributing to the economic development. Most studies, regarding female or gender difference in SME's performance have mainly emerged from developed countries: while in other developing parts of the world such as Africa; there is still a huge gap in the entrepreneurship performance of men and women in social, cultural and economic activities.

However, research on female entrepreneurship across Africa is crucial to the creation of knowledge base on literatures with regards to the common forces influencing the performance of female entrepreneur's. This study has been conducted using the systematic literature review methodology with a critical reviews and analysis of both theoretical and empirical findings of about 68 articles. This study analyzed and reviewed common factors influencing the performance of Female Entrepreneurs across Five (5) African Countries in east, west and southern Africa: particularly with countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Botswana and Ethiopia.

The result of this study shows that these factors are mainly associated with social structural problems. For examples cultures and values affecting female entrepreneurs in most African countries are almost the same with each theme of factors recurring at each specific country region. However, from the variation of results of these factors shows that religion/cultures, family responsibilities, education/ experience and technology may influence the performance of some group of female entrepreneurs in some country's context.

Keywords: Female or Women entrepreneurship, (FE's) Factors influencing women entrepreneurs' performance in Africa, entrepreneurial performance

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One of the most interesting things I have learned from this 21st century was the rights and equality of male and female in their own respective ways; According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF-- 2013) Gender equality represent a society in which women and men enjoy the similar opportunities, outcomes, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. Equality between men and women exists when both sexes are able to share equally in the distribution of power and influence; have equal opportunities for financial independence through work or through setting up businesses; enjoy equal access to education and the opportunity to develop personal ambitions. A significant characteristic of promoting gender equality is the empowerment of women, with a focus on identifying and redressing power imbalances and giving women more autonomy to manage their own lives. Women's empowerment is vital to sustainable development and the realization of human rights for all (UNPF – 2013).

A research study of this kind requires the support and the assistance of others in other to be successful. I am deeply grateful to my supervisor Professor, Dr, Juha Kansikas for his commitment and insightful supervision and inspirational encouragement in all phases of this Master's thesis; above all, for his encouragement and contribution for me to be able to picture this particular choice of topic on Female Entrepreneurship

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Finally, this Master's thesis is dedicated to Jehovah-God Almighty and to my father Pharmacist, Reuben O. Ewoh and my Mum Mrs., Hannah Ewoh whose inspiration has brought me this far! I love you all so much

Jyväskylä 1.12.2013

Ethel Reuben Ewoh



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("The glass ceiling that once limited a woman's career path has paved a new road towards business ownership, where women can utilize their sharp business acumen while building strong family ties") Erica Nicole

(Founder & CEO YFS Magazine)

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The main motivation for my Master's thesis, in the area of female entrepreneurship, is because of my passion and love for entrepreneurship as a field of discipline. I choose to study entrepreneurship because I want to become an entrepreneur myself. Also, choosing this topic was due to the passion I have to become a female entrepreneur also other issues on women empowerment, gender issues as well as political trends which examines national and transnational policies that affect women in the society in general has compelled me to study female entrepreneurship as the topic of my thesis. Thus, being an African woman, I grew in a society where not every female has the opportunity to empower herself to become independence of the man. This story started when I came to Finland to study, I found out that the number of careered and educated women where all over everywhere, sometimes I go to some government offices, banks etc, and I see women in every sector of the economy being represented. To me, this is a reality I could only imagine in my heart that it could also change in other part of the world; but psychologically I found myself frequently looking at gender differences and how this has manifested into cultural perceptions of how the female gender is being perceived in some other culture especially across the business world. The fact that the Finnish women entrepreneurs are very well highly represented in their economy, gave me some thoughts about asking these very questions? What are the African female entrepreneurs doing? What are the performances of the female entrepreneurship work in Africa? Do they have any challenges in performing their entrepreneurial duties? Is there any kind of socio and economic forces underpinning their performances? What are their challenges? In other to understand all these questions the following section will give details of this study in understanding the performance of Female entrepreneurship work in 5 African countries.

However, the main idea of this master's thesis is to investigate factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs in an African context using a systematic literature review. This study will come across many entrepreneurship concepts in describing social and economic variables in the relationship on how it affects the process of business creation and the entrepreneurial perfor-

mance of women entrepreneurs in 5 African countries. However, research on female entrepreneurship and performance has been a growing trend and has been an ongoing research area for many years now. Even though, there has been a disagreement on how to measure performance or any specific way to measure performance. However, performance has often been used to compare the differences between men and women in their entrepreneur (Manolova, et al, 2007; Jusuff et al, 2011; Pines et al, 2010 and Cohoon, et al, 2010). However, performance itself has been described as a noun which does not have a specific way to be measured. The most popular literature on female entrepreneur's performance was conducted by Lerner, Brush, and Hisrich, (1997) examined individual factors affecting Israeli women entrepreneurial performance which were grouped into five different variables such as (social learning, human capital, goals and motivations, networks, demographics, and environmental factors). Other studies on performance have been done on several other areas such as firm or organizational performance, new venture performance etc, but researchers have used performance to do some comparative studies. For example, (Jusuff et al, 2011) has compared the performance of female and male entrepreneurs in the small and medium size enterprise in Lagos-state Nigeria. They argued that the factors which affect the performance of female owned business are considerably different from those factors which affect the male counterpart owned businesses, because the differences between the male and female entrepreneurs can be visibly seen on their business activities (Jusuff, et al, 2011). Other studies that are linked to performance has been concentrated on small and medium size enterprise (SME's) focusing on the factors affecting female entrepreneurs (Ibro et al, 2006; Naser, Mohammed and Nuseibeh, 2009; Wube, 2010; Yusuff et al, 2011 and Gitari, 2012). Nonetheless, studies on business performance itself have received much attention by many researchers on female entrepreneurship discipline. Nonetheless, issues concerning female entrepreneurship performance have been raised due to concern about the failure rate and low performance in female businesses comparing to men's business (Kalleberg & Leicht, 1991; Brush, 1992; Fischer et al, 1993 & Rosa et al, 1996). Other studies, shows that many new businesses and organizations fail shortly after being formed and can achieve only minimal performance (Freeman et al., 1983; Carroll, 1984; Singh et al, 1986; Cooper et al, 1991; Bhide, 2000).

Another study on performance was reported by Valencia et al, (2007) which has examined and analyzed women entrepreneur's differences according to their business goals and business performance. They argued that women entrepreneurs pursue non economic goals as individuals or socially oriented as these do not necessarily worsen the economic performance of their enterprise as their entrepreneurial activities can manage well with non economic benefit. However, there have been several ways in which variables has been used to measure performance for example, scholars such as Richard et al, (2008) has used methodological ways in measuring organizational performance variables in three specific areas such as (a) Financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment) (b) Market performance (sales, market share) (c)

Shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added). Others studies has discussed how economic performance was measured by household and small business sectors (Christensen and Jorgenson, 1973; Sexton and Robinson, 1989). Although measuring performance has proven to be useful on the areas of female entrepreneurship. Shelton, (2006) investigated female entrepreneurs with work family-conflict, management strategies and venture performance while, Carter, (2000) proposes ways of improving the performance of women owned businesses through the process of training and advisory services for women in the UK. Other scholars such as Levent, Masurel and Nijkamp, (2002) investigated how entrepreneurial process has influenced performance on the attitudes and behaviors of immigrant Turkish female entrepreneurs living and working in Amsterdam. The study revealed that female entrepreneurs are successful in terms of their sales and survival situation as well as good performances in market shares. However, the positive performances of these women entrepreneurs were shown to have a positive relationship because of their attitudes towards positive motivation, ethnic network, entrepreneurial family tradition, work experiences, ambitious personality and self confidence were all linked to better performance and business success (Levent, Masurel and Nijkamp, 2002).

Other studies that investigated some comprehensive list of factors influencing performance of female entrepreneurs in Malaysia was conducted by Teoh and Chong, (2007) they argued that psychological and organizational methods are often used in investigating and analyzing the connection between the influences of women's individual personality such as parental influence, business management, business strategies, goals and motives, networking and their entrepreneurial orientation to their business performance. Brush, (1992) on the importance of female entrepreneurs argues that, the reason why FE's underperform than their male counterpart in term of growth was because of their goals and economic pursuit. However, the essence of performance in female entrepreneurship literature clearly shows that female owned businesses are examine to perform in terms of their financial abilities even though there may be other measures in describing the performance of female entrepreneurs.

Finally on this section, it has shown that scholars have described performance in several ways. Lumpkin & Dess, (1996) has described entrepreneurial performance as a construct which consist of incomes and fulfillment that is derived from an extensive range of framework of conceptualization. Performance has also been used to measure organizational competencies and strategies (Venkatraman & Ramanujam, 1985; Dess & Robinson 1984; Conant et al, 2006). Performance is a complex multidimensional construct (Murphy et al, 2006; Chakravarthy, 1986 and Slater & Olson, 2000). The next section defined performance in this master's thesis as well as gives more detailed of the aim and objective of the study and the basic structure of the study.

## **Performance Defined.**

Performance in this study is linked to entrepreneurship performance and is defined as an act of performing or doing something productively; with the application of a comprehensive knowledge for great results. However, the purpose of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs in Africa.

### **1.1 The Aim and Objective of the Study**

The objective is to explore factors influencing the performances of female entrepreneurs. And the aim is to understand common factors influencing the performance of Female Entrepreneurs in Africa.

### **1.2 Research Structure**

This study is divided into 7 chapters, with each chapter serving different purposes: The chapter one (1) of this master's thesis gives a brief description on the reason for this particular chosen topic as well as a brief introduction of performance and how performance has been studied by other scholars and linking it to entrepreneurship. Then it is followed by the definition of performance and the aim and the objective of this research study as well as the research background of the study. The chapter Two (2) went on to describe the basics of entrepreneurship its concepts and theories and how it is linked to job creation as well as for growth and development. Then in the same chapter 2 the performance of business was reviewed using OECD entrepreneurship performance impacts and indicators as well as the principle of entrepreneurial orientation and how it linked to performance by scholars. The Third (3) chapters discusses about female entrepreneurship, the reasons why women become entrepreneurs, the characteristics of female entrepreneurs and the factors which affect female entrepreneurs performance in general and the Fourth (4) chapter discusses the methodology of the research. The Fifth (5) chapter discusses female entrepreneurs using the African context as well as analysis of factors influencing the performance of African female in five (5) African countries, the variation of factors and some suggestions of strategies in helping female entrepreneurs performances. The sixth (6) chapters discuss the results of the study and chapter seven (7) discusses conclusion and discussions of the master's thesis and chapter (8) gives some more details of the reliabilities of the research as well as other recommendations for policy making options and direction for further research.

### 1.3 The study background

The development of women as entrepreneurs has begun many years ago. However, the role of women in this 21<sup>st</sup> century is not just limited to domestic activities or as house wives. But rather, the roles are changing, women are assumed to find a balance between being a wife, a mother at the same time an entrepreneur. In my own contribution, a women entrepreneur simply means, becoming a woman business owner, an owner with the responsibility of managing one's self or a woman entrepreneur means a woman who runs, manages a business enterprises that she has total control of all finances and the responsibilities that concerns the business as well create jobs for her community.

According to OECD, (2004) describe women entrepreneurs as a business enterprise that is owned and controlled by a female. This simply means this woman has about 100% of the startup capital and its economic interests at the same time she is ready to bear all risk that is associated to the running of the business activities. Other scholars such as Masood, (2011) defined women entrepreneurs as business enterprise owned and manage by a women having a minimal economic interest of about 51% of the start-up capital and contributing at least 51% of the job created as a result of the enterprise of a women. Deshpande and Sethi, (2009) and Masood, (2011) defined women entrepreneurship as means or an act to perform business ownership and business development that gives women the ability to increase economically, socially at the same time strengthens their business advantages across the society. Female ownership of business is constantly increasing in across the developing world, while Female ownership of business in most developed and wealthy economies women entrepreneurs own more than 25% percent of all business activities (Jalbert, 2000 p. 7). In other words, this can be attributed to the advancement of other matured wealth nations that has created better opportunities for many women entrepreneurs across the world, because globalization has created possibilities for free trades among nations as well as the movement of people, products and services such as transfer of knowledge and technologies. According the United Nation director general on human development called Sakiko Parr-Fakuda, she made a remarkable statement concerning the empowerment of women across the globe "she stated that " the rising economic influence of women owned businesses are shifting and changing the landscape of the general world of business. She quote "among 10 women leaders 4 are engaged in the business and market environment". Other scholars have noted many of the global impact of women entrepreneurs and how it's growing worldwide with many significant numbers continuing to strengthen on the global scale. For examples in many countries such as (Africa, Asia, Latin America, Caribbean North Africa and Middle East women produces more than (30-80%) all foods products (WISTAT, 2000; Kickul, Sampson and Gundry, 2003; Gammage, Diamond and Packman, 2005 and OECD, 2006) and they are active at all business levels such as locally, regionally and the globe. World Bank, (2012) argues that the role of women was part of the key drivers of economic development in the past

century, and these roles came through various forms; which lead to the increased in the participation of female labor force, and reduced discrimination and wage differences. However, due to these changes, there were better enhancement performance to support gifted females which are interested in leadership and management positions as well as other connected areas of specializations. Another scholar called (Duflo, 2005, p. 2-10), lays an emphasis that giving someone more than half of your potential workforce will have a greater impacts and importance in economic benefits beyond promoting gender equality. However, this type of notion implies that growth incentive is particularly good for female entrepreneurship and the economic dynamics that promotes entrepreneurship among women. However, Weeks & Seiler, (2001, p1-4) revealed in their studies, that the entrepreneurship among women are increasing in an advance position and recognized among several nationals, states, governments and among the international business environment in realizing the economic benefit of promoting entrepreneurship through development, creation of jobs and enterprises as well its impact in the society. OECD, (2004 and 2012) emphasized that woman business ownership or creation has fostered income and growth on number of areas such as on employment creation for the owner and its worker as well the community. Nonetheless, it has enabled women on the provision of basic and essential needs of their families, for example providing women opportunity to access health, educational and social needs of the family rather than depending on the government.

However, this study is looking at the factors which affect the performance of female entrepreneurs across Africa. The performance of female entrepreneurs across the globe has been categorized by different factors as well as in many cultures and contexts. Kickul et al, (2006) the development and the number of women owned business has contributed enormously to the development of the world trade. The development has outpaced the research and understanding of the factors that influence the performance and the growth of every individual entrepreneurial firm, especially for those in emerging markets. OECD, (2004) argues that women business operations must be examined carefully at a personal and firm level especially on the motivation of becoming entrepreneur in understanding their performances and the different between women and men entrepreneurs. But, Kickul et al, (2006) revealed in their studies of Russian women entrepreneurs that mentoring is important in developing relationship for entrepreneurial women in building confidence and self-efficacy which may also help in achieving sustainability of firm performance.

Meanwhile, the existence of entrepreneurship and the role of entrepreneurs in our societies have been developed, and growing for many centuries, entrepreneurship has been on the attention of many scholars with several definitions. McClelland, (1961) defines entrepreneurial actions as a process of risk taking, energetic activities, organizational skills, individual responsibilities, money for entrepreneurial action as well expectation for future possibilities. Churchill, (1992) defines entrepreneurship as the process of discovering and developing an opportunity in other to create value through innovativeness and



utilizing the opportunity with or without human or capital resources or the location of the entrepreneur in a new or existing business. Others such as (Stevenson and Jarillo, 1990, p23) defined entrepreneurship as the process by which individuals either on their own pursue opportunities without regards to the resources they currently control. Michael, (1998, p. 113) defines entrepreneurship as the engine that drives market-based economies based on the entrepreneurial individual or team that identifies and capitalizes on opportunity, puts together unique combinations of resources, assumes risks, and manages and harvests ventures. Casson, (2003) defined an entrepreneur as someone who specializes in taking judgmental decisions about the coordination of scarce resources. In other words, entrepreneurial activities has been described as the process of creative human action in search of creative value, through the foundation or development of an economic activities, through identifying and exploiting new products, processes or markets. Though, many more scholars agreed that the field of entrepreneurship has lacked a well accepted known definition e.g. (Gartner, 1990; Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991; Bull and Willard, 1993; Bygrave and Hofer, 1991; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996 Venkataraman, 1997; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Brockhaus, 1980; Vesper, 1982; Drucker, 1985; Carsrud, Olm & Ely, 1986; Sexton & Smilor, 1986; Gartner, 1989; Mitton, 1989 and Evans, 1949) and many more others. However, these scholars gave their definitions from various perspectives and understanding of entrepreneurship, but they all show some interesting and common similarities on which an entrepreneur is, generally, an entrepreneur can be anyone regardless of him or her or her business activity.

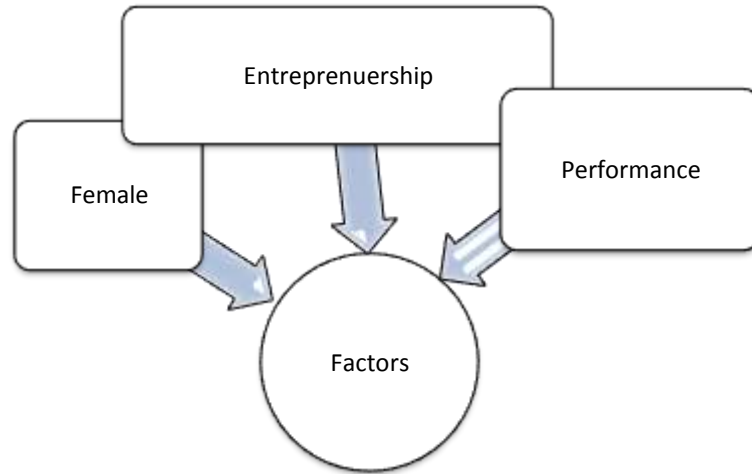
Regardless, of all these impacts and contributions of entrepreneurship across the globe women entrepreneurship is still on the rise, in many developing nations like Africa as well as the impact of women entrepreneurship is almost not felt in the development of the world trade and market. This is because most of these nations have faced a lot of challenges in the area of socio-cultural economic and environmental issues that has affected entrepreneurial skills and the development of women and men in these countries- for example; the impact of war, hunger, poverty, and corruption has crippled some of these nations in developing their full potentials on economic activities.

In Africa today, most of these trends are beginning to change towards industrialization and trade: because these changes have been aimed at developing a market based incentives that will enable the African women to assist themselves through the process of entrepreneurship development. Many African women are steadily entering into trade with the potentials for growth and personal development in their communities. Thus, women have the same ability as men if given equal opportunities as men. There are many African proverbs and other proverbs that described how a woman can change the things around her if given the opportunity or the help she needs to perform any business activity.

“ If you give a women a helping hands she will use it to help, nurture, teach the children how to create and transform” (Authors-proverb)

“When you educate a man; you educate another man. But when you educate a woman you educate a generation”- An African Proverb

Nevertheless, women entrepreneurs in general still have a lot challenges in performing their entrepreneurial roles. This has been blamed on the non-traditional occupation for women in some part of the world to become entrepreneurs. In Nigeria, it is often said “Behind every successful man, there must be a woman”. According to Woldie & Adersua, (2004) in Nigeria, women continue to develop their own businesses. Zakaria, (2001) and Mordi, et al, (2010) in comparing to other African countries, that Nigeria a sub-Sahara African country has the fastest growing business opportunity in the region. Thus, it is still considered to be a traditional society which believes women should not take major role in business activities given that there is already some certain difficulties in performing entrepreneurship activities in Nigeria. In essence, women entrepreneurs face still bigger challenges that make them underperform in their various business activities. Yusuff et al, (2011) briefly stated that it would be logical to expect small businesses to grow and increase. Instead, the rate of business failures continues to rise due to the obstacles affecting business performance in Nigeria. They revealed in their studies that some factors such as (lack of financial resources, lack of management experience, poor location and poor site often make it difficult for business owners to perform the necessary needed investment in modernizing their business knowledge and production of goods and services. Other issues concerning entrepreneurship development are hindered in many parts of the world because of the above mentioned inherent factors that affect entrepreneurs in Africa and in other developing world. Entrepreneurs are said to encounter harsh economic climates which limits their ability for better investment climates. For example, lack of business loans and funds, lack of management skills, poor infrastructure, and corruption, inadequate and competent personnel, inability to control costs laws and regulation, general economic condition low demand for products and services, poverty, shortage of raw materials. In essence, these factors has contributed to the failure of many businesses as well as created fear and low performance among entrepreneurs and business people. Finally on this section, despite all these inherent problems associated with entrepreneurship, the development and growth of entrepreneurship involving women has always been a growing trend. This study tends to fill in the gap on common factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs in Africa. Figure (1) below some gives the basic structure of this master's thesis.



## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This section reviews relevant literatures that have been written on entrepreneurship, the concept of entrepreneurship such as, benefits and importance of entrepreneurship, and Female entrepreneurship

### **2.1 Entrepreneurship and Concept**

A number of entrepreneurship authors have tried to define the concept of entrepreneurship for example Entrepreneurship has been defined as "the creation of new economic activity" (Davidsson et al, 2006 p. 27). Entrepreneurship has been playing a significant role in economic growth (Thurik & Wennekers, 2004; van Stel, 2006) as well as creating employments and significant driver of innovation. Entrepreneurship has been at the center of discussion in the business, political, economic and management worlds. Thus, the well-reported swifter fall and rapid rise of most enterprises has made governments of many nations to rethink their action and strategies for a better entrepreneurial economy (Rae & Carswell, 2000).

Entrepreneurship can be seen as a phenomenon that is stems and nourished by different socio-economic environments and contexts. The essential factors that lead to entrepreneurship could benefit from different aspects of the socio-and economic context while both may share certain other aspects Yetim, (2008). Several studies on entrepreneurship offer different definition of the concept of entrepreneurship. Certain personality characteristics of the entrepreneurs are most common in various definitions. Thus, studies focusing on the personality characteristics, terms like creativity, competitiveness, achievement, motivation and risk taking are frequently cited in these studies (Cantillon, (1755; Hawley, 1970; Drucker, 1974; Duckers, 1985; Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; McClelland, 1961; Thornton, 2005; Cantillon, 1955 and Thornton, 2005) described entrepreneurs as the farmers who bore risks associated with purchasing inputs at

a given price to produce and sell at an uncertain price. Harley, (1907) emphasized that being the first to articulate that risk assumption is the most essential function of the entrepreneurs, which the reward of the enterprise accrue primarily to the owner due to the assumption of risk and responsibility and risk. McClelland, (1986) also explains entrepreneurship through the need for achievement and demand for power while Lumpkin and Dess, (1996) emphasized on the important ways in entrepreneurship that is active, competitive aggressiveness, autonomy and innovative. Others include different areas of entrepreneurship such as creativity, innovation, and opportunity recognition, new firm creation or creation of an organization (Stevenson, 1985; Gartner 1988, Gartner, 1990; Gartner et al., 2004; Mordi, Simpson, and Singh, 2010). Some other scholars agreed on another definition of entrepreneurs, they described entrepreneurs as one whose aims and prospects to utilize opportunities with the zeal or tenacity to face challenges and also overcome difficulties (Winn 2005; Mordi, Simpson, and Singh, 2010, p7). Entrepreneurs deal with creativity and innovation, having the ability to see opportunities where other people are not able to see the opportunities. Entrepreneurs are known to be determined and committed to entrepreneurial activities, which is seen as the process of starting a new business venture (Rosa, 2011). Other method of entrepreneurship has also been linked to family firms as a place where family members representing different generations are active in a business (Bork, 1986; Churchill & Hatten, 1987; Koironen, 2002; Ward, 1987). There are also scholars who require the family to be owners of more than 50% of the stock (Barnes & Hershon, 1976; Gallo & Sveen, 1991). But according to Littunen, (1992) on the definition of a family business is one where the controlling ownership rests in the hands of an individual or the members of a single family. Other issues concerning entrepreneurship has been rooted in process of new venture creation and ownership across many nations which is one of the reason why the organization of Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, (GEM) was born in other to access and measure the entrepreneurial activities of people across many nations in the world (Brockhaus, 1980; Mescon and Montanari, 1981; Reynolds et al, 1999 & Acs et al, 2004). However, the basics of entrepreneurship concept that arise from the risk theory of profit are the degree of risk, presence of new venture creation or ownership is involved. Thus, the potential sub-domain terms include new venture entrepreneurship, owner and manager entrepreneurship and high-risk entrepreneurship (Gedeon, 2010). Others definitions includes Kirzner an Austrian economist who gave his own definition of entrepreneurship as the sequence of innovative actions in order to discover the opportunity and the alertness to new opportunities. This means that the author considers alertness in recognizing opportunities as more important than innovation in defining entrepreneurship. Nonetheless, the entrepreneur must prepare and correct errors that arise from business operations e.g. knowing customers needs, treating customers want as a way of being alert in recognizing their demands (Kirzner, 1953). In referring to an entrepreneur as an owner and manager (Gedeon, 2010) "emphasized that

a good managers can create profits due to incremental innovation but, unless they also assume the risks of ownership manager are not entrepreneurs".

Other entrepreneurship scholars such as (Venkataraman, 1997) had other unique description of entrepreneurship that sees the entrepreneur in the position two business trends that that involves the presence of profitable opportunities and innovative individuals. Timmons, (1997) sees entrepreneurship as a way of thinking, reasoning and acting in a way that drives holistic approach and balanced leadership and (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000) emphasized on the discovery of opportunity in other to earn or receive money in form of trading resources at the same time making producing goods for sales. However, this means that the discovery and the assessment and the exploitation of better opportunities lies beneath the development of new products, services, production as well as new strategies in organizational patterns for new markets and for products inputs that has never been in existence. The entrepreneurial opportunity is unanticipated and sometimes unvalued money making opportunity (Cuervo, Ribeiro and Roig, 2007 p3). Sometimes, the entrepreneurs do not immediately expect or realize the business opportunity that can create beneficial economic effect that can change the world of the entrepreneur

The multiple definition of entrepreneurship has made entrepreneurship versatile, ambiguous and famous as field of discipline. In studies like Gartner, (1990) an Entrepreneur has been defined as "one who undertakes a commercial enterprise and who is an organizational creator and innovator". However, the basic of entrepreneurial activity is in other to maintain a business in a better performance: Therefore women and men must possess some kind of personal characteristics in many areas of business in other to become successful in the marketplace. All scholars made different and remarkable contributions to entrepreneurship in many ways. But, the unique nature of entrepreneurship is seen as a way of creating an exceptional volume of wealth in our world: many of our world organizations such as (IMF, and World Bank, EU, GEM) have all seen entrepreneurship as the only way to keep our world moving forward in terms of growth and development. This is because entrepreneurship is seen as the only essential contributor for the advancement of private and public owned enterprises which has the ability in making our economies in to be dynamic. Also, entrepreneurial process in a society has a unique nature in creating jobs and wealth for individual and the government. According to (Hisrich et al, 2005) these wealth are created by individuals who are not afraid of risky opportunities especially in entrusting their time and resources for valuable and production of new businesses for the betterment of their products and services and the satisfaction of their customers. But in all, (Venkataraman, 1997) said it all as he emphasized that the process of entrepreneurship is all about "how by whom and the method opportunities can bring future good and services that are discovered and exploited into existence. However, scholars have emphasized on the benefit of entrepreneurial orientation in achieving a performance. Studies such as (Begley & Tan, 2001; Tan, 2002; Shapero & Sokol, 1982) have tried to set up a relationship between entrepreneurial characteristics and the social, cultural

and economic characteristics. A study by Yetim, (2008) has also tried to connect entrepreneurship as the socioeconomic and cultural structure of the individuals in achieving performance. The next section discusses the process of entrepreneurial activities: figure 2 below shows how an individual performance can be achieved in the process of basic entrepreneurial activity.

Figure 2. The Process of Entrepreneurial Activity- A framework



The image above explains the process of entrepreneurship as in becoming entrepreneurial that begins with step by step procedures or action. The process involves starting a new business enterprise begins with an attitude to become entrepreneurial, and the ability to involve better strategies as well as good problem solving and managerial skills in managing a business: nevertheless, an entrepreneur must start this process by developing an idea, evaluation and development of opportunity in prevailing against factors that resist the process of creating a new firm (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000 and Hisrich et al, 2005).

### **New Idea**

The birth of a new venture begins with an idea. An idea can be a prescription for need or a problem with a concept in solving the problem. New idea development has become successful for decades. the development of new idea has lead to the achievement of new economic possibilities and the use of new technologies like the internet to create an invention from the new idea or knowledge boom through social networking face-book; while these strategies are aligned with the studies of (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000; Sarasvathy, et al, 2002) where applying creativity through idea, innovation, and invention has enabled the development of key strategies in new entrepreneurial start-up. In other words, new idea is an element of opportunity recognition strategy because new idea comes through the process of thinking or exploration which can only happen when a firm identifies ways of positioning itself to withstand some challenges in the ever changing market environment (Ireland, & Webb, 2006

p53). According to Ireland, & Webb, (2006 p. 53) exploration's successfulness depends on the firm's ability to acquire new, diverse knowledge and subsequently integrate it with existing knowledge.

### **Opportunity Recognition & Evaluation:**

Several researchers such as (Kirzner, 1973; Timmons et al, 1987; Hills, Lumpkin and Singh, 1997; Singh et al, 1999; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Sarasvathy, et al, 2003; Baron, 2006 and Lehner & Kansikas, 2012) have made their own contributions in literatures concerning the topic of opportunity recognition which has assisted in understanding the phenomenon. For example, Baron defined opportunity in his article as a recognized method of creating economic value (such as profits) that has not been previously exploited by others which are currently in the market (Baron 2006, p. 107). In entrepreneurship, opportunity recognition is regarded as a major feature in the process of entrepreneurship development (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Other scholars also see opportunity recognition and opportunities exploitation as focal point of entrepreneurship, because these opportunities represent the main process by which an individual entrepreneur perceives the opportunity of forming a new venture (Kirzner, 1973). Others such as (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000) argued on the importance of prior experience and knowledge in the process of identifying opportunity and (Hills, Lumpkin and Singh, 1997) argued on the role and value of social networks in identifying opportunities. Sarasvathy et al, (2003, p 4) emphasized that, an entrepreneurial opportunity begins with some number of ideas as well as the belief for acting entrepreneurial to help in the creation of potential economic market that is available for consumers. But in conclusions, on their findings on entrepreneurial opportunity, they argued that entrepreneurial opportunity can become a locative process, market discovery process and as market creative process. However, research has identified that entrepreneurial business ventures begins with an idea, but the existence of the new business enterprise begins with a good opportunity, as a good idea does not in essence point to a good opportunity and does not in effect leads to the creation of new venture (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Nonetheless, opportunities are not the way to solving entrepreneurial problems, but, ideas may become the solution for initiating a startup (Timmons et al, 1987) but, Singh et al, (1999) discovered in their studies that, the process of recognizing an ideas and then followed in developing the ideas can lead to a genuine business opportunities which is an essential component in creation of new business activities. Opportunity recognition can be seen to be linked to the process of perception leading to the recognition of new methods and patterns available (Lehner and Kansikas, 2012, p. 35). Finally, opportunities can be seen or discovered anywhere in a business environment, but it can be only become useful and important when assessed and exploited by an individual who is willing to explore it for entrepreneurship gains.



**Strategic Planning:** The process of developing a new business enterprise requires strategic planning and positioning. Because, the competitive nature of the business world has forced many entrepreneurial firms to become more dedicated and agile to tactical business activities: since it will enable a firm to curb rivalry among competitors. In the area of performance, strategic planning can help a business to have some certain level of business performance with the support some tactical tools such as upgrading existing technologies, and emerging of new technologies as well as other marketing opportunities. With an existing strategic planning, firms will have the ability to be free from outside pressure; besides, strategic entrepreneurship has been defined as the way in which a company can exploit its current competitive edge at the same time exploring future opportunities (Ireland & Webb, 2007). while strategic management, for these firms are the ability to focuses on how competitive positioning can create advantages for firms that, will in turn, produce improvements in performance (Porter, 1980, 1996). Other issues for firms are entrepreneurship's attentions to create wealth and competencies on identifying new and emerging opportunities in the marketplace (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000; Hitt et al, 2001). However, the strategy of every organization is the moving forward of actions towards realization of its long term goals and objectives. However, (Ireland, Hitt, and Sirmon, 2003) has defined strategic entrepreneurship as firms' pursuit of superior performance via simultaneous opportunity seeking and advantage-seeking activities. Timmons & Spinneli, (2003) underlined the importance of strategic planning for the success of any entrepreneurial venture. Studies have reported reasons companies engage in entrepreneurship and one of the reasons according to (Hitt et al, 2001 and 2002) was to increase performance through two strategic principles such as strategic renewal and the creation of new business opportunities has created better insight to entrepreneurship strategies within a firm and in strategic entrepreneurship

Brown, (2005) underlined the importance of commitment and strategic planning while strategic management or planning provides the context for entrepreneurial actions Ireland et al, (2001) and entrepreneurial process is all about creation and strategic management is how a utilized advantage is recognized and retained from what has been created (Venkataraman & Sarasvathy, 2001). Thus, strategic entrepreneurship is entrepreneurial action with a strategic perspective (Hitt et al, 2001). Nonetheless, a continuous focus and better solutions can maintain a firm's competitive advantage through effective strategic planning. This is because; businesses that have used formalized strategic planning are more likely to survive, than those firms without a formalized system (Bonn, 2002 p. 39). In essence, strategic planning is connected to organizing an organization mission and vision. Therefore, a successful strategic planning enables a company to tactically analyze its positions and decisions in addressing the challenges it faces day to day running of a business resources at the same time dwelling on its opportunities (The Enterprise Foundation Inc, 1999). The figure 3 below shows an example of the process of strategic planning in a firm.

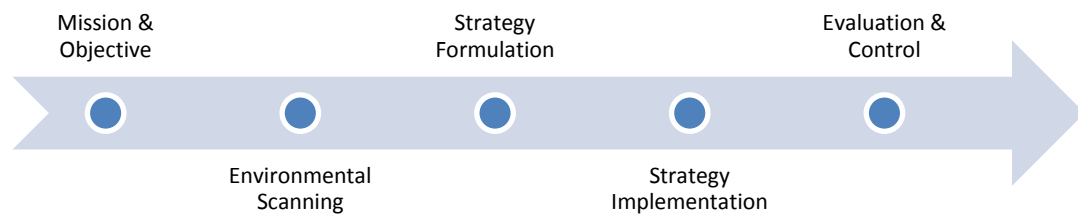


Figure 3: The process of strategic planning in a firm

### **New Venture Formation:**

New venture formation has been an essential source of job creation in every economy for many decades; because of these trends in the corporate shifting and downsizing governments and policy makers around the world has increasingly recognized the benefit of entrepreneurs as a key factor in new job creation and economic prosperity. A recent study of the OECD economies has also confirmed that firm-formation has been seen as a key factor in the creation of employment and economic sector growth. Thus, monitoring them provides an essential, timely indicator of entrepreneurialism in an economy especially when coupled with other formations. For example, the condition of the overall labor market or measures introduced by governments to stimulate self-employment has been as "Push and "Pull" factors" Push factors is seen as [high-unemployment] while "Pull" factors is seen as [increased opportunities] of which both can play an important role in the formation of new ventures OECD, (2012). Also in 2012 OECD studies explored and exposed many fall and rise up of many new firm startups in the peak of the global economic crises in some OECD countries such as (France, Spain, Italy, Germany and Australia and United Kingdom). On the other hand, this approach to New Venture formation is close to Gartner's (1998) conceptual framework process. On this Gartner's research framework proposed considered entrepreneurship within the perspective of some variables (i) individuals i.e. the person or persons involved in starting new organizations (ii) processes i.e. the actions undertaken to start a venture: (iii) organizations i.e. the kind of firm that is started and lastly the environment i.e. the surrounding and influencing the new venture. For examples, personal entrepreneur and the experience the individual brings to the process

of entrepreneurship are important and the environment that an entrepreneur is in doing business may actually influence business either positively or negatively. For instance the industry of business, market and suppliers may affect the business.

## **Growth**

The two central concerns of economic policy are growth and business cycle stabilization. There is considerable interest in devising government policies and institutions to influence prospects for economic growth and mitigate the distress associated with economic downturns (Fisher, 1999). Thus, every new business has a tendency to work toward creating its product and services, as well as generating revenue and moving towards sustainable performance. According to Mason, Bishop and Robinson, (2009) firms with high-growth contribute to economic performance in several ways; High-growth firms have a direct impact on national economic performance through their own employment, innovation and productivity growth as well as having larger effects on economic and social outcomes. Others like Mason et al, (2009) had identified three main effects of high growth in firms; (a) the positive impact of high-growth firms on productivity as the resources of displaced weaker firms are reallocated to stronger firms. This process also encourages greater innovation and efficiency in surviving firms. (b)The spillover effects of rapid firm growth on the growth of other firms as well as on regional economic and social outcomes, such as employment and inactivity rates. (c) Positive effects on overall innovative activity, since high-growth firms are disproportionately innovative. Thus, innovation has been seen as way to enhance growth and performance, competitiveness in small businesses; there have been several studies on innovation and growth (Rosenberg, 2004; Timmons & Bygrave, 1986 and OECD, 2007). This study is focusing at the common factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs in Africa. The next section explains some of OECD entrepreneurial performance determinants and impacts in our societies in doing business.

## **2.2 OECD Entrepreneurship Performance Determinants and Impacts**

OECD and Euro stat (2007) has also noted some of the entrepreneurial performance indicators on firms; they described four performance indicators in a business; as (a) the birthrate of firm and the death rate, of new firm (b) firm survival (c) employment in new firms and (d) competitive contribution

### **2.2.1 Birth and death Rate of New firms**

The establishment or opening of a new business is always a trend that will continue to make entrepreneurs who they are today. But, these trends always come at a cost with some entrepreneurs lagging behind some unavoidable appearance of business operation each day. The birth of new firms generates a segment of employment growth each month in every nation's calendar. However, there have been several researches focusing on the survival and death rate of new firms. Birch, (1979) and Acs and Audrestch, (1985) small firms create more jobs than big firms but the major factors affecting the survival and the birth of new firms has been focused mainly on several issues concerning operating a new business. For example, environmental factors such as HR, harsh market conditions, rules and regulations, finance and technology, these include both in the internal and external environment, and financial factors such as effect of bank loan, debts, and other financial constrains etc. However, because of high failure rate in new business there also has been a lot of attention in the effect of entrepreneurial success (Cooper et al, 1988; Storey, 1994; Cooper et al, 1994; Reid 1991; Van Praag, 2003 and Astebro & Bernhardt, 2003). All the same, access to finance is often stressed as a determinant for the performance of new firms birth and death rate in general (Cooper et al, 1992 and 1994).

### **2.2.2 Firm Survival**

Survival rate among firms has been described to between 3 to 5years old of business existence and with the proportion of younger firm survival still between 3 or 5years (OECD and Euro stat, 2007). but often during startup founders of new firms make several decisions prior to launching of the new business (Reynolds & White 1992), but, often these decisions represents the "Gestation" process whereby the founders commit resources, identify their target market, and even determine attributes of the product or services as well as organizing the management of the firms internal and external activities (Stearns et al, 1995). According to, Stearns et al, (1995) the reliability of firm survival can be often traced to resource commitment that constrain founders of new business in their ability for change or miscalculation in establishing the firm. They examined 3 factors that reflect commitment of resources based on decision during gestation stage of the business as (a) physical location of the firm as a place of business (b) Strategic focus of the firm as a method of competing for resources in the environment and (3) industry affiliation that defines the core technology of the firm. Thus the discontinuance operation of new firms operations is higher than the old firms. Discontinuance of new firm maybe as a result of the individuals characteristics of the founders, such as structural characteristics of the new firm and the condition of the environment that impacted the new firms effort to deliver a good service to the market (Bruderl et. al, 1992). Research on this area has focused on the founders as a key factor in influencing new firm continued existence and success (Cooper, 1991). Although, studies

suggest that personality traits such as leadership or social relationships of founders contribute to new firm survival. Gartner's, (1998) argument on the behavioral traits of an entrepreneur revealed that the trait approach of is seen as a personality trait and the characteristics of an entrepreneurs. But he emphasized that, some of the trait approach that dominated entrepreneurship research such need for achievement, locus of control, risk taking and values has clearly distinguishes entrepreneurs and non entrepreneurs. However, some people believe that at the beginning of new firm creation process that the founders are uncertain of certain decisions that may influence firm performance. However, Stearns et al, (1995) emphasized on the internal condition of the firm, they revealed that firm survival depends on the location, strategy and interaction of industry in other for a firm to survival. In line with this consideration, for a firm to survive in business it's necessary for the founder to fully understand the environment of business to get adequate measure in keeping the business alive.

### **2.2.3 Employment in New Firms**

Research comparing male and female business ownership has consistently found women to be younger and operating newer businesses and their business to be smaller in terms of annual turnover and employment size (Carter, 2006). However, (Carroll et. al, 2000; Cowling et al, 2004 and Millan, 2008) investigated decision to become an employer, while (Burke et. al, 2002; Van-Praag and Cramer, 2001) investigated the decision to hire a certain number of employees. Henley, (2005) investigated the decisions, but does so within the framework. OECD and Euro-stat, (2007) investigated business ownership rate among start-ups and in total firm population they found out that employment rate was within 3 and 5years old firms with average firm size by employees after 3 or 5years with the population of more adults in new firm start-up per month.

### **2.2.4 Competitive Contribution**

The high rate of growth firms by employment and turnover are one of the numerous benefits or advantages of a firm's competitive contribution to a firm's performance. Others, also includes the value added contribution, productivity growth by size and age contributions as well as the propensity of export capacity in new smaller firms. Thus, the profit margins and market shares are also indicators of a competitive performance which they present significant variations among companies in the business environment.

OECD, (2007) has listed the following factors as determinants in entrepreneurship {market condition, access to finance, technology infrastructure R&D, entrepreneurial culture, rules and regulations as well as supply of entrepreneurial spirit} these six determinants are thought to have influenced entrepre-

neurial performance. They are often seen as being influenced by micro economic policies among national boundaries which affects individuals and companies. For instance, unstable political government of a nation can affect the market condition of a country's entrepreneurial potentials as well as regulatory framework on foreign assets, taxation, competition, and firms export capabilities. Other, political influence can also decrease access to the financial sector and hampering the financial and capital access of entrepreneurs. Also, determinants of entrepreneurship at individual level can also cause unemployment rates which can also increase the probability of individuals starting a business. However, labour market condition is the major determinant of entrepreneurship (Fairlie, 2011). Thus, all determinants can to some or high degree influence entrepreneurial performance depending on amount of focus that is put upon different determinants (Larsen & Wraa-Hansen, 2012).

However, its impact in the society will also be great: because job creation can give the ability for people to receive better jobs, reducing poverty, reducing informal sectors, and help create opportunity for satisfied jobs. Another is economic growth can help in the creation of lead markets, SME's competitiveness and ecological-growth. Productivity and growth can help to creating room for globalization challenges being mastered & the ability to adapt to technological changes being utilized, and growth of workforce flexibility as well as creating the opportunity to stopped better emigration of talents. Finally studies by (Ahmed & Hoffman, 2008) argued that these four frameworks for addressing and measuring the impact of entrepreneurship may vary between countries and their economic situations. However, the economic determinants of any nation are able to clarify if investments in entrepreneurial activity are favorable. The next section explains the entrepreneurial orientation and how it is linked to performance with relevant literatures.

## **2.3 Entrepreneurial Orientation and Performance**

Some articles have attempt to establish the role of entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance (Zahra, 1991; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Wiklund 1999; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2003; Dimitratos et al, 2004; Parker & van Praag, 2006; Rauch et al., 2008; Ireland et al., 2009; Davis, 2010; Lechner & Gudmundsson, 2012, Soininen et al., 2012; &Vij & Sign-Bedi, 2012), as well as factors that motivate entrepreneurship and business startup (Stevenson 1990; Brush 1992; Allen & Truman 1992, 1993 & Green & Cohen, 1995) and on performances of female owned business ( Hisrich 1986; Brush et al., 1986; Hisrich & Brush, 1986; Lerner et al., 1997; Carter 2000; Lerner & Almor, 2002; Fairlie & Robb, 2009; Lee & Stearns, 2012). Entrepreneurial orientation according to Lumpkin and Dess, (1996) is referred as the processes in which decision making processes evolves as a way of activities: that can help in the process of new-entry for new business creation and entrepreneurship. New entry can only be present when new or

existing goods and services are developed for a market (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996, p. 136). EO is seen or regarded as a process of construct that can be connected with technique, practices as well as decision-making approach for managers and corporations (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; p, 162). Others also suggest, on the indication of a culture and practices of a firm; because the culture is seen as an essential ingredients for competitive edge over rivals and for firms strategic renewal of their goals, growth and opportunities (Agarwal & Helfat, 2009). However, EO has the ability to captures the most essential feature of a firms and the way it is organized and that knowledge-based resources are the appropriate way to discovery and exploitation of opportunities. All are positively related to firm performance and how it EO enhances the relationship between them EO and firm performance (Wikilund & Shepherd, 2003).

Other scholars like Parker & van Praag, (2006) argues on the entrepreneurial aspect of schooling, capital constraints and how it affects entrepreneurial start-up performance in Dutch ventures: they pointed-out capital constraints and education as having an impact on an entrepreneurs performance, thus education was revealed to have a positive factor in determining the performance of an entrepreneurs as they argued that education decreases the chances of the entrepreneurs capital constraints. Therefore, education has direct effect to the entrepreneurial performance of an entrepreneur (Parker & van Praag, 2006). Moreover, EO is grouped as some kind of personal psychological characteristics: such as risk-taken ability, problem solving style, innovativeness, values attributes, and attitudes that are strongly related with some kind of motivational factors to engage in entrepreneurship (Kilby, 1971; Mintzberg, 1973, p.1-40; Brockhaus & Horwitz, 1986; Begley & Boyd, 1987; Babb & Babb, 1992; Sexton & Bowman-Upton, 1990; Rauch & Frese, 2000; Poon et al., 2006). EO is an important way to measure how a firm is organized. Nevertheless, EO and performance have been described and generalized as a process of decision-making activities, that can be often used by entrepreneur to act entrepreneurial (Lumpkin and Dess, 2001; Rauch et al., 2006; Kreiser and Davis, 2010 & Ullah et al, 2011). In line with the idea of new entry, comes in the notion of pursuit of new opportunities recognition such as new markets, new trends etc. The pursuit of new opportunities goes beyond human or a firm in recognizing of these opportunities. Indeed, research suggest that opportunity recognition is achieved through human cognition as this is made possible through the framework a person has acquired through experiences in other to recognize the relationship between the face of unrelated events or trends in the external world. In other words, these cognitive frameworks are used to "connect the dots" between changes in technology, demographics, markets government policies and as well as other factors (Baron, 2006). Organizations often engage themselves in entrepreneurship in other to strengthen entrepreneurial performance (Guth and Ginsberg, 1990 and Stevenson and Jarillo, 1990). The influence of some of factors that affects entrepreneurial performance has also been studied by Gomezelj & Kusce, (2013) investigated the influence of entrepreneur's personal and environmental factors and how it affects firm's performance in Slovenia; the re-

search suggested that the ability to accept risks, self sufficiency or confidence and need for self determination are mainly the essential factors influencing personal or individual performance at the same time environmental influences were not found to have direct effect to entrepreneurs performance. However, on general business performance they suggest that personal factors (risk propensity, need for independence and personal reasons for entrepreneurship), the market condition were also seen as important factor. The studies concluded that personal performance is affected only by personal factors while business performance is affected both by personal factors and well as environmental factors (Gomezelj & Kusce, 2013). The next section reviews about dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation as the factors which affect entrepreneurship.

## **2.4 Dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation**

Streaming from the dimensions of EO, it was conceptualized as having three dimensions by (Covin & Slevin, 1989). Other scholars (Miller & Freisen, 1982; Covin & Slevin, 1991; Zahra, 1991 and Knight, 1997) talks about innovativeness, risk-taking and proactively to describe the value of entrepreneurship. The other two more dimensions were found by (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996) as autonomy and competitive aggressiveness to conceptualize EO. In line with the studies of EO, it has no specific definition; thus it can be seen as a process, structures, and behaviors of firms characterized by innovativeness, proactively, risk-taking, competitive aggressiveness and autonomy as argued by (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Other scholars defined EO as a firm's level of entrepreneurship (Covin & Wales, 2011).

### **2.4.1 Innovativeness**

Innovation simply means supporting and encouraging new business ideas as well as conducting tests and trials for creativity. Innovation has been seen and described as part of corporate entrepreneurship (CE). In other words, innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactive has described as the process by which enterprises operate with in other to get performance (Zahra 1993; Lumpkin and Dess 1996; Mc Gee 1999 and Pearce et al., 2010). In entrepreneurship innovation is required as an instrument of creativity and business performance. In addition, Drucker, (1985) argued that innovation is for entrepreneurship. Schumpeter, (1934) has measured entrepreneurship as the fundamentals of a creative activity which carries innovation and a mixture new field for men and the creation of money material, machine and management; thus, his views of innovation as the critical dimensions for economic change: In other words he sees innovation as important factor of economic incentives as well as the entrepreneur as the economic man who tries to maximize profits through the innovation of new of



products, new product methods, new markets, or new forms of organizations. For example the world apocalypse of innovation has fueled a lot technological growth and revolution with the arrival of the (Dot-coms, world-wide-web, Microsoft, Apple, Google and Face-book) which has captured the attention of policy makers in strengthening rules and regulations for better entrepreneurial innovation. A firm that has the approach for good entrepreneurial orientation will engage itself in product innovation in the marketing environment as well as undertake an approach towards risk-taking in entering new business ideas would be the first with a proactive solution for opportunity recognition and for a competitive advantage. The study of innovation and performance has been done on various areas of studies. Scholars revealed that innovation has some linked to better firm performance (Hitt et al., 1997; Loof & Heshmati, 2002; Kemp et. al., 2003 and Darroch, 2005). Others linking factors of innovation to the success of most services and manufacturing firms on improving innovation performance especially focusing on critical factors in the services sectors as HR strategies as one of the most important for manufacturers. The author argued that the main focus of innovation should be on product innovation advantages and quality; because, services and quality of innovation are the most importance for a firm's competitive advantage and performance (Atuahene-Gima, 1996). However, this simply means that firm's innovativeness will always result in innovation: because innovation will decide the extent in which a company will be successful in business in meeting the strategic goals and objective of the business and its environment (Hult et. al, 2004) and innovation is the main essential factor for entrepreneurial success and performance. Innovation is the back-bone of many successful businesses today.

#### **2.4.2 Risk-Taking**

Risk taking is the propensity of taking bold actions as in entering into unknown new market areas with the commitment of a large sum of resources into venturing into a business with uncertain results. Risk taking is another key element of EO; it is defined as the willingness to commit huge resources to opportunities that have a reasonable chance of failure (Mintzberg, 1973; Covin & Slevin, 1989; Zahra, 1991; Lumpkin and Dess, 1996 and Wiklund & Shepherd, 2003). However, a company's choice to pursue high entrepreneurial orientation is faced with choice that entails risks as well as the allocation of limited resources Wiklund et al., (2009). Previous studies have found risk-taking as a dimension that is positively interrelated to the performance of entrepreneurial ventures Rauch et al., (2004). Others suggests or relate firms with moderate risk-taking to outperform in market as compared to firms exhibiting moderate or lower levels of risk-taking (Begley & Boyd, 1987; Kreiser et. al., 2002; Tang et al., 2008; & Kreiser & David, 2010) other relate risk-taking to economic performance (Bromiley, 1991) in other words, the nature of a firms risk taking behavior can significantly affect corporate performance (Wright et al., 1996). A well

known scholar of entrepreneurship called (Cantillon, 1730) in his description of entrepreneurs, revealed that they are rational decision makers because they assume risks or possible threat and still provides the necessary resources needed in running and managing a firm. Other scholars noted some of the managerial aspect of risk taking (March & Shapira, 1987; Palmer & Wiseman, 1999) and well as other factors of risk taking processes and problems (Palmer & Wiseman, 1999 and Stewart and Roth, 2001) and the ability to perform risk taking propensity, of the entrepreneur's ability (Brockhaus, 1980; Lichtenstein & Brush, 2001 & Soininen et al., 2011). Other scholars like (Kogan & Wallach, 1964) have found no differences in risk propensity among groups of entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, Lumpkin and Dess, (1996) argued that all business operations often involved an amount of risk in their dealings. In other words, risk taking does not make firms automatically entrepreneurial, but in order to become entrepreneurial the firm must engage in product market or technological innovation (Miller, 1983).

### **2.4.3 Proactiveness**

Pro-activeness has been defined by scholars' as a means of discovering and developing new business opportunity in being the first in the marketplace to take an edge over a business breakthrough that no other person has (Venkatraman, 1989; Naman & Slevin, 1993; Lee & Penning, 2001; Damitratos et al, 2004 and Rauch et al, 2009). For example, being the first person to enter into a particular market to manufacture or produce needed manufactured goods as well as taking part in upcoming business activities. It can also be referred as a personal orientation of your actions or taking initiative by acting rather than reacting to an event (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996 & Kreiser et. al, 2002 p, 78). However, proactiveness has been shown to be noticeable at the following areas of business organizations (a) aggressive behavior targeted towards competitors (b) organizational goals and objectives targeted towards favorable and sustainable business opportunities. In other words, proactive business ventures continually seek new opportunities by expecting future demands in developing products and services in expectation of customers needs (Kreiser et al., 2002). For examples: in the presence of the firm's services, is a good representation of the business line such as brands that are ready to counter rivals through tactical exclusion of products and services that's are in either in developed or declining stage of the product life cycle (Green et al., 2008; Kreiser & Davis, 2010). It is basically the ability to take action whenever the needs arise. Other scholars described proactiveness as having an attitude of being a superior (boss) or a quick disciple and at the same time having a high ethical standard or regards for the workers (Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996 and Knight, 1997). An entrepreneurship scholar also emphasized on certain situations: in which firms could use to become proactive in their behaviors to enable them increase their competitive advantage (Porter, 1985). Lumpkin and Dess, (1996, p. 146) proactiveness is illustrated by the processes aimed at anticipating and acting on future needs. It can be seen as an existing environment for being on the aggres-

sive and protective. Lumpkin and Dess, (1997) has found an inter-connection between proactiveness and firm's performance; they argued that a firm's proactive propensity may give the firm an ability to expect or create change needed in the marketplace as well as become the first mover to take advantage in the market.

#### **2.4.4 Competitive Aggressiveness**

The main goals and objective of several enterprises today, is to strengthen all efforts in their ability to competition in the marketing environment: In other words, to achieve this goals many entrepreneurial firms needs much efforts and intensity to outperform their competitors. Competitive aggressiveness is seen as having the ability as a firm to successfully and openly engage in a competitive position to perform better than rivals in the market place and at the same time set up aggressive actions such as price cutting strategies and other strategies (Kraus et al, 2005). However, entrepreneurial firms have been conceptualized as showing "an aggressive competitive orientation" (Covin & Slevin, 1989). Thus, these characteristic depicts a proactive enterprise which involves itself in aggressive and unconventional strategies towards rival competitors in the same market segment (Knight, 1997).

Competitive aggressiveness enables enterprises to response to competitive pressures or threats. In many articles, the term proactive and competitive aggressiveness are often used as interchangeable, the differences between both terms. In addition, proactiveness reveals how a firm relates to market opportunities in the process of creating demand and, competitive aggressiveness reveals to how firms relate to competitors and how firms respond to trends and demand that previously exist in the marketplace as well brings new entrant head to head to existing firm competition (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996 and 2001).

#### **2.4.5 Autonomy**

Autonomy is described as the independence action of a person or a team in bringing forward an idea or a vision in the course of completion (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, p. 140). In general, it simply means the capability and motivation to be self-govern in the search of opportunities. At the organizational environment, it is a decision for an action that is in use willingly on oppressive nature of organizational control for better management of the organization: in other words, the forces of the organizational environments such as resource accessibility, rival's actions, and the consideration in the organizational inner structure may change due to new business initiative. Autonomy is a very important part of

organizational culture and varies with organizations for example the size of organization, management style and ownership structure (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, p. 140). However, the diversity of EO has shown that they are all independent variables that could work perfectly together within an organization; even as, (Covin & Slevin, (1989) supported the notion that EO is best viewed as a universal concept.

In line with this consideration, Lumpkin & Dess, (1996) argued that various dimensions of EO may occur in different situation, as a still seen as a multi-dimensional construct. Some interesting facts about the argument of EO, is that each of these dimension may have different relationship and outcome; For instance, many researchers have linked risk taking, innovation, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, autonomy to all having some kind of relationship with firm performance (Covin & Covin, 1990; Hitt et al., 1997; Lumpkin & Dess, 2001; Ferrier, 2001; Kreiser et. al., 2002 and Kemp et al., 2003; Darroch, 2005; Kreiser & Davis, 2010; Blackford, 2010 and Stambaugh et al, 2011).

In conclusion to this chapter, entrepreneurial orientation and business performance relationship has received a lot of attention from many forms of organizations and has been studied by various scholars. Steaming from these considerations, many researchers have theorized the numbers of firm level of entrepreneurial behaviors as the tendency of engaging in high risk, innovative, and proactive behaviors that is positively related to organizational profitability and growth (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Zahra & Covin, 1995; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Lumpkin & Dess, 2001; Wikilund & Shepherd 2003; Covin et al, 2006; Naldi et al, 2007; Kellermanns et al, 2008; Ireland et al, 2009; Morris et. al, 2009; Soininen et. al, 2011 & Petuskiene & Glinskiene, 2011). Meanwhile, these relationships vary across studies. Because some studies found that businesses that adopt a strong EO perform better than firms that does not adopt an EO (Covin & Slevin 1988; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Wikilund & Shepherd, 2003: Rauch et al, 2004; Wikilund & Shepherd, 2005; Awang et al, 2006; Okpara, 2009; Nan-Chen et al, 2007; Frank et al, 2010 and Kreiser & Davis, 2010) while other studies has also reported lower or weaker relationship between EO and performance (Zahra, 1991 and Stam & Elfring, 2008). Many research literatures has emphasized on these relationship between EO and performance: Although, most studies appeared to have shown some organizational and environmental factors to have influence on entrepreneurial performance (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Lerner et al., 1997; Solymossy, 1998; Awang et al, 2009; Carsson & Pavelin, 2010 and Gomezelj and Kušce, 2013). The next sections described female entrepreneurs, the importance of female entrepreneurship as well as factors which influences the decision for many women to start-up a business.

### 3 FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship has become a significant source of personal employment for lots of women across many nations: as the sizes, number and types of female owned business has been going through significant changes in various parts of our economy. Although, there has been a disagreement by some scholars that the intensity of female participation in entrepreneurial activity is considerably lower than that of their male counterpart (Langowitz & Minniti, (2007). But, a recent report by GEM, (2012) the percentage of female and male total entrepreneurial activities with innovative products and services by regions shows that women innovativeness in business are on the rise, especially in regions such as US and developed Europe women entrepreneurs have higher innovation than their male counterpart: Indeed, in Sub-Saharan Africa 22%,male 23%, Mid Asia female 23% male 18%,Latin America/ Caribbean female 24% male 26% Asia Developing; female 17% male 22% Asia Developed; female 23% male 22% Europe Developing; female 25% male 25% Europe Developed female 32% male 32% USA female 36% male 33% Israel female 25% male 33%. Female entrepreneurship has described and identified as a most important factors for innovativeness, strength and for the creation of employment opportunities (Orphan & Scott, 2001). Female entrepreneurship has made significant contribution to the development of the world economy, particularly in middle income countries (GEM, 2007). Another GEM report also stated that 104 million women in 59 nations represent more than 52% of the world population with 84% of world GDP has started and managed new business organizations. Thus, these women entrepreneurs make up between 1.5 % and 45.4% of the adult female population in their various economies and 83 million of these women across regions of the world ran businesses they had lunched in the last three and half years. These women together make up 187 million representing the contribution of women worldwide in entrepreneurship and business ownership (GEM, 2012).

Majority of studies has been carried out with regards to female entrepreneurship. In this study, the importance of female entrepreneurship trends across Africa has compelled me to develop a systematic literature review on

this topic. The objective of this study is to explore factors influencing the performances of female entrepreneurs. And the aim is to understand common factors influencing the performance of Female Entrepreneurs in Africa.

Previous review by Ahl, (2006) reported that several research articles on female entrepreneurship reveals the contrary in spite of intensions and inconclusive research results on female entrepreneurship there is a tendency to recreate the ideas of women as a being secondary to men and women's business becoming less of significance or at best being complemented. In her studies she discusses what research practices caused these results. Although she suggested new research directions that do not produce women's subordination but captures more richer aspects of female entrepreneurship. Mirchandani, (1999) highlighted on the issue of female entrepreneurship in conjunction with feminist theory on gender and work; he explored the ways in which research on female experiences of entrepreneurship focuses on identifying similarities and differences between male and female entrepreneurs. Mirchandani, (1999) continued by emphasizing on the criticism of the female entrepreneurship representation on the eyes of scholars. He argues that, scholars have criticized and made desirable the representation of rising female self employment on a number of dimensions. He continued that the available knowledge on female business ownership could be enhanced through the expression of two basic issues: such as fundamental in the development of categories which prioritize female entrepreneur over sexual dimensions of social class) and the ways in which the link between gender, occupation and organizational structure are differently affected by female and male business owners. Another notable research literature that depicts female entrepreneurs was written by professor Birley, (1988) and it is titled "*Female Entrepreneurs: Are they really any different*"? In this studies (Birley, 1988) explains some of the motivation of individuals female entrepreneurs, family background, education and work experience as a distinct form of employment that can contribute to both the decision to start a business and the choice of market and environment within which a business can be operated.

Although, majority of studies concerning female entrepreneurship has focused more on the individual characteristics, personality traits, and the environments, as well as the differencing gender of the entrepreneur and that typical personality of a successful entrepreneurs are male (Collin and Moore, 1970; Mills, 2003; Birley, 1988). However, researchers have differentiated male and female entrepreneurs in term of personal background, entrepreneurial motivations and other psychological traits (Brockhaus, 1982; Begley & Boyd, 1987 and Sexton & Bowman-Upton, 1990) and sociological dimensions (Buttner, 2001; Brush, 1992; Lerner et al., 1997; Mirchandani, 1999; OECD 2004). Business and organizational characteristics as well as trends in business ownership DeCarlo & Lyons, (1979) and Brush, (2002) and organizational performance determinants (Kalleberg and Leicht, 1991) and other management styles by (Buttner, 2001 and Lincoln, 2012) issues and challenges as well as other dimensions (Halkias et al, 2011; Kalleberg & Leicht, 1991). Others such as venture size choices and growth concerning female entrepreneurs are also discussed by the-

se scholars (Morris et al, 2006; Carter & Allen, 1997 and Gundry & Welsch, 2001). The next section discusses the reasons why women choose to become entrepreneurs.

### **3.1 Female Entrepreneurs = Reasons for Business Ownership**

The importance of female entrepreneurship and its benefits to the economy of the world has been growing and developing and there have been a great number of empirical findings concerning female business ownership. Nonetheless, researcher has concentrated much on the motives that drives business startups of many female business processes. However, Hisrich, (1990) and Hisrich et al, 1996) revealed a similar factor which contribute to female business ownership. He argued that there have been similar motivations between male and female with independence and the need for personal-achievement has always ranked high among the list of varying factors that motivates men and women to start a business. Other studies that identified occupational flexibility in terms of hours worked, have been identified as one of the important factors that encourage female entrepreneurship (Ducheneaut & Orhan, 2000 and Orhan & Scott, 2001). Other researchers such as Cromie, (1987, p259) and Marlow, (2005) explained the female self-employment phenomenon as an offer of more solution for those women whose careers has been interrupted by child bearing. In other words, FE's has provided assistance in providing better flexibility to accommodate domestic tasks that has overwhelmed women. Although, self-employment has been related to represent the breakaway of women in their place of work because of discrimination and advanced "glass ceiling" (Capowski, 1992; Davidson and Copper, 1992). This argument is further supported by Kuratko who emphasized that the main motivation or reason for FE's choices of personal-employment was due to better flexibility and ability to combine their jobs and family responsibilities (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 1992). Other theoretical backings on entrepreneurship have mainly been associated with normal realistic approach to entrepreneurship research. McClelland's, (1961) theory of need to achieve and (Rotter's, 1966) theory of locus of control explains how an individual can be seen either as external or internal. However, the external controls expectation of an individual that is associated to learning and the motives that support the activation of ability in being determined. Thus, the external control has the ability to impede learning expectation and encourages conformity. In other words, locus of control can be described as a concept that is directly related to the notion of attribution and attribution can be seen as individual's beliefs regarding causes of success or falling performance. However, (Littunen, 2000) emphasized on an internal control which is always expected to be connected with entrepreneurial spirit.

Meanwhile, McClelland's theory proposed that individuals with a stronger motive on need to achieve will often find their way to entrepreneurship and

succeed better than others as entrepreneurs. Other studies, has noted push and pull factors as the reason why women become entrepreneurs. Brush, (1999 and Buttner & Moore, (1997) gave more emphasis on these push and pull factors as necessities such as unemployment or joblessness, glass-ceiling, redundancy, economic downturn, and financial reasons such as inadequate family income, dissatisfaction with being employed or the need for independence, need for achievement, desire for profit wealth, personal advancement, self fulfillment or actualization, social position, power and the desire to become personally importance, and the ability to be a boss or manager of oneself (Collerette et al, 1990; Lee-Gosselin et al, 1990; Ducheneaut, 1997; Hansmark, 1998 and Glancey et al, 1998). Capowski, (1992) argues that strong desire to control financial destiny, he also emphasized that other motives for business ownership included self determination, financial dependence and belief in a "better way" of doing things. Thus, the situation are a clear-cut selection of pull and push factors and these factors are often combined (Brush, 1990). Moreover, Hisrich & Brush, (1985) revealed that the development of women entrepreneurship has been mainly associated to push factors, such as frustration and boredom. However, there have been several motives why women or men can become entrepreneurs. In essence, entrepreneurship can be seen as a family thing; because, some persons get into entrepreneurship as result of being in a family that already existed entrepreneurs at the same time entrepreneurship has been a way of life for the individual already; therefore entrepreneurship as an option does not mean it a pull or push factor. According to Orhan and Scott, (2001) push and pull factor reveals most entrepreneurial motivations because the pull factor has been identified as one of the particular features of the female entrepreneurs and the push factors has been shown to reflect on the flexible schedule of the family such as caring role that has been placed on mother in mothering their children can actually make many women to stop or abandon their careers than men. Because of these factors Orhan and Scott, (2001) has emphasized on the influence of socio-cultural context and suggested that differences in motivation between men and women maybe due to social factors. A female-specific push factor motivation can be identified behind dissatisfaction with salaried jobs' which is one of the first sight gender- neutral characteristics. However, they stressed that most research about women has linked dissatisfaction on women to glass-ceiling that has impedes several women executives from reaching more senior executive positions. A further gender specific attribution has been suggested as motivating female entrepreneurs that is also contained within the "dissatisfaction within the salaried job", while women have discomfort with a dominant masculine business culture, characterized by hierarchy such as the "old boys" network and the use of directive power as opposed to the "Soft" influence based on consensus and empowerment of employees which has been perceived to be more feminine (Orhan and Scott, 2001). Studies suggest that several women businesses begin with basic differing reasons than the male businesses. However, it's argued that many male entrepreneurs start their businesses for the purpose of growth and development while women are often motivated to meet personal



goals (Steveverson and St-Onge, 2005; Richardson, Howarth and Finnegan, 2004 and Walker, 2007).

Generally, Buttner, (1993) laid emphasis that men and woman motivation for business startups were quite in a similar way, but that the difference in their motivation was that men often cited economic reasons while women cited family needs. But, Scott, (1989) noted that men and women had very different priorities as entrepreneurs. Men are likely to emphasis on being their own boss while women have the tendency to place emphasis on personal issues and satisfaction. However, some of the push and pull forces pushing women to become entrepreneurs are mainly based on economic and social reason a) Push forces includes [unemployment, inadequate finance or family income, salaried job, glass ceiling, redundancy, recession, workplace discrimination, organizational stress] while the pull forces includes [employment security, stable income, wealth control, owned job, profits, financial dependence, owned boss, social status, self dependences, self actualization, and greater flexibility to work, self determination]. The author of female entrepreneurship literatures has always emphasized on the challenges and reasons why women become female entrepreneurs face, even though, it is important to take into consideration these problems and challenges. But, no one is describing how these women how these women entrepreneurs has been successful for decades; we all know women invented disposable diapers, stoves, refrigerator, dishwasher, ironing board, liquid paper, electric hot water heaters, medical strings, fire escapes as well as chocolate chips etc. the success of the women entrepreneurs needs to be recognized in other for them to become more successful and growing accordingly. But, it is also important for most women entrepreneurs to recognize their abilities to become successful, I believe women are generally very whole-hearted, natural and giving, multi-tasking, women have a lot of attributes that not every male has. It is important to be determined in achieving something. Women need to be more motivated in their vision in doing extra ordinary. They need to collaborate and mentor each other to be strong in business as well as being equipped with the right tools for good business, growth and performance. The next section discusses the characteristics of these female entrepreneurs.

### **3.2 The Characteristics of Female Entrepreneurs**

Firstly, who is a female entrepreneur? Many scholars have defined women entrepreneurs as enterprises which are owned and managed by women having economic financial interests: in other words, women entrepreneurs are merely entrepreneurs who are females, Thus a female entrepreneur maybe defined as a women or group of women who startup a trade to manage and run business activity. Female business ownership is reported to become mostly concentrated on the areas of retail and personal service industries, until recently women were discourage from seeking career and educational experiences that would provide them with managerial and technical training necessary for success in their

business; such as finance, manufacturing and R&D. But, despite recent gains, female entrepreneurs are relatively rare in these traditionally male dominated industries (Hisrich & Brush, 1985 and Hisrich & Bowen, 1986). In general, women entrepreneurs encounter numerous challenges in meeting their day to day business operations; especially for women who enter into an industry, for either in managerial or entrepreneurial role is generally exposed to various environmental constraints.

Many articles has discussed the characteristics of female entrepreneurs and has concluded that there are no significant demographics difference found between the characteristics of male and female entrepreneurs (Sexton & Bowman-Upton, 1990; Buttner 1993; Brush & Bird, 1996 and Hisrich et al, 1997). Nevertheless, studies have shown that both female and male entrepreneur's posses the characteristics required for good and effective performance of their ventures. Personal characteristics that expressed needs and values of female entrepreneurs were reported that female entrepreneurs differed significantly from other females in general and minority female entrepreneurs and non minority entrepreneurs had much in common on the basis of background characteristics (DeCarlo & Lyons, 1979). Women entrepreneurs in general share the same motivations with their men counter-parts (Kerka, 1993). nonetheless, among these personal characteristics of female entrepreneurs, there have been two distinctive variables among these female entrepreneurs' characteristics; education and professional work experience. These variables have been found to play a very significant role in the creation and the successful survival of new ventures (Bowen & Hisrich, 1986 & Fischer et al., 1993). In terms of quality of education received, Female entrepreneur's shows to have experienced some slight disadvantages, while some are college graduates, and better educated than female executive managers (Bowen & Hisrich, 1986; Sexton & Kent, 1981; Mascon & Stevens, 1982; Hisrich & Brush, 1983 and DeCarlo & Lyons, 1979). Also, the benefit of education in business startups has been directly linked to have a constructive influence on an early business entry and on the future of the business performance because, education and personal skills has a strong relationship between each other. However, personal work experience has been considered by various scholars to have a major framework and impact on the capability of women to start a business and improve performance (Hisrich & Brush, 1988 and Fischer et al, 1993).

The long history of the world has always told us how our mothers were many centuries ago: women were only described as a group of people who only engaged themselves as mothers that are restricted to their homes in other to care for their families and children. On the present day, women are not only self-sufficient in their lives, also most of these women have embraced modern lifestyles as they strive for sovereignty in many aspects of their life's such as politics, education, socially and economically. Even so, many have the ability of expressing their own taught, ideas and displeasures of life. However, scholars argue that the discussion female and male entrepreneurs have always focused on measuring the both genders attributes and features (Brindley, 2005). Other

scholars argues about women entrepreneurs struggle to oppose “glass ceiling” as they desire authority and control of their own career and professional abilities (Kephart & Schumacher, 2005). However, the amount of information and facts available today by various scholars’ suggest that the rate of female business ownership has been growing dramatically: Thus, these scholars all agreed that the rate of female entrepreneurial activities are considerably lower than those of their male counterparts or male entrepreneurs (Minniti et al, 2005; Verheul et al, 2006 and Langowitz & Minniti, 2007). The gender imbalance in our society today has created a lot of negative thoughts about female entrepreneur’s ability in many aspects: in general, there has been a lot of notion around the male dominated societies that women are weaker than their male rivals. It is assumed that women are too emotional in their business dealings, narrow-minded on risks and with important business issues: in other words, self confident cannot be determine for a woman to become a successful entrepreneur (McClelland et al, 2005, p. 85). But, this does not stop the fact that many female entrepreneurs today are role model, inventors, and business women all across the globe doing the same thing their men counter parts are doing that are successful. Many talented woman entrepreneurs are now found in many areas of the industries today especially in the area of management, women have proven to be very good managers, even though, there has been much emphasis on the differences between male entrepreneurs and female entrepreneurs and the problems they face in participating in entrepreneurial activities: Female entrepreneurship is believed to have motivated various entrepreneurs across the developing world; and it has become extremely significant for many individuals, communities and countries (Minniti and Naudé, 2010). Women entrepreneurs are described as women who engage themselves in complete entrepreneurial actions. Because they assume risks in combining resources in variety of ways as well as taking advantage of every identified business opportunities in the environment through which the production of goods and services (Okafor and Mordi, 2010, p, 44). However, they are described for having very distinctive individual characteristics such as flexibility, innovativeness, creativity, strength, responsibility, management ability, and credit risk abilities (Okafor and Mordi, 2010, p, 44). In other words, these women can be successful in any business environment, because they possess good criterion for business success and performance.

There is no doubt concerning FE’s abilities on their contributions to major economic driver’s and development across the world today. Nevertheless, FE’s are seen as the main drivers in the creation new-firms across the world. Scholars had always investigated the trends in business ownership of men and women. However, they discovered that women are owned businesses are at an infant level and are often found to be operating newer or smaller businesses which in turn make their annual turnover and employment sizes low (Carter, 2006). But, self employment in business ownership rate among start-ups varied among men and women entrepreneurs globally. For examples in the, UK employment rate of women comprises of about 31.6 million females (50.8%) com-

pared with 30.6 million males of (49.2%). In comparison with other five nations, the UK female self-employment rate (7.8%) lies just above the average (7.6%) above the USA, France and Ireland, but below Germany and Canada. The female TEA rate in the UK (3.9%) is lower than the average (5.3%) above Germany and France, but, below the USA, Canada and Ireland (Carter, 2006). In 2009 the EU has about 32.5 million self-employed people, and it created about 14, 9% of the total employment rate in the EU level which includes male 69.6% against 71% in 2000. Often, many entrepreneurs make a conscious decision not to hire any employees; instead they remain solo self-employed (Verheul et al, 2010). Female entrepreneurs lag behind male entrepreneurs on key start-up businesses. According to Mitchell, (2011. p1) women entrepreneurs in USA are behind men in building high growth companies. In other words, women entrepreneurs being on the same balance with their male counterpart will help create more economic strengths and more job opportunities as their capability in high growth companies will be a great economic resource. In Nigeria, the majority of female entrepreneurs are married with children, representing 68.2%, 15.0% were widowed and 12.8% were single, with other findings showing that 4.0% were either divorced or separated from their spouses; with some of these women entrepreneurs who had children identifying that they faced challenges balancing their dual roles as entrepreneurs and mothers (Lincoln, 2012, p 4). Knowing that most of these factors have limited much of female business from moving forward; because starting and operating a business involves many notable risks, especially the fear of failure as it has been reported that much female business has failed due to normal business problems and family problems (Rajani, 2008, p. 277). On the other hand, factors that motivated most women and men to begin their own businesses were due to their determination for sovereignty (Shane, Kolvereid and Westhead, 1991) and a desire for self-actualization (Brush, 1992) other external factors also influences their choice to start-up a business were all different for both men and women.

Thompson & Hood, (1991) argues that recognition and helping others were listed among what motivated women to start up businesses more than men. Others authors like Still & Timms, (2000) wrote more about women way of being flexible as well as their work-style in way of being more ethical and customer oriented in managing their businesses and as well as meeting their organizational social objective. Various studies have highlighted social capital, social skills, or other competencies such as human capitals can help to strengthen female entrepreneurs on the part to success in their entrepreneurial ventures (Carter, 2000; Burt 2000; Baron and Markman, 2000; Moore, 2004 and Gonzalez-Alvarez and Rodriguez, 2011). Most scholars argue that women can have few or less related access to networks and social capital than their male counterpart (Burt 1998, 1999; Davis and Aldrich, 2000; Yetim, 2008; Aaltio-Marjosola, Kyrö and Sundin, 2008 and Gonzalez-Alvarez and Rodriguez, 2011). However, several female entrepreneurs wished to achieve senior or superior positions in the society where there are more men than women (Orhan & Scott, 2001). Other well known international research organizations like ILO, (2003) reported some

major factors that motivate or pushed women into business were revealed to be because of support of their families, employing own self and to create personal incomes. Nonetheless, information's concerning women entrepreneurs source of capital income has been reported by scholars as personal finance savings, family loans and community group payment and micro financing (Haan 2004; Chea 2008; Gudz, 1999; OECD, 2012).

In general, women start their own enterprise because of some of these factors which limit their capacity to start large ventures; for instance women are said to have low levels of self-confidence, little access to practical information on how to develop and manage their own business. Most of these factors are very common in the developing countries where there are inadequate market conditions, poor regulatory barriers and no access to start up finance (Rajani, 2008). However, it is true these factors mostly apply to mainly emerging markets as entrepreneurship has become the main source of revenue and self independence for many women across the world.

In relations to this study, female entrepreneurship performance is an idea relating from entrepreneurship itself with the management of female business ownership (Allen & Truman, 1993; OECD 1993; Aldrich, 1989; Lerner, Brush & Hisrich, 1997; OECD, 2004; Gundry, Kickul & Iakovleva, 2006; Teoh & Chong, 2007; Jamali, 2008; Wube, 2010; Mitchell 2011 and ILO 2012). However, from the research perspective, it is a mix together of micro and macro level of research on entrepreneurship. This is because, many literatures on female entrepreneurship has also find its roots on micro-level entrepreneurship such as exploration of many distinctive characteristics of female and male entrepreneurs in terms of motivation, personality traits, or experience, education or other attributes of their companies such as size, goal, capital access, management and performance. However, much attention has been focused on a wave of interest to investigate the influence of macro level factors on entrepreneurship and female entrepreneurship (Baughn et al, 2006 & Verheul et al, 2006). However, these factors are both important in providing a comprehensive understanding in the context of female entrepreneurship as well as a consistent integrative multi-level research design which was advocated by (Davidson and Wiklund, 2001 and Bruin et al, 2007). Bruin et al, (2007) argues that the determinant of female entrepreneurship lie in a complex interplay of micro, meso and macro level factors and Anna et al, (2000) argues that gender differences have been documented on a micro level in relation to self perception, and opportunity recognition Eckhardt & Shane, (2003), decision making method Baker & Nelson, (2005) and network structures and networking behavior (McManus, 2001). The truth remains that, there is an increase in the number of research literatures regarding FE's performance. And it has given researcher the ability to understand the forces that surrounds every business situation and the influences it has on the performance of FE's across the globe. The next section will discuss general factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs across the world.

### 3.3 Factors Influencing the Performance of Female Entrepreneurs

Ahl, (2006) research has made notable recommendations concerning a more effective entrepreneurial research to go beyond essentials of empirical research in relation to genders. However, she argues that more researches on genders were on the organizational level factors. Nonetheless, problem, issues and challenges of FE's has been reviewed extensively by various academic scholars of different countries of origins. Ahl, (2006) emphasized that scholars have focused more on organizational level factors.

Kalleberg and Leicht, (1991) studied and discussed factors affecting new venture performance. They examined the reasons why some firms are more successful than the other in men and women businesses in South-Central Indiana. The studies observed organizational structure, performances, owners attributes using macro characteristics in describing organizations and their environment; they found out that businesses headed by women are more likely to go out of business than those owned by men. Other factors that affect the businesses of women was revealed to includes women's smaller sizes of business, lack of experience, and their concentration on the least profitable industries were among many factors which makes women's business not to perform very well. This is because it is said that small business will generate small income and will turn give little financial success (Loscocco et al, 1991). Other studies by Cooper et al, (1992) summarized the experience, education, occupation of parents, gender, race skills and contacts, management skills, knowledge, know-how as well as financial capital are the most visible resources for better entrepreneurial goals and strategies. Factors influencing performance has been studied by Lerner, Brush, and Hisrich (1997) examined individual factors affecting Israeli women entrepreneurial performance which were grouped into five different variables such as (social learning, human capital, goals and motivations, networks, demographics, and environmental factors). It is important to note that today's business environment has created several ways and strategies in promoting and establishing of female business across the business world: But indeed, some factors have hindered women's ability to establish their businesses in a manner that men's business do. Because women do not perform less or earn less because they are women: instead, lower financial performance would be expected because society treats women differently, and because women entrepreneurs having different approach to entrepreneurship and management are different from their male counterpart (Lerner & Brush, (1997).

Loscocco et al, (1999) studies investigated some factors in gender differences in sales and income of men and women owned businesses. They categorized these factors into five sets of variables such as [human capital, business context, business characteristics, owner's attitude and personal situation]. In this study they summarized these women generated less income because most

of them lacked human capital, work experience, skills and the ability for individual ownership, also personal characteristics such as level of education, mental ability, and proper decision making process are all factors involved in better business success. Family situation is also an important factor because this shows the physical and emotional support of the family members in managing the business. Business characteristics reflects the about the business features, the organizational context and structures (Loscocco et al, 1999). Other studies identified many other factors which can influence the performance of business such as the entrepreneur's rational approach to employee or interactive style as well as forms of support from others in their working environments are all important factors (Buttner, 2001). Moreover, the entrepreneur nature of specialized background, entrepreneurship capability and preferences: such as cultural/traditional, values, religion beliefs and honesty other factors includes the entrepreneur's ability to access information (Makhbul, 2011). Another literature also reviewed personal factors which affects performance of entrepreneurs in SME's in South Western Ontario. Thibault et al., (2002) proposed that personal factors such as the entrepreneur's demographics such as gender, age of the entrepreneur and business dependency and other three related business factors such as bank financing, technology and number of employees as a major important factor that contribute in sales performance in SME's. Other scholars also found that human capital, work experience and financial capital has played a significant role for the factors affecting the lower survival rates of profits, employment and sales.

Fairlie & Robb, (2008) discovered that female owned businesses are less successful than male owned business because women have less startup capital, as well as requires human capital acquired through prior work experience, other evidences includes that women work fewer hours and they have preferences in their goals than their male counterparts. A literature concerning factors affecting performance of SME's in Malaysian manufacturing industries has also noted various factors to have affected SME's performances effective entrepreneurship, appropriate HR, proper use of marketing information, and the application of information technology (Moorthy et al, 2012). Other factors motivating women to become entrepreneurs in UAE was government financial support as well as other important factors such as self fulfillment, knowledge, skills and experience, relationship to spouse/ husband are all necessary in starting up a business (Naser et al, 2009). Other scholars also noted financial independence, decision making, market and informational networks as well availability of startup capital, skills and responsibility towards their children the main important factors to become self-employed (Hossain et al, (2009). Many scholars have found the glass ceiling factor to be the main fundamental reason why women are forced in the decision in becoming entrepreneurs (Moore & Buttner, 1997; Orhan & Scott, 2001; Weiler & Bernasek, 2001; ILO, 2003; Mattis, 2004; Winn, 2004; Lockwood, 2004; Pallard, 2006; Jamali et al, 2006; Patterson 2007; FAMILONI, 2007; Tan, 2008; Jamali, 2008 and Madichie, 2009). Other entrepreneurial internal factors such as self-efficacy, risk taken have been discoverer as

factors which have been useful to overcome challenges in the success of some Iranian female entrepreneurs (Javadian & Singh, 2012).

Brush, (2000) previous empirical research has mainly focused on factors influencing the performance of female businesses of which some data's are very scares and difficult to obtain, even though "Brush" argument about gender differences in SME's remained generally unaddressed by social scientists and that the majority of studies has disregarded gender as a variable interest or have excluded female subjects from their design. Moreover, Brush & Hirsch, (2000) generally accepted the notion with other scholars that male and female differs significantly on influence on their business performance. They argued that the performance of gender differences have not been fully exploited among small business owners. Other scholars emphasized on the importance of gender differences in our present economy: In other word, they argued that gender has a strong impact on the performance of any business because gender has a lot of factors affects in the formation and implementation of our business strategies (Boohene et al, (2008). However, studies done by Habib, Roni, & Haque, (2005)<sup>1</sup> had also mentioned social, economic, religious, cultural and psychological factors which affect the origination and success of female entrepreneurs.

A recent literature review of women entrepreneurs from developing countries by De Vita et al, (2013) suggest that evidences of factor influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs has rooted itself from social structural dimensions; such as cultures, values, that affected these female entrepreneurs varies across national origin. They argued that some of the "recurring" themes emerging from each and specific geographic regions. They emphasized on the availability of training in basic business skills and many difficulties in access to networks and business supports systems, as well as the social segregation of women and the lack of societal legitimating to act as an entrepreneurs. In fact, they suggested and emphasized the need for specific training programs for the development of female entrepreneurs even though they assume that these may be applicable in some part of the world. The next section gives a more details of factors which influence the performances of female entrepreneurs that were explored by previous researchers.

### **3.4 General Factors Affecting Female Entrepreneurs Performance**

The entrepreneurship of women has become the back-bone of many families today across the world. Therefore, there has been a lot researches which has examined factors which affects female entrepreneurs in both developed and developing countries. Lerner et al., (1997) studied some of the impact of social

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<sup>1</sup> Habib, W. M., Roni, N. N., & Haque, T. (2005). Factors affecting women entrepreneurship in India: A multivariate analysis. *Journal of Business Studies*, 16(1), 249-258



structure which affects female entrepreneur's performance in non OECD countries: targeting Israeli women business performance. These factors were mostly associated with economic and social learning theories in ways that can improve the performances of female entrepreneurs. However, it has been argued that economic factors the ability to create an important effect on the entrepreneurial future of any business ventures in gaining a substantial significance. In other words, (IFC, and World Bank group, 2011) argues that women with a good attitudes of prudence in economic issues has the power and ability to transform the life's of their families and children for better development, at the same time reinvest their profits and resources on their children's health, education and nutrition. The next section will give details of factors influencing female in general

### 3.4.1 Access to Loan and Finances

Assessing finance is one of the fundamental means in which entrepreneurs use to pursue growth and development opportunities in their businesses: in other words, IFC is one of the major financial organizations that give access to FE's in business. It has been revealed that female entrepreneurs started their business with lower level of capitalization, access to finance as well as smaller proportion of debt finances than their male counterparts (Cartier, 2000; Bruin et al, 2007 and IFC, 2011). Several female entrepreneurs lack access to loan and finances. According to a research investigation in the 1980s its include that women lack access to get hold of start-up finances, proper financial management, and development of effective and efficient marketing and advertising plan (Pellegrino & Reece, 1982; Cowling & Liu., 2011)<sup>2</sup>. Financial access to women has been limited by non financial barriers such as legal and regulatory environments, good infrastructure, and personal abilities such as age of the entrepreneur and education or skills (IFC-World Bank Group, (2011). Thus, these barriers are thought to affect both male and female business owners in any business environment. Financial institutions feel uncertain about the entrepreneurial abilities of women. Buttner and Rosen, (1988) revealed that loan managers are influenced by sex stereotypes regarding credit request of male and female entrepreneurs, because they rated women among the high risk compare to their male counterpart. These financial organizations set impractical and difficult securities to receive loan to women entrepreneurs because they assume that women had greater limitations in accessing personal savings, interrupted work histories and lower pattern of payment (Carter & Kolvereid, 1997). However, scholars like Wube, (2010 cited; UNIDO, 1995b) on evidences of repayment interest rates of women being larger than men. Other issues were reported as dis-

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<sup>2</sup> Pellegrino, E. T., & Reece, B. L. (1982). Perceived formative and operational problems of rural entrepreneurship in Europe: A research framework and agenda. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 27(2), 25-32 & Cowling & Liu., (2011) BIS; Department of Business Innovation and Skills: Business Growth, Access to Finance, and Performance outcomes in the recession: University of Exeter Business School.

criminatory attitude of banks and other informal ending organization towards obtaining formal credits. In other words, it has been surveyed that women entrepreneurs are likely to have taken out loans with the terms becoming less favorable. However, this is particularly an issue of concern for many female entrepreneurs who want to grow their business, because in many countries studies reveals those women entrepreneurs are more likely to face higher interest rates, and too required of collateral on a higher share of loan and shorter loan repayment time (IFC-World Bank Group, 2011). Other scholars, Bulsara & Pandurengan, (2007) stated that there is existence of gender bias and general distrust towards women's credit worthiness, because at times bankers perception towards women, rather than financial as a result of financial consideration; especially in the cases of poor women whose experience with bank has been very discouraging. Often banks requires collateral guarantee as primary determination for credit ratings, rather than viability of projects. Other factors are the fact that some female entrepreneurs are less educated, at the same time lack information on securing loans which makes it more difficult for them to access funds and in most cases they lack inheritance rights. However, in some nations women are legally permitted to right of ownership as well serving as a source for the needed collateral or property to secure loan. Nonetheless, there has been different associations linking sexual discrimination and financial support, often they're described as a continuous gender relations which contributed to barriers may leading to long-term underperformance of female firms (Marlow & Patton, 2005 and Carter et al, 2001).

### **3.4.2 Access to Market**

A study by OECD, (2006) has critical outlined some number of factors that has weakened the position of women's economic activities and access of markets are (a) unequal rights and responsibilities of women in the most families gives men the authority as the sole provider of the home gives the man the responsibility to return cash and other needs: another words these may apply only in some countries of the world where gender division of labour within household underpins the basic differences in the rights and responsibilities of men and women. (b) Fertility and reproduction among women is a major factor that makes women to enter and exit the labour market more often and makes women's to have lower job time and lesser job skills than men consumption pattern. It is also assumed that becoming a mother confers a women certain responsibilities which can restrict a women's movement in participating in labour market. (c) Gender social norms vary across countries; and it has a strong influence on men, women work and working environments because some tasks and jobs are often considered to be appropriate for men or women. Thus these norms are thought to influence women's access to productive assets and ownership of wealth: for example in many region of Africa where men where men holds formal rights to land ownership while women's land rights are contingent upon her as a mother or wife: I argue that, the legal frameworks now in

most African countries has been amended to allow the women to get proper access to her rights on the conferment of marriage to a particular man or family. In other words, this reason gives her the right of ownership and is respected base on her children and a proper way of a legitimate civil marriage will also give her the ability to access her rights in the community as a widow or as women (OECD, 2006). The condition of FE's has been struggling in obtaining access to newly developing markets due to lack of appropriate needed contacts (UNECE, 2004). However, Birley et al, (1987; Lumpkin and Dess, 1996 and Owens, 2007) thought that these women entrepreneurs lacks knowledge, skills and expertise that are necessary for the new emerging markets. Therefore, these processes have proved to be complex for these entrepreneurs in receiving access to markets that are beneficial for their goods and services. Female entrepreneur are most at time not capable to handle marketing and production of their products. it was reported that most FE's are not exposed to international markets, which makes them lack knowledge about international marketing acceptable standards for consumers, at same time the high cost of developing new business contacts and relation in a new country may become a barrier to several FE's: whereas, some women face sexual harassment, discrimination that may have them being restricted on their quest to travel to make business contacts Wube, (2010 cited; UNECE, 2004)<sup>3</sup>.

### **3.4.3 Access to Education (Training)**

Education and training in entrepreneurship has been linked to better the performance of entrepreneurs, because it's seen as the most fundamental factor for efficiency and growth for every business performance. Reijonen & Komppula (2007) argues that an entrepreneur can be successful if their personal abilities such as skills, motivation, and attitude are somehow related to each other. Many research articles have noted the fact that women entrepreneurs are less educated. In other words, lack of appropriate education and training lack managerial experience, personal management skills and experience required to manage or start a business making it difficult for them to succeed in their business as their male counterpart in performance. Others, argues that the method of training and education programs may vary across context because some program may emphasis on practical issues of knowledge and theoretical development: because knowledge, skill and attitudes are the main essential attribute of an entrepreneur: while formal education may be become an advantage (Gibb, 1987 and 2002). However, some scholars argued that these reports may have

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<sup>3</sup> (Wube (2010 cited: UNECE .(2004). "Women's Self Employment and Entrepreneurship in the ECE region", background paper prepared by the secretariat for the Regional Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies, Geneva, 28-30 January 2004.

been exaggerated Birley et al, (1987) and other scholars suggested that few women occupy managerial and administrative positions but these women are highly educated and all well trained of which they make 50% of all university students including business administration students Lerner et al, (1997). Meanwhile, ILO, (2004) reports the main obstacle hindering the increasing women entrepreneurial activity as lack of affordable technology, training and or low level of technology.

The ability for entrepreneurs to have the necessary training expertise in a given area of business will give the entrepreneurs the opportunity for a greater advantage for a better business performance. In other words, acquiring education and training is more difficult for women than men, because most female entrepreneurs has other responsibilities such as family which requires a lot of time and efforts. They are making it hard to acquire formal or informal kind of trainings (Wube, 2010 cited; UNECE, 2004)<sup>4</sup>. Gender plays an important role in some part of the world. For instance, most cultures in Africa, Asia and Arab countries where the female gender as seen as secondary, some families due to poverty still prefers the male child to acquire education over the female child or dictating some kind of education or skill the female child. All these, are contributing factors that can hinder a female child's future in getting a proper education and training for a specific business area (Wube, 2010 cited; UNECE, 2004)<sup>5</sup>.

#### **3.4.4 Access to Networks**

Female entrepreneur are unable to access support networks because of some difficulties they encounter during startup processes. Buttner and Rosen, (1988) assert that most of the difficulties they face in not getting access to networks was because of most women are victims of sexual discrimination. Other obstacles and problems reported were FE's social position and network (Naser et al, 2009). Other scholars emphasized on lack of finance and credit, lack of business and financial planning training had been mentioned as the factors which influence the performance FE's. They advice for development and growth for female entrepreneurs on ways getting access to seminars on financial issues, management issues, marketing as well as ways of seeking assistance from professional experts, colleagues and friends in building up better established formal and informal networks (Hisrich and Brush, 1984). Other factors that hinders FE's from gaining access to networks include less business contacts, government bureaucracy, and less bargaining power of women has lim-

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<sup>4</sup>(Wube, (2010 cited; UNECE. (2004). "Women's Self Employment and Entrepreneurship in the ECE region", background paper prepared by the secretariat for the Regional Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies, Geneva, 28-30 January 2004.

<sup>5</sup> (Wube, 2010 cited; UNECE (2004). "Women's Self Employment and Entrepreneurship in the ECE region", background paper prepared by the secretariat for the Regional Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies, Geneva, 28-30 January 2004.

ited the growth and development of female businesses. Many literatures suggested most FE's business is concentrated on the small business areas which makes their concentration on the smaller business sectors has limited their access to better professional organizations such as unions that will give the platform of establishing their right and responsibilities, and other specialties in accessing other business networks to help their businesses information's to be updated. Nonetheless, other existing contacts and networks are males dominated because most networks assisting female entrepreneurs seems to have activities for development of female business owners after working hours which seems to become a difficult time for female entrepreneurs (Wube, (2010 cited: Mahbud, 2000)<sup>6</sup>. However, there are fewer or less majority networks where women can enter and gain confidence and exposure in moving forward her business. In other words, lack of network can deprive FE's business of the awareness and exposure needed in achieving growth to succeed in business. Few invitations are sent to woman to be part or join trade mission's delegations, as a result of combined invisibility of women dominated sectors or sub sector and of women as individuals within any given sector (Wube, 2010 cited; Mahbud, 2000)<sup>7</sup>

### 3.4.5 Access to Policy Maker

It is always important for the policy makers to recognize the needs and benefits of female entrepreneurship. Government can create more favorable policies to help female entrepreneurs in creating more jobs, for example; government in the EU has tried in getting female entrepreneurs with the necessary support they needed in various sector of their industries. However, female entrepreneurs have little or no access to policymakers or representatives to advocate good policies that will favor their businesses. Often big companies and men can easily influence policies to suit them because they have access to policy makers who are seen as their peers. Most women tend not to belong to, and even less reach leadership positions in mainstream business organizations limit their contributions in policy making decisions through lobbying and negotiation. The lack of access to information's by female entrepreneur's limits their contribution during policy making (Wube, 2010 cited; UNECE, 2004).<sup>8</sup> Thus, governments around the world should encourage female entrepreneurs to create more jobs opportunities by creating favorable policies for FE because this in

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<sup>6</sup> Mahbud, U.H. (2000). Human Development Centre, Human Development in South Asia: The Gender Question (Oxford University Press)

<sup>7</sup> Mahbud, U.H. (2000). Human Development Centre, Human Development in South Asia: The Gender Question (Oxford University Press)

<sup>8</sup> (Wube, 2010 cited; UNECE, (2004). "Women's Self Employment and Entrepreneurship in the ECE region", background paper prepared by the secretariat for the Regional Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies, Geneva, 28-30 January 2004.

turn will help reduce reliance on foreign labour in most advanced countries and also create jobs for developing countries (OECD, 2008).

In conclusion on this section, the performance of FE's is hindered by various factors that affect businesses. For instance, in emerging markets like Africa, factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs are many and some related to mostly socio-economic, cultural and environmental factors. Factors such as effect of trade liberalization, low access to land and other tangible assets, lack of adequate infrastructure, lack of finance, lack of information and networks, low education, inadequate managerial and marketing skills, lack of strategies in building a business, lack of technological know-how and access to policy makers and gender or sexual discrimination etc. In other words, women entrepreneurs in developing nations lack adequate resources in building a better business to succeed

## 4 METHODOLOGY

In line with systematic literature review methods, the previous chapters on entrepreneurship and female entrepreneurship review was following the traditional review process by using different databases for searches of literatures and books using Jyvaskyla University Nelli portal: find e-journal Business Source Elite (EBSCO) ABI/Inform(Proquest), Emerald Journals, Science Direct, JSTOR, SAGE, African Journal Business and Management; as well as the main research data-bases using Jyvaskyla university Cisco network system to access Google Scholar. On using these databases (a) a selection criteria was made to restrict unpublished articles in order to enhance the quality of this thesis: Other restriction followed unpublished books such as conference papers and book chapters (b) article must be published between 1990's to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013 and the literatures must be officially written in an English language. Then, the search followed the type of keywords such as "female entrepreneurs" or "women entrepreneurs" or "factors affecting female entrepreneurs" as well "factors influencing performance" others include written abstracts on female entrepreneurs: then the next stage of search was followed by searching on the managerial aspect of female business keywords (performance of female business) as well as managerial profiling of each article paper by using these keysearch words: such as "firm performance" or "entrepreneurship" or "women owned businesses" company, "venture or firms performance".

After applying these steps of analysis and strict inclusion/exclusion of measure on some less quality material. Finally, I selected papers that were sampled and they were about 220 research papers: As the main methodology of this research is to use systematic literature review in finding the common factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs across the African continent. Then, the chosen 220 papers were then additionally examined according to a very systematic criteria for the exclusion and the selection only articles published for some certain countries in Africa as well as picking mostly articles from sub-Saharan Africa with different nationalities across Africa. Also

article must contain some kind of factors influencing entrepreneurship and female entrepreneurs in these 10 countries. In doing so, some of my thinking emerged by focusing on specifically those studies which topics are on female entrepreneurs in these countries. so finally I got, total of 68 articles which were 22 articles from Nigeria, 8 articles from South-Africa, 6-Ghana, 6-Tanzania, 5-Kenya, 5-Ethopia, 1 from Uganda & 1 from Somalia and 10 conference papers from OECD, ILO, World bank, GEM e.t.c Then, finally the papers were clustered according to the distribution of the articles by journals, and year of publication then followed by articles colleted from each region of Africa, which ranges from East, West, and South African countriesas well as type of keywords search on search for articles on a on specific subject area. The next section shows more details in forms of tables. Table 1 and 2 below shows original sources of articles and by year of publication and Journals Published as well as regional or each country's papers.



| Journal & Year   | 1990     | 2001     | 2003     | 2005     | 2007     | 2008     | 2009     | 2010      | 2011     | 2012      | 2013     | Total     |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| International Management Review  |          |          |          |          |          | 1        |          |           | 1        |           | 1        | 3         |
| International Journal of Social Economics  |          |          |          |          | 2        |          | 1        |           | 1        | 1         |          | 5         |
| OECD   |          |          |          | 1        |          |          |          | 1         |          |           | 1        | 3         |
| International Journal of Business and Social Science   | 1        |          | 1        |          |          | 1        |          |           | 1        | 1         |          | 4         |
| Journal of Small Business and Enterprise   |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | 1         | 1        |           | 1        | 3         |
| International Journal of Emerging Markets  |          |          |          |          |          |          | 1        |           |          |           | 1        | 2         |
| International Studies of Management & International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research |          |          | 2        |          |          | 1        |          |           |          |           |          | 1         |
| International Journal of Social Economics  |          | 1        | 1=2004   |          |          |          | 2        |           | 1        |           |          | 5         |
| International Labour Organization (ILO)  |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |           |          |           | 2        | 2         |
| International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management                                       |          |          |          | 1        |          |          |          | 1         |          |           |          | 2         |
| Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development   |          |          |          |          |          |          | 1        |           |          | 1         |          | 2         |
| Journal of European Industrial Training  |          |          |          |          |          | 2        |          | 1         |          | 1         |          | 4         |
| Journal of Enterprising Communities  |          |          |          |          |          | 1        |          |           |          |           | 1        | 2         |
| Journal of Business Management   |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |           | 1        | 1         |          | 2         |
| Journal of European Developmental Research   |          |          |          |          | 1        |          | 1        | 1         |          |           | 1        | 4         |
| Journal of African Business  |          | 2        |          |          |          |          | 1        |           |          | 1         |          | 4         |
| Journal of Modern African Studies  |          |          |          |          |          |          | 1        |           |          |           |          | 1         |
| Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM)  |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | 1         |          | 1         |          | 2         |
| African Journal of Economics and Management Studies  |          |          |          |          |          | 1        |          |           | 1        | 1         |          | 3         |
| Education, Business and Society  |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | 1         |          |           | 1        | 2         |
| World Development  |          |          |          | 1        |          |          |          |           |          |           | 1        | 2         |
| Equal Opportunities International  |          |          |          |          |          | 1        |          | 1         |          | 1         |          | 3         |
| Gender in Management   |          |          |          |          |          | 1        | 1        |           |          |           |          | 2         |
| Management Research Review   |          |          | 1        |          |          |          |          | 1         | 1        | 1         | 1        | 5         |
| <b>Total Articles = 68</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>68</b> |

Distribution of article by  
Regions of Research

|   | <b>Distribution article by<br/>Country of Research</b>          | <b>Type of Article or name of Article</b>        |
|---|---|--|
| West Africa:                            | Nigeria 22 papers<br>Ghana 6 papers                             | Factors affecting Female entrepreneurs in Africa |
| East-Africa:                            | Tanzania 6, Ethiopia 5,<br>Kenya = 5, Uganda 1,<br>Somalia 1    |  |
| South Africa:                           | South Africa 8 papers,<br>Zimbabwe 3papers,<br>Botswana 1 paper |  |
| <b>Sub-Sahara Conference<br/>Papers</b> | OECD, ILO, GEM,<br>World Bank etc. 10 pa-<br>pers               | Female Entrepreneurs Africa                      |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>68 Paper and Articles</b>                                    |  |

On the analysis, of these articles, most of the articles are based on empirical research, while some others are in form theoretical reviews which mostly were found in some of the multipurpose disciplines articles data bases such as Business, Economics, and Management, Psychology and Sociological researches discussing mostly issues concerning female entrepreneurs in Africa or Sub-Saharan African countries. Other issues mostly found were challenges, obstacles, problem facing female entrepreneurs in Africa, as well as socio economic and cultural issues facing female entrepreneurs. Only some few studies have either highlighted some factors which affect female entrepreneurs in these countries. Thus, only one study has mainly focused on the performance of female entrepreneurs in an Ethiopia organization and another study by (ILO, 2008) reported on Kenyan small businesses has identified factors affecting female entrepreneurs. Other studies have mainly focused on financial, cultural, political, leadership family responsibilities and educational problems as the main issue affecting female business ownership across these African nations. The next section will discuss in details about entrepreneurship in various African countries context.

## 5 FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

Since the global economic recession of 2000 the region of Africa has become one of the fastest growing regions in the world. And it has witnessed many crucial economic drivers for examples high GDP growth rates as well as the development of women and entrepreneurship (African Economic Outlook 2012). However, Female entrepreneurs contribute greatly to the economic growth in Africa: indeed, some of these growths have been recognized in a recent report that indicate the highest number of TEA rate in the world to be from the region of sub-Saharan African countries. For example in Zambia 41% Ghana 37% Nigeria 35% and Angola 32% (GEM, 2010). In other words, these African women entrepreneurs have followed the path of the western civilization in finding solutions on how to solve some of African problems through entrepreneurship. Women entrepreneurs are increasing being recognized across various African countries and they contribute significantly to the growth of their nations. According to the percentage of female business ownership across African continent, in Tanzania both urban and rural women account for 68% percent of all businesses. In Nigeria, the specific percentage rate is difficult to obtain because they are grouped by various areas of their business participations in many industries. Studies by Kitching & Worldie, (2004) stated that in agriculture 48%, managers 21%, education 10%, trading, retailing and finance and services 6%. In other cities such as Abuja in Nigerian capital area shows that agriculture 25%, education 42%, retail and trade 15% and female managers at only 5% on women who held managerial positions in finance and services. In South-Africa between 2006-2011 women entrepreneurs accounts for 44% of all local businesses. Ghana was the only country in Africa where more women are engaged in entrepreneurial activities than men with about 55% of their businesses (GEM, 2010) and in Zambia women own about 40% of all businesses (GEM, 2012). In Kenya in the micro small enterprises sectors women accounts for 49.2% of both urban and rural businesses (ILO, 2008), and in Uganda women own 39% of all businesses such as farming and small to medium-sized enterprise (IFC,

2008) and Tanzania women own 43% of all businesses in the micro small enterprises sectors (AFDB, 2005 and ILO, 2008) and in Cameroon women own and manages 57% of small and micro-businesses (International Trade Centre, 2004). Nevertheless, entrepreneurship through the eyes of many African countries are gendered in terms of access, control and finance; so some of these factors has led many women enterprises to operate in smaller or lower business sectors or in an informal sectors (UNDP, 1995) whereas, an increasing number of research suggest that economic empowerment of women maybe positively interlinked with improved family welfare and nutrition and better access to education for the female child as well as better the society and the economy of the world in reducing gender poverty.

A recent studies by De Vital et al, (2013) has described the entrepreneurship of females in the region of sub-Sahara Africa as not very well in the mainstream of the nations national economy: they argued that their entrepreneurship are only to crafts, hawking, and personal services. However, I argue, that these groups only represent the lower level of female entrepreneurs in many developing nations. Because, one of the major problems which in affects many female entrepreneurs in many emerging nations are better access the finance and the appropriate infrastructure and the environments rules and regulations on issue of free market economic principles. However, female entrepreneurship in Africa is on increase and yet still developing, for example, women in sub-Saharan Africa produce more than 50-60% per cent of food in the region (Foster, 1996). However, African main primary resources industries comprises of agriculture, minerals (oil and gas, gold, coal, iron-ore) whole sale and retails, telecommunication, transportation, manufacturing, financial services, public administration, construction, real estate, business and services, tourism and utilities others. In many of these industries are the main reasons for development and growth drivers in most African economies. In other words, the government of many African nations has made room for the reduction of conflicts in these regions has created good conditions for better microeconomic policies for prosperous business climate. And these polices have synergized the markets and giving opportunity for the privatization of many industries and lowering taxes as well as strengthening the legal systems. For instance, Nigeria has privatized more than 116 enterprises between 1999 -2010 (Leke et al, 2010) as well as making rooms for openness of trade between neighboring African countries by renewing old trade agreements with other nations outside the African continents. However, these trends has ushered in a better standard of living, new middle-class and reducing the poverty of many women across many African states, this is because women in Africa are thought to be among the least in poverty rate in the African continent (World Bank, 2009).

Meanwhile, women entrepreneurs represent enormous potentials for entrepreneurship to many African nations, because these women aspirations to become entrepreneurs are in line to create change within their communities across Africa. In general, many African nations' lacks empirical research-studies on the area of female entrepreneurship a report from the South African women

entrepreneurs network (SEWAN) in 2005 published a report on issues and challenges facing female entrepreneurs in South-Africa. The report pointed out the issues of less indigenous research studies on African FE's. Since, they lack information, limitation in background African methodologies studies as well as lack of relevant up to date-data's and appropriate instruments of measure and problems of access to African female entrepreneurs in most cultures and countries. However, the only African nation that has a lot of articles concerning female business, ownership and challenges facing many African female were studies from Nigeria, South-Africa, Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia while others countries like Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda has fewer studies. Others like Somalia, Sudan, Cameroun, Gambia, Niger, and Mozambique etc has only one research study or no empirical studies. In other words, there is need to call for more empirical studies on the area of female entrepreneurship across many African states.

However, in most African nation's women entrepreneurs are severely constrained by various factors such as lack of capital, discrimination, family and training (Robertson, 1998), inequality in education, unequal access to economic rights on access to land, finance and other productive inputs (Hendricks 2000 and Madichie, 2009). These factors were the variables which have hindered most entrepreneurial progress and performance. The next section will analyze the factors which influences the performance of female entrepreneurs in 5 African countries, which will be divided into three sub-clusters (a) West Africa (b) South Africa, and (c) East Africa) while the group (A) of west Africa will comprises of Nigeria and Ghana, and group (B) will comprises of South-Africa, Botswana, and (C ) Ethiopia.

## **5.1 Analysis of Common factors influencing the performance of African female in 5 African Countries**

### **5.2 West Africa (Nigeria and Ghana)**

#### **5.3 Nigeria**

Nigeria is situated in Western part Africa. It bordered Niger and Chad through the north, and Cameroon through the south, and Benin through the west, it's also surrounded by the Gulf of Guinea which borders Togo and Ghana by the water: with the population of over 168.8 million people and with 2.5% annual population growth (World Bank, 2012). It is called the United States of Africa with about 250 tribes and languages: with an official language of English and other major ethnic groups such Ibo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani and Ijaw. Nigeria has a very good diversity in culture across the country. Nigerian faces problems a number area for example issues of separatism from different ethnic groups in the country; in the North terrorism (Boko-haram) and from the South-resources control and from the East-Biafra. These problems are associated with the marginalization of different ethnic groups, because Nigeria has not fully practiced true federalism. Other issues are linked to the control of the country's wealth and resources. However, Nigeria has a democratically political system and has been under civilian rule since February 1999 election succession which marked the end of 15 years military rule. President Good-luck Ebele Jonathan was sworn in to take power after the death of Umaru Musa Yar-Adua in 2010. Good-luck Ebele Jonathan is currently both the chief of state and the head of the government. The system of government is democratically organized in a federal way. Although, there has been several issues in the system in practicing a truly federal system that functions properly for its citizens.

Nigeria is rich with varieties of natural resources such as Oil and Gas, Zinc Copper, Gold, Uranium, Clay, Limestone, Iron-ore, Coal, Marble, Agriculture and many others. And industrial operations are mainly concentrated on the oil and gas sectors. But, agriculture is one major industry in Nigeria that has fueled a lot of workforce across the nation. In Nigeria, Oil and natural resources are very basics for the Nigerian financial economic system, because it adds approximately 95% to the country's incomes. The (AEO, 2012) reports that Nigeria is a major oil producing country in Africa and the number 13<sup>th</sup> in the world international oil market. The economy of Nigeria has been growing steadily with an average of about 7.4% annually. And most of these growths have been visible in industries such as telecommunication, entertainment, manufacturing, retail and

wholesale services, agriculture. Although in the year 2011 growth was reduced to 6.9% and 6, 6% in 2012 and 2013. But, in March 2014, the Nigerian economy became the largest economy in Africa and the 26<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world with a total GDP rate of about \$510 billion dollars. From the year 2010 the expected GDP was at \$360.644 billion and in 2011 was \$408.805 billion and 2012 was estimated to grow at %\$262.6 but was growing at \$453.966 billion and in 2013 it's at 509.9 billion (National Bureau of Statistics February, 2014). The robust in economic growth was seen as result of various factors from different parts of the economy. For examples, growth was seen visible from different service sectors such as entertainment and telecommunications. However, the government has tried to bring down inflations through a number of areas in the economy. For example, getting hold of policies that will create an opportunity for better food cost and it achieved bringing down inflation from 13.7% in (2010) and 10.2% in (2011) and 10.1% in 2012 and 8.4% in 2013. One of the main goals of the government is to create an enabling environment for creation of job and employment of its citizens as well as to curb poverty across the country. However, several challenges facing the Nigerian economy is over dependency on oil and gas industry and lack of adequate infrastructure and corruption: thus the government has tried to promised most of these issues by addressing them in several ways for example the government has created a non independent organization called (EFCC) in tackling corruption in other to improve the Nigerian financial system and others. In addition, Nigeria is putting together all measures in realizing the millennium development goal particularly through means of providing the most important basics of livelihood for its citizens. For examples, education, health, reduction of poverty, maternal health, sexual equality and the empowerment of women and youths.

These challenges have as well created opportunities for improvement. The business environment in Nigeria is continuously picking up and improving. However, with the complex nature of things on how businesses are being carried out in Nigeria seems to need some changes in these areas such as [legal, policy issues, and regulatory frameworks]. However, all these are necessary for the growth and the performance of a business. Nevertheless, it is necessary for any economy that is growth oriented to look at all these regulatory issues to ensure that businesses survive or for businesses to flourish. One major problem facing the Nigerian business environment is that there are no consistencies policies, regulation frameworks and services from the governmental organizations in Nigerian. The government needs to build on consistence policies, for example every government does a different thing from the different one, and they do not build on the existing policy platform for continuance in business policy performance. For instance, there are no permanent ways of business registration processes, too many complicated processes than other countries across Africa.

However, even with these challenges Nigeria still remains a hub for outside investors. And one reason for this is because Nigeria compared to other African nations has a very great advantage in terms of population. Therefore, investors try to market their goods and services where there is need for higher

demand of their products. Another main issue facing Nigeria is economic issues; there is a difference between economic growth and economic development. The Nigeria economy has been growing steadily to GDP which is related to economic growth but in economic development it looks at per capita, the standard of living and the changes in the society such as infrastructural development, health and safety, literacy level, regional competitiveness social inclusion and environmental sustainability. In this consideration, Nigeria economically is growing and making more money but the standard of living is failing because there is no enabling environment for job creation, students go out of the universities and there is no employment for them. The government needs to help in creating vibrant private sectors such as the SME's MSE's and the informal sectors for the creation of employment opportunities to reduce poverty, because these sectors contribute more than 70% of the economy. So, helping these private sectors will help entrepreneurs to do business at ease and lessen some of the issues. For example, solving the problem of power supply will give a turn around to the Nigerian economy. Other sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing can be enhanced and explored to create more economic growths. The next subsection will discuss the role and the system of FE's in Nigeria.

Long before now, the typical Nigeria woman is only restricted to domestic activities; these women do not have access to tangible assets such as land or property in order to qualify for a bank loan (Halkias et al, 2011) but in this 21<sup>st</sup> century these trends are continually changing. A lot of women in Nigeria are now entrepreneurs, activists, lawyers, social workers, medical practitioners, pilots and others. These women continue to desire to be treated as their male counterpart in a world which seems to be governed by male. Female entrepreneurs in Nigeria are between the ages of 31 and 55 years old. Also, majority of them are married and have children as well as most of them had attended an academic institution and a graduate school (Woldie and Adersua, 2004). Other scholars emphasized that the educational achievement and the economic status of the Nigeria women in the physical population, is not well represented in the policy making process, more especially in issues of business and manpower development (Okafor & Mordi, 2010). These women make up about 50% of the Nigerian population and 35% are fully engaged in entrepreneurship or business ownership (Okafor & Mordi, 2010 and Gender Nigerian Report, 2012). However, with the constant change that has been shaping the Nigerian business environment has ushered in some changes that have become known. It includes the recognition of potential women as well as their involvement to the economic development of their nation (Okafor & Mordi, 2010). Thus, more and more women who are beginning to get hold of opportunities from various sectors of the Nigerian economy (e.g. farming, textile, transportation, and information and technology (Martin, 2010). According to the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics data (2010) confirm that in 2007 only 32.5% of women were employed in the (non-farming) private sector. The public sector, which is often perceived to be more progressive (it is the only area where direct public policy intervention



can effect changes in gender composition) does not fare any better. But the fact still remains that the Nigerian women are under-represented in the Nigerian economy. According to UK aid on international development report, in Nigeria women account for 49% of the total population, of which the majority of those in formal employment are men. However, the Nigerian labour markets are divided into two sub regions; the north & south while there are more women in the formal sector in the Southern part of Nigeria than in the North the rate of female entrepreneurship in the micro sector is higher in the more industrialized States of the South (36%) than in the North (23%). This suggests that, many of the opportunities for micro-enterprises are linked to the formal manufacturing sector. Also, because of limited opportunities for employment is seen as the main reason behind so several Nigerian preferred the strategy of owning their own enterprises. In other words, 43% of these Nigerian women referenced starting a business as a way of being economically active and ways of making their living through micro-enterprises. However, they cited the importance of micro-enterprises as the main source of income and as a strategic way of empowering women. Other report confirms that women in the micro-enterprise sector tend to be better educated, and that more of them report vocational and graduate education compared to men (World Bank, 2009 p. 92).

However, several factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurial development in Nigeria emerged as follows (1) the first problem is associated with social cultural problems (a) Family responsibilities has been noted as the major factor affecting female entrepreneurs in Nigeria (Starcher, 1996; Kitching & Woldie, 2004; Woldie & Adersua, 2004; & Singh, Mordi, Okafor & Simpson, 2010 and Halkias et al, 2011). Several women have the responsibilities of being a mother and at the same time a wife, of which do not allow these women to perform best in their businesses entrepreneurial activities. And most of these women entrepreneurs have up to six children which makes their responsibilities difficult. Because these responsibility has been designed in most Nigeria culture that women must take care of their family and children while men becomes the real financial provider for the home. A lots of these women entrepreneurs suffer this kind of cultural value system that has been unbreakable for many centuries. In essence, most of these philosophies are rooted in several religious ideologies which often position the men higher than the women. However, the Nigerian society has always been very hierarchical with the practices of large power distance among people is not exception when dealing with the issue of ownership and rights among men and women. For example, Nigeria has a system where the paternal rules are guided in a way that favours the male child over the female child. This is because women are supposed to be betrothed by another male from a different family which automatically makes them wife. This unevenness and male dominance over females are clearly seen in the labour market. A woman in business is seen as very independent and successful and is stereotyped won't be able to be good wives and mothers (Singh et al, 2010). Others factors include discrimination and gender-inequality, even though, many business constraints are both shared by

both sexes, but others like women has to deal with additional road block due to deeply rooted discriminatory socio-cultural norms and traditions that are embedded in the policy and legal environment with institutional support mechanisms (Madichie, 2009 p. 9). The Nigerian women entrepreneurs face different form of discriminatory attitude in the employment industry because some of the government policies on customary and religious practices have resulted in much unfavorable effect on females. Even-though the Nigerian constitution recognizes the principle law of equality without grounds for discrimination of both sexes. Cultures and traditions make women to find it hard to be accepted by their customers and their male colleagues and their customers in the business environment (Woldie & Adersua, 2004 and Singh et al, 2010).

The second factor that emerged is lack of finance and lack of support assistance. In Nigeria majority of female entrepreneurs lack access to finance and credit (Onyishi & Agbo, 2010). However, most of them are at disadvantage in meeting the required criteria set-up by most banks in gaining financial access for business establishment. For instance (Halkias et al, 2011) argues that only 10-15% percent of female entrepreneurs have access to bank loans to fiancé their businesses because they lack tangible assets to acquire loans. However, female entrepreneurs face a lot of gender inequity and sexism in effort to obtain loans (Mordi, Simpson & Singh, 2010). This is as result of banks in Nigeria operating with the method of binary loans system that hinders women from accessing fiancé for their businesses. However, another source of obtaining a business's finance in Nigeria is through microfinance, but many women lack appropriate business plan in other to obtain loans. Interestingly, with my own observation many of these microfinance banks are often inflated with a very high interest rate for the return of the loans as this factors may not improve the business performance of many female entrepreneurs. Others factors include sexual harassment, lack of support assistance such as career guidance or counseling; many female entrepreneurs in Nigeria noted that they do not have a kind of social support before becoming entrepreneurs (Mordi, Simpson Singh, and Okafor, 2010). The third main factor is poor or inadequate education and training needed to perform entrepreneurial activities. It is assumed that education has an impact on the performance of every business venture. However, Chirwa, (2008) argued that the impact of education is much more pronounced on women-owned businesses than in the male-owned business. Lack of education has been seen as major constraints that discourages many female entrepreneurs in most developing nations. However, an empirical study from Nigeria by Halkias et al, (2011) emphasized that lack of education is major issue facing female entrepreneurs in Nigeria as they are often afraid of failures. Others includes lack of knowledge on financial capital of their business, lack of information, and awareness on better business opportunities which are available for female entrepreneurs. The appropriate training needed for entrepreneurship is necessary and essential. many female entrepreneurs do not have most required training before starting a business; for example many instances that because "Mrs. A is selling Bread" and is successful: therefore "Mrs. B" wants to sell Bread too

without knowing or having the appropriate training and skills needed in selling of breads: these instance has caused many businesses to failures and discontinuance. Although, scholars argue that men tend to receive more education and training than women: which means that women have limited knowledge in operating a business, as they become vulnerable to the very competitive nature of the marketing environment in Nigeria. Thus, outside these issues, female entrepreneurs in Nigeria are often prevented from running a competitive business by their comparatively lower level of education and skills which has generally limited their access to the various support services (Woldie & Adersua, 2004 p 79).

Some of the analyzed papers also highlighted some of the important changes that are coming to both female and male entrepreneurs. For instance (Mordi et al, 2010) argue that the traditional roles which were occupied by the Nigerian woman in the family are beginning to change: because of some effect in the family changing structures and environments has forced more women to become more realistic and proactive about their business dealings as well as their functions within the society. However, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM, 2012) has noted some of the importance changes happening across. For instance, a woman entrepreneurs across many African states have been included among FE's to be given access to finance in form of loans and credits through the help of the First Bank of Nigeria. Also, the present government of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan has called on entrepreneurs to embrace an industrial revolution of the small and medium size enterprises more especially by diversifying the economy for growth and in creation of more jobs opportunities (Business Day-News, (2014). Moreover, the government has made available funds for male and women entrepreneurs to access finance through the Bank of Industry (BOI) via micro-finance. The bank of industry has also set out about 90 million naira for the for the business development fund for women entrepreneurs (BUDFOW) through an organization called Federal Ministry of women Affairs and Social Development FMWASD) to provide soft loans to women entrepreneurs (Bank of Industry, 2013). Others includes training tailored for entrepreneurs to receive the appropriate training for their business for example the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) has provided most of these services through the federal government of Nigeria.

Finally on this section, Female Entrepreneurs continues to have difficulties in doing their entrepreneurial businesses in the challenging dominated role the world had given to them (Mordi et al, 2010). However, the Nigeria society is very male dominated with numerous socio-cultural trends against women. The Nigerian culture makes the male the economic provider, emotional protector and leader (Hofstede, 1980). In my own contribution to these factors or challenges the male paternalism system in Nigeria is seen as a "No Go Area" it is sometimes only addressed when a female is very well represented as very influential and successful, both educationally and financially within a culture and her communities etc. Paternal ideologies are seen as invisible to the male dominants in the Nigerian society, even though it represents the negativity and ine-

quality. Nonetheless, Koironen, (2003) argued that paternalism may have good and strong features of protection and guardianship of family institutions, family traditions and family ownership. But realistically, the Nigerian female entrepreneurs face a number of obstacles and challenges. Scholars such as (Woldie and Adersua, 2004) emphasized that "the greatest reward of business ownership for women is in gaining control over their own working lives". For example low level of education, lack of career guidance or counseling, lack of access to resources, sexual discrimination, funding, and family responsibilities as a major restraint of her becoming an entrepreneur. According to Ademokun & Ajayi, (2012 p. 75) mentioned that some of these factors may likely cause FE's to have rigorous effect in their capability in running a business productively. For examples, in time limits, networking, or management several FE's may needs more time in carrying out their family duties. In reference to these factors it may create a boundary to FE's in appearing as not trustworthy in their pursuit for financial support from financial institutions. In spite of all these challenges female business owners' encounters, scholars such as (Woldie and Adersua, 2004) emphasized on the importance of a continuous wave of change or transformation happening in a way of decreasing gender inequalities across Nigeria has the potentials of making the nation in becoming more democratic on issues concerning women. In essence, they argued that the attitude of discrimination is common across Africa and is regarded as a traditional African attitude has caused many FE's to be less motivated about business ownership and startup.

## 5.4 Ghana

Ghana's is a country with the population of about 25.37 million people and with an annual population growth of about 2.2% (World Bank 2012). Ghana was once called "**gold coast**" is a mixture of multi-ethnic diversity with an official English language and other 75 ethnic dialects spoken across the country and major ethnic groups as Akan, Ewe Mole-Dagbane, Guan and Ga-Adangbe. Therefore, these ethnic groups share a common cultural heritage with reference to history and languages even though no part of the country is ethnically homogenous: in other words, during the colonial time these common features and attributes were among the variables that contributed to the formation of the nation of Ghana (Dzisi, 2008). However, in Ghana in spite of the various ethnic groups that makes up the formation of Ghana. The Ghanaian nation is also identified as an indigenous nation that has collective cultures which are similar to each other.

However, Ghana has a democratically elected system of government which ushers in new leaders at every 8years of leadership and since from the independence of Ghana, the nation and its leaders has been at peace and has been managing the collective interest towards the economic development of Ghana. The nation of Ghana is known across the world with its cocoa produc-

tion which has made her the second largest cocoa beans producer in the world; as these cocoas are produced from many rural district and has often brought migrant labors across the country especially in these rural communities where most of these cocoa's are produced. However, apart from cocoa, other natural resources includes Gold, Silver, manganese, bauxite, timber, rubber, fish, limestone's and diamonds etc. In 2009, Oil was discovered in Ghana, as this has been seen an opportunity towards the development of the Ghanaian economy. Although, Ghana is one nation across Africa living peacefully with one another, but one of the major problem facing the Ghanaian economy is lack of infrastructure, unemployment rate as well as problem in the agricultural sectors, for instance appropriate help needed to farmers in the area lack of farming subsidies, poor farming practices, and poor climate condition has affected most farmers in the area of food production as 70% of the country's population are dependent on farming. However, poverty and corruption poses a major threat to the country. Other issues of concern are the high illiteracy rate among the girl-child in the northern region of Ghana: but the economy of Ghana has continued to grow with the GDP rate of about \$40.71 billion and an annual GDP rate of about 7.9% in 2012 (world Bank, 2012).

Women in Ghana traditionally, are expected to function only within the domestic household units, mothering and nursing children, cooking, processing and storing food as well as managing available resources to sustain family members Dzisi, (2008). In Ghana these women make up about 50.52% of the population as they contribute significantly to the country's economic growth. In the area of labour force Ghanaian women has been for the past 15years active in the labour industry as the numbers of active participants are around 8million women of which they make-up or contribute about 50% of the economic activities with the ages of 25 to 45 years old (Aliata, Baba & Patrick, 2013). According to the Ghana Association of Women entrepreneurs (GAWE) 80% percent of women owned businesses are at micro level. Dzisi, (2008) emphasized that these women are mainly engaged in seven main trading segments i.e., trading 26%, services 21%, agro- business processing 16%, manufacturing 12% and others such as textiles and fabrics 12%, while agricultural and construction are 4%. Other scholars like (Aliata, Baba and Patrick, 2013) argues that these women are found in most typical industries such as agriculture, farming, industries such as manufacturing of garments and textiles, art and crafting. While other informal sectors like services, wholesale and retail trading women are least in the area of managerial and administrative jobs. However, the adult female literacy rate stands at about 65.9% in 2007, as most indigenous women participate mostly on farming or agricultural market produce, making of pottery, weaving of cloths and in other handicraft (Dzisi, 2008). However, Dzisi, (2008) also noted that women are motivated to entrepreneurship because of financial and personal reasons. However, the women of Ghana are making impact in entrepreneurship especially in helping their households and supporting their nation's economic activities. In this section of the article analysis on factors affecting female entre-

preneur's performance in Africa: In Ghana similar factors arise as issues facing Ghana women entrepreneurs which are mainly socio-cultural and economic factors.

The first factors that appeared here in this section is "family responsibilities" (Anu, 2005; IFC/World-Bank, & GEM, 2007; Dzisi, 2008 and Boohene et al, 2008). Dzisi, (2008) described family responsibilities as usually refers to children and unpaid domestic work which many African women are caught up in lines between business and home duties. However, the Ghanaian society has a traditional sex-role that identified the living arrangement with clear description of household responsibilities as women are trained from their childhood to behave in some certain ways in most African cultures. However, relationships are built through family membership which was inherited from their ancestors, for example family, school and friends functions as a way socialization platform as children remain the responsibility of the families (Boohene et al, 2008). Finding a balance in business and family has become a very difficult thing for several women entrepreneurs as these women has many children to care for as well as other extended family responsibilities. Others scholars like Boohene et al, (2008) argued on gender inequalities; girls and women are pushed into female stereotyped type of careers such as tailoring, teaching, secretarial work, nursing, hair dressing which discouraged many of them from entering professions in agriculture, forestry, fishing "hard sciences" as engineering and accounting as these reasons has resulted to women having less opportunities in acquiring the experiences necessary needed in operating a business enterprise to success.

The second factor that emerged here as constraint that affects women entrepreneurs in Ghana is "Access to land" (Anu, 2005; IFC, 2007) land is a very vital source of living in Africa: land is seen as a vital asset a family own. Land is a productive input that can help many female entrepreneurs to get access to basic needs as they are useful for the production of food, water and shelters. A woman access to land is seen as critical factor the total economic-expectation and the full integration of women into economic and social spheres of life in Ghana (Anu, 2005). Others noted some cultural practices regarding land and property ownership as well as inheritance and regulatory and institutional such as taxation and bureaucracies helps to hinder women's entrepreneurial progress etc. For example in the matrilineal tribes in Ghana women are supposed to be the leader in the family: however, it is common practice that men are appointed to take care of the stool and family land (Anu, 2005). In essence, these women operate in an environment with no neutral-gender as these socio-cultural norms poses significant barriers to women's development (Anu, 2005 and Dzisi, 2008). Even though, the constitutional rights of men are women in Ghana are equal but (Anu, 2005) argues that the land tenure system gives men more power as the access to these lands are often described as family, clan lands where the main ownership belong are belonged to families as men are the heads of families across Africa.

The third factor is "Access to Finance and Credit" Anu 2005; IFC 2007; According the report of UNDP, 2007; GEM, 2012 and IFC, 2007 & 2011; Aliata, Ba-

ba & Patrick, 2013 and World-bank, 2013) access to finance and credit is a major factor that constrained small business owners as well female entrepreneurs in many emerging nations. According to (Anu, 2005) women in Ghana resort to borrowing from family member and other saving such as "Susu" as well personal finance, informal loaning system for example loaning from money borrowers and traders to finance their businesses. However, other factors has been blamed for the inadequate access to finance as some many women entrepreneurs are blamed for lack of education, and too many bureaucracies involved in accessing loans and other binary loans system that requires collaterals to access funding.

The forth factor is "Access to education, skills, training and technology" (Anu, 2005; Dzisi, 2008; Boohene et al, 2008 and Aliata, Baba & Patrick, 2013) women have limited access that enables them to have formal channels that helps provide comprehensive skills and training (Anu, 2005). Several women entrepreneurs are unable to expand their business processes due to their low level of basic or essential educational qualification as well as poor access to productive enhancing technology (Anu, 2005 and Dzisi, 2008) other factors includes lack of business and marketing skills that will enable them arrange feasible business proposals.

Finally, on this section, the analyzed papers also highlighted, some important changes concerning female disparities in Ghana, modern lifestyles and western lifestyles has helped reduced disparities and nurturing between genders among urban dwellers: although most of these females are still bound on the kinship system to traditional social values that is required of them especially in assuming the responsibilities that these association demands (Boohene et al, 2008). Other findings by Dzisi, (2008) concluded that these factors, challenges and obstacles confronting female business owners in Ghana have not limited them to perform their business to success. Although, she noted most important things these FE's lack such as modern technologies, finance, environmental influences and socio-cultural obstacles. Nevertheless, the main objective of this thesis is to analyses common factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs in Africa. The next section discusses on the factors influencing female entrepreneurs in South-Africa.

## 5.5 South-Africa

The republic of south-Africa is located at the southern part of Africa, with the population of about 52.98million people (Statistics South Africa 2013), it has around 2.798 kilometer elongated from on the coastline along the South-Atlantic Oceans. In the north it is neighbored with Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe while in the east it's neighbored with Mozambique and Swaziland However, South Africa lies within an enclave called Lesotho. It is known as the 25<sup>th</sup> largest nation and 24<sup>th</sup> most populous nation in the world (South African Info, 2014; World-fact book, 2014). South Africa has a multi-ethnic diversity with a wide variety of cultures and traditions among its people. On the constitution of South Africa it has 11 official languages: which makes it these languages the highest in the world. However, the most spoken languages are of European origins which are English (British) and Africans which originates from Dutch as the language of most and colored South Africans. Nevertheless, English is the language of business as it is among the most spoken languages. According to the last population survey of 2011, the South African people are divided into diverse cultural groups with 79.2% of Black-African ancestry, and about 8.9% colored, 8.9% whites, 2.5% Indians or Asians and 0.5% others (South African Info, 2014). However, all ethnic groups are very well represented in the country's democratically political system since the end of the apartheid.

The South African mixed-economy has one of the highest rates of economic activities across Africa: with a GDP rate of about \$384.3 billion and gross domestic products units per capita of about \$6.847.395 units current price in us dollars, Gross domestic product base on purchasing power parity of country's valuation of GDP is about \$595.700 billion and Gross domestic product base on purchasing power parity of per capita GDP is about \$11.525.466 units (IMF, 2013). The main industries of South Africa economy includes agriculture which is about makes about 2.5% industry 31.6%, services 65.9% others includes mining , automobile, metals and machinery, textiles, iron, steel, chemicals etc. South Africa has many major trading partners across the world and lots of foreign direct investment, with an economic growth rate of about 1.9% 2013 and it is projected to grow up to 2.7% in 2014 (World Bank, 2013). Southern African economy has been advancing; with these growth which is among the highest in Africa: still the economy faces some challenges in the area of creating more employment for people, because the unemployment figures shows that 24% of the entire population are unemployed.

Women in South Africa women contribute significantly to economic development; they account for 52% of the entire population which is about 26.6 million women and are employed in mostly non agricultural sectors as they represent about 34.6% of labour force. However, women in South Africa are very well represented in the political system because they occupy about 42 % of the seats in the national parliaments more than in other countries such Ghana 11% and Nigeria 7% (World Bank, 2013). Global entrepreneurship report of



2003 reported a six country measures of entrepreneurial activities and female TEA value which South Africa is among the group of countries which is considered most entrepreneurial among other African continent with other nations such as New Zealand 13.9% & 9.96% Australia 9.9% & 5.6%, Canada 8.5% & 6.0%, Ireland 8.1% & 3.7% and Singapore 5.4% & 3.5% (GEM, 2003).

Nevertheless women encounter a number of challenges in South Africa because they are among the highest number in the country's unemployment data with an average of about 2.9% of the national standard. However the same report shows that men are more likely to get more employment opportunity than women irrespective of their age and race as 72.6 percent of white men are employed, 56% of white women, 42% of black men and 30% of black women (Statistics South-Africa, 2010 and 2011). Female entrepreneurs in South Africa are hard working and always seeking for better ways to transform their businesses. Although, one of the main factors that was identified to help motivate women entrepreneurs to start-up a business in South Africa and in Ireland was for their desire to create better environment for their family and their community (McClelland et al, 2005). These women's economic activities of female entrepreneurs in were also revealed in the Gauteng region of South Africa by their races as the black women are 65% of the entrepreneurs followed by the white women which contribute 49% and colored 16% and Indian women make up to 14%: and their type of businesses includes crafting, hawking, personal services and retail sectors as well as their percentages in each sector for instance in service sectors 12.3%, hospitality services 10.4% others includes food and entertainment industries of 11.2%. In skilled self employment areas are often from health and beauty services with 15.2%, fashion 8.3% other are in furniture establishment 4.2% and event companies 9.7%. Women entrepreneurs with professional skills or degree from the universities include pharmacy 1.4%, optometry 7%, pilot instructor 7% and in communication 2.8% (Akhalwaya & Havenga, 2012). But even, with these interesting facts and developments in the South African economic sectors, there still exist some gender imbalance within the economic activities in South Africa as the economy has continued to move on the part of growth. Witbooi and Ukpere, (2011) asserted that there is an enormous inequality between male and female in all sections of economic activities within the country. For instance, female only earn about 66% percent of what men usually earn in the finance and economic sector and 65 %percent in the industrial sectors of about 75% in trade and 86% in the services sector. So because, of these reasons women has been given more attention in closing the gap between men and women in intensifying more women's role in their involvement to the economy of development of South Africa. Other areas these disparities have been visible in the areas of job opportunities. For example it is stated that half all black women are unemployed and majority are employed in the social service sectors and 30% employed as mainly domestic workers as they are mainly employed as teachers and nurses. In general, black women are thought to have excelled in managerial positions even though; they only occupy about 1.2% and 0.5% of directorship positions. While in the whole country about 1.5% of all

women occupy the position in directors (Witbooi and Ukpere, 2011). In reference to factors that affect female entrepreneurs across Africa, South Africa is not an exception. The factors affecting female entrepreneurs in South Africa are mainly surrounded among socioeconomic factors (a) "Family responsibilities" many female entrepreneurs it difficulties in finding a balance between work and running a home especially caring for their children and husband (Schindehutte, Morris and Brennan, 2003: dti, 2005 and Mathur-Helm, 2006). Other includes informal institutional factors such as "family values" has influenced several female entrepreneurs because the society has continued to associate women with family responsibilities (Welter et al, 2003 and Mari, 2011).

The second factor is "Race, gender and geographic location: the statistics of economic activities suggest that there is a huge difference in gender as well as between races of black and white women including men and women entrepreneurs. Most of these factors has been blamed because of limited opportunity in the formal employment sectors as many women as well as black women working in mostly unregulated sectors as access of resources a very much between gender, race and class (dti, 2005 and Witbooi and Ukpere, 2011).

The third factor is Access to finance, women entrepreneurs reverberate for lack of financial support assistance from various financial organizations (IFC, 2006). They complained being denied access to affordable financial access due to some reasons that these women could not show any prove of their employment status, income levels, awareness of financial issues or financial illiteracy, the proximity to the financial providers, attitude towards technology and lack of appropriate and affordable product and services (Falkena et al, 2000; dti, 2005 and IFC, 2006). Female business owners in South Africa have come a long way but they come across barriers and discrimination as it has been recorded that they have better credit repayment records than men. Yet, they find it harder to raise finance than their male counterpart (dti, 2009). The forth factor is Education and training; female entrepreneurs in most developing nations lack mostly education and training that will help improve their understanding and awareness in the labour market. Training is important for the preparation of targets as well as budgets and for business performance. For example, technological training can help the business on the part of innovation and growth. Most female entrepreneurs in South Africa attend tertiary institution of higher learning (McClelland et al, 2005).

Finally, on the analyzed papers of this section, there are several evidences of changes among the South African female entrepreneurs beginning from 2005, 2009, 2010, and 2011. The government of South African has created measures in tackling the gender inequity as well most of these factors which affect women in business through a program called "Social Engineering" through the Accelerations and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGI-SA) to create greater participation of more female entrepreneurs in other to improve better economic growth in the future. However, these policies also created opportunities for more black female entrepreneurs through a program called Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and other social transformation process with crea-

tion of women networks of different kinds such Business Association and networks (BWA). The network of female business owners in South African is called (SAWEN) with the help of the government has created programs (ASGI-SA) to help enable FE's in receiving the necessary help they need in running their business ventures. For examples, these helps has been targeted in areas of entrepreneurial training which were made available in the areas of business start-up, basic entrepreneurship training and advanced entrepreneurship programs (van-Vuuren and Botha, 2010) as well as training and financial access models which have been made possible through the local authorities and better effective entrepreneurship among women (Mari, 2011 and Witbooi & Ukpere 2011). South African literatures shows a lot of changes going on in the areas of training to help female entrepreneurs, but the effectiveness of these trainings can only be felt later in other to determine their performance. However more studies will be needed to evaluate the performance of these FE's even though they seem to be active in their entrepreneurial duties.

## 5.6 Botswana

Botswana is among Africa's most stable countries with a stable economy; it is the world's largest producer of diamonds, which had made Botswana to become among the middle income countries in the world. Botswana is also one of the smallest countries with a population of about 2.004 million people as well as an annual population growth of about 1.9%. Nonetheless, Botswana is a country known for its credibility in Africa and it's free from corruption practices (CSO, 2011). Botswana is a multi-ethnic nation with people of diverse origins, its official language is the British English language, but they have other local languages like Setswana, Sekgalagadi, and Kalanga as they are widely spoken and known among its people. However, the major ethnic groups in Botswana are Tswana, Kalanga, Basarwa, Kgalagadi, Whites of European origins and 1% of other ethnic groups. Botswana irrespective of the various ethnic groups with different languages and cultures is known as an indigenous nation that has collective cultures which are similar from each other. The nation of Botswana is one of Africa's longest permanent multi-party democracies. It has a democratically elected system of government that has held continuous democratic elections since her independence in 1966. The nation has been progressive and peaceful.

Botswana is economically known across the world as one of the world largest producer of diamonds with abundance nature of animal's wild life, dams, sport or game reserves parks and others sports activities. However, Botswana compared to other sub-Saharan African nations has become the best in terms of better effective economic policies it has adopted since its independence (Irwin, 2011). Nonetheless, the strategic location and option of Botswana in doing this uniquely has made Botswana to be popularly known by people across

the world as one of the top destinations for leisure's. Its tourism business continues to flourish as it generates lots of revenues for the government outside diamond trading. Other natural resources that Botswana has include copper, nickel, salt, soda ash, silver, coal, iron ore, textiles and agriculture. Since her independence of Botswana in 1966, the country has been sustaining her economic growth rate as well as maintaining itself as one the highest economic growth countries in the world (CIA, 2014). In the year 2009 the nation of Botswana experienced a negative economic growth that affected and reduced the industrial sectors by 30% because of the global economic meltdown. Therefore, because of these issues it leads to the world reduction of demand in global diamond trading. In 2010 the economy quickly recovered with the help of the government; through its fiscal discipline and sound management practices was able transformed the economy from a poor country to a middle income country with GDP of \$16,800 billion in 2012 and annual growth rate of 5.2% in 2014 (World Bank, 2014). According to CIA, (2014) Botswana has two areas of investment services which make it the best credit risk in Africa. Because of the extraction and mining of diamond account for more than one third of the GDP, meaning 70% to 80% of export income. However, agricultural products like livestock, sorghum, maize, millet, beans, sunflowers and groundnuts but most of the rural dweller are subsistence farmers even though agricultural development is still at its very low level; but key sectors of the economy includes cattle rearing, financial services and tourism. However, one of the major issues facing Botswana is the prevalence of HIV/AIDS which poses a greater danger to its people and the economy. Botswana is rated as the second highest in the world as in the population of about 2 million people and 320,000 people are infected with these deadly diseases.

Women in Botswana are not different from other African country: they are traditionally expected to perform household functions, mothering and nursing children, cooking, processing and storing food as well as managing available resources. The Botswana Central Statistic Office, (2009) survey shows that about 56.2% of women are employed in the informal sectors and 40% of woman are self employed and early Tea rates accounts for 28 percent in 2013 and their educational levels were at 30 percent as most female entrepreneurs have secondary and post secondary education (GEM, 2012). Women are represented in their constitutional rights as the same as men. but Brown, (1983) argues that most legal changes concerning women's rights have not provided the necessary support these women needs; women lack proper economic capacity in taking full advantage of their rights for example single women may be able to have the right to land ownership, but often they lack the resources to make farming valuable as they tend to have limited means of acquiring machineries for farming.

This section will follow the review in reviewing the common factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs in Botswana. Although, there is actually less empirical research regarding issues concerning female businesses in Botswana. But in a recent empirical findings by Okurut and Ama, (2013) they described some environmental factors as key factors influencing female

SME's in Botswana. The first factor is "Access to Credit Markets" Okurut and Ama, (2013) find out that access to finance and credit is a major factor that constrained small business owners as well as female entrepreneurs in Botswana. They emphasized that access to credit market is assumed to be a big constraints for woman and youth entrepreneurs in Botswana. The issue of bank policies regarding loans as one of the factors that constraints many female entrepreneurs to access loans due to lack of collateral, such as land and properties which are mostly owned by men. They also noted that the government policy to address these financial constraint for female entrepreneurs and youths through its policies, as funding of these body in charge of female is also a major issue as requirement for obtaining loans are still very difficult for most female entrepreneurs in Botswana.

The second factor is found to affect female entrepreneurs in Botswana is "Capacity or Skill constraints (capacity building) Okurut & Ama, (2013) argued that lack of skills or inefficient capacity building is a major problem facing most female entrepreneurs in Botswana. They describe capacity building as an integral aspect of entrepreneur's development. They pointed out five training areas that can be useful to woman, such as marketing skills, bookkeeping, job training, managerial skill and technical skills. In essence, these skills can help female entrepreneurs to add more value and success in her business.

The third factor is "Governmental Regulations" Okurut & Ama, (2013); government regulations poses a big treat to most female entrepreneurs in Botswana for instance in obtaining trading licenses, women are discovered to have major challenges in obtaining a license: and this has been blamed as a result of the processes and procedures for taking too longtime in getting these licenses for instance acquisition of trading license seem to be a major problem leading to female entrepreneurs inability to secure loan from the bank since trading license is one of the requirement for obtaining of a loan.

In conclusion on this subsection, the analyzed papers in Botswana highlighted some important changes on the side of the government in helping FE's in Botswana. Also programs are tailored with the help of local enterprise authority in providing the needed capacity training to entrepreneurs. However, female entrepreneurs still lack the needed training required to boast there business and enable them manage their business effectively. Finally, the major factors facing female entrepreneurs in Botswana are varied among environmental factors. For example, market constraint has been described by Okurut & Ama, (2013) as obstacle to female entrepreneurs in Botswana such as nonpayment of goods and services supplied on credit and high competition for woman to remain in market to compete within rivals. They must improve their product quality and be innovative. However, nonpayment for supplied product can affect female entrepreneur's business performance and growth and can cause a business closure.

## 5.7 Ethiopia

The federal republic of Ethiopia is a country at the horn of Africa as it bordered by Eritrea in the north and Djibouti in the north east and Somalia in the east, and Sudan and South Sudan in the west and Kenya in the south. Ethiopia is a country with over 91, 72 million people (World Bank, 2012). It is popularly known in the world as the most populous and non-coastal nation in the world as well as the next largest country in Africa subsequent to Nigeria (CIA, 2013) and it's populate a total area of 1100.000 square kilometers (420,000 sq mi).

Ethiopia has been discovered by scientist as the oldest locations of human of life and is considered as the region of the world were the Homo sapiens came from before setting to other regions of the world since from 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC (Absher et al, 2008; Kaplan, 2008; Bloomberg, 2008) and it's also known to be having a monarchy system and the resistance for scramble for Africa among its history line. However, Ethiopia was well-known for having most of the world great powers in the 3<sup>rd</sup> of a hundred years and it was one major empire in the world to formally adopt Christianity as a religion (Munro-Hay, 1991 and Henze, 2005). This multi-lingual country has about 80 clans or ethnic groups with the majority being Oromo 34%, Amhara 27%, Somali 6.2%, Tigray 6%, Sidama 4.0%, Gurage 2.5%, Welayta 2.3%, Hadiya1.7% and Afar 2% Gamo 1.5% Gedeo 1.5% others 11.3% (CIA, 2013). Ethiopia has been a self-governing state since from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and has not been fully colonized by any foreign government, because it has been govern by kings and emperors, but later they had a communist system of government which started from 1974 until 1991 and from 1991 democracy was ushered in through a multi party system. The people of Ethiopia practice a federal parliamentary system of government that makes the prime minister the head of the government. The economy of Ethiopia continues to grow with a small GDP rate of \$41.61 billion and an annual growth of about 7.0% in 2013 and 7.2% projected for 2014 (World Bank, 2012). The agricultures sectors accounts for 41% of the economic activities and with 80% of exports of different agricultural products such as coffee, beans, oilseeds, cereals, corns, potatoes, sugarcane and vegetables.

Nonetheless, women in Ethiopia make up 50% of the population with the proportion of 28% that held national parliamentary seats and 42% share employment in the non agricultural sector (World Bank, 2012 and UN, 2014). However, they contribute significantly in the production of foods; but, they have not mutually shared the equal opportunity of development with their male counterparts: for instance access to tangible assets such as land, credit and other productive resources are difficult for women to obtain in Ethiopia.

However, their products and services contribute significantly to the growth of GDP and they are very much in the micro small enterprises (MSE's) sectors (Singh and Belwal, 2007; Wube, 2010 and Sida, 2010) as they are in line with similar trends happening within other African countries. In an empirical studies done by (Singh and Belwal, 2007) shows their demographic characteristics as

follows: out of 90 women entrepreneurs 22 were single, 30 are married, 15 are divorced and 23 were widowed as their educational level shows that 16 were illiterate, 23 completed grade 1-4, 17 grades 5-8, 21 grades 9-12 and 13 completed grade 12, as well as 68 of them had school aged children and relatives living with them and 22 did not have children of their own and among the 48 of these women had school aged children, family and relatives who depend on them. The private sector in Ethiopia is mainly influenced by the informal sector and SME's sectors as well as the micro enterprise sectors including the agricultural sectors which make women to represent 60-70% of the MSE sectors (ILO, 2005; and Sida, 2010). However, women owned enterprises in Ethiopia are mainly concentrated in the low growth sectors because they faces several constraints. In reviewing the common factors influencing the performances of female entrepreneurs across Africa; Ethiopia is not an exception that is not affected by these factors.

The first factor that emerged in Ethiopia is "Sexual prejudice" in Ethiopian especially issue that concerns the laws, and the under-development of enterprise culture, inadequate support system for business and the underdevelopment of markets and infrastructure has been blamed for these issues in Ethiopia for examples, these women think they are marginalized or treated as minors or and they have been categorized and linked to their roles as women. In other words, these reasons have forced many women's in the participation to entrepreneurship (Sida, 2010; Wube, 2010). The second factor is "Lack of Financial capital" financial access is one major problem facing many women in the MSE sector in Ethiopia (Singh and Belwal, 2007; Sida, 2010 and Wube, 2010). However, a lack of capital of finance access limits the women's ability to grow and develop her business fully: for example, a study by ILO shows how these women lack access to finance; they borrow from money-lenders, credits, loans from bank or using different traditional means of funding or as collateral (ILO, 2003 and 2005).

The third factor is lack of "Market and working premises and raw material" this problem is associated to basic infrastructure development for instance; choosing a suitable business premises that can decisively influence sales, staffs and the future growth of the business as well the business image to the customers. Underdevelopment of business services and poor public and private infrastructure as well as weak public sector support systems has weakened many women in the SME's sector in the business ability on growth and performance (Wube, 2010). Others such as lack of and raw materials will hurt the development of the business because raw materials are essential for the sustainable development of our societies. The fourth factor is 'Low level of Education and the literacy rate among women are reported to be very low with only 29% of women that are able to read and write (CIA, 2007). Many women from the rural areas are reported to be able to only speak their native language in order to carry out business activities. However, they also tend to pursue areas of employment which are gendered base for example in areas such food processing, clothing, hairdressings and other works related to agriculture such as selling of yogurts,

milk and vegetables along the roadsides of their homes (ILO, 2003 and 2005). The last fifth factor is "Family responsibilities" several women entrepreneurs are dominated with domestic activities such as food preparation, child care, and others, this is because some women tend to have an average of six children while at the same time pursuing their entrepreneurial activities which can be as result of their low performance in entrepreneurial activities (ILO, 2005 and Wube 2010). The effect of the culture in most African custom and tradition where the woman is not helped by their male counterpart in terms of domestic activities is major factor that hinders women. Thus, women are allowed to carry child caring burden alone at the same time be expected to satisfy the family, because most of the custom has given men immunity in not participating in the domestic activities which has been made and portrayed as woman's duties.

Finally, the analysis of literature on Ethiopia shows that women entrepreneurs in Ethiopia are barely surviving. They lack basic necessities as well as bear the socio-cultural and economic burden in operating their business to success. However, newly emerging literatures suggest that the government through its strategy for the development of MSE's sectors has created ways in solving the problems facing many female entrepreneurs across the country by introducing different means of helping entrepreneurs particularly, women as a main target for their goals in establishing a program through National Action Plan for Gender Equality (ILO, 2005 and Sida, 2010). Studies shows that strategies for helping women on the areas of finance have also been made available through the development of microfinance institution by giving loans and credits to female's entrepreneurs. The results of these studies shows a significant change taking place in the role female entrepreneurs in the MSE sectors as well as in the area of access to finance. The microfinance system has really helped many females' entrepreneurs in making a difference towards income and savings as well as business growth (Sida, 2010; Belwal et al, 2012 and Haile et al., 2012). The next section gives a brief description of the common factor influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs across five (5) African countries. However, the figure 4 belows shows these common factors are similar but they are unques in each countries business environment.



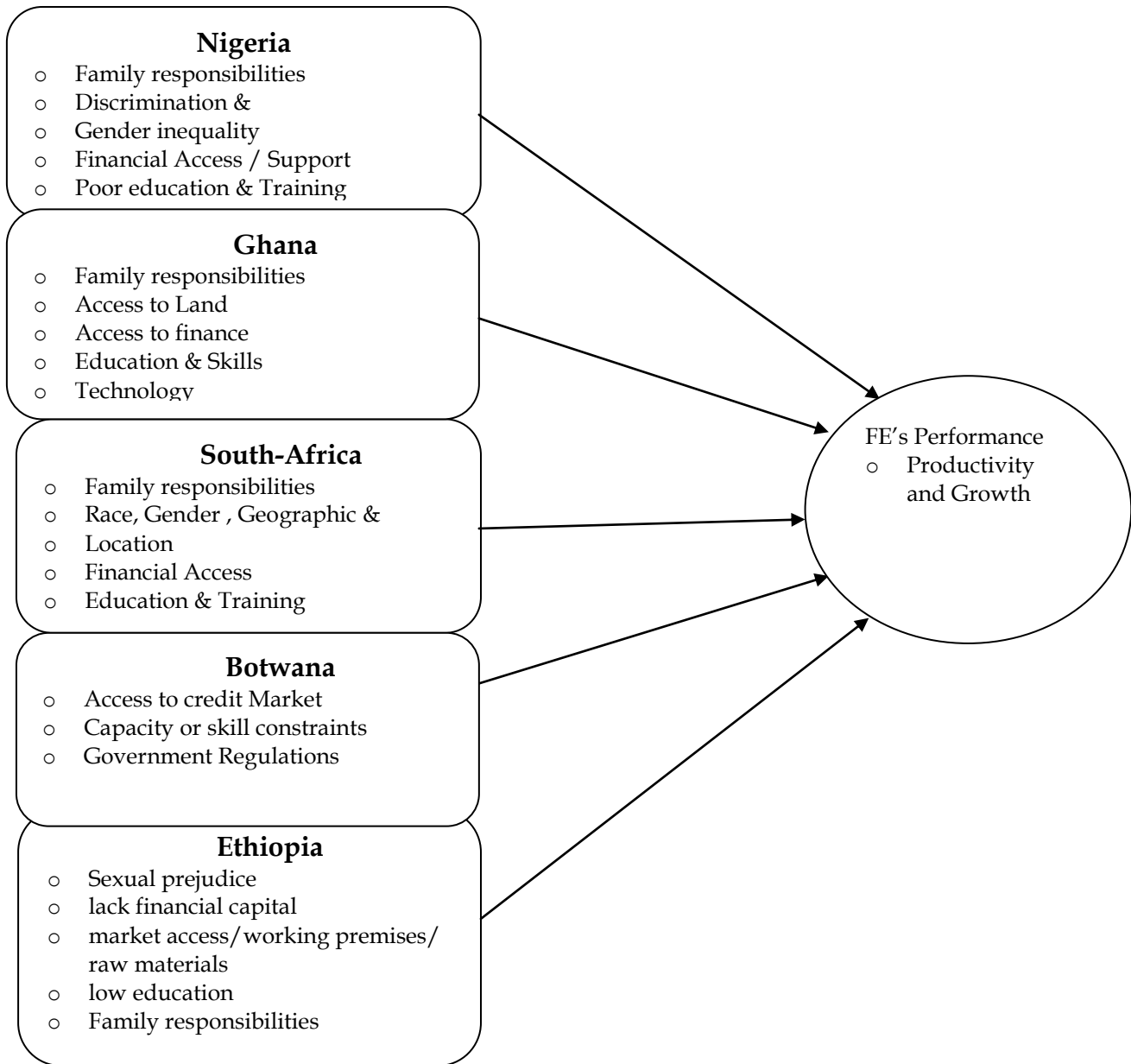


Figure 4. Common Factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs across Africa

## **5.8 Variation on Findings and Results:**

The factors influencing the performance of female entrepreneurs (FE) in African countries are almost the same: But, there are some varying factors which influence the forces that affect female entrepreneurs in the African context. For example, Family responsibilities, Religion, Culture, Education & Technology, personality profile, Access to finance and Training may effect differently in the environment of business or in the entrepreneurs country of origin.

### **5.8.1 Family Responsibility**

Female entrepreneurs in Africa in most cases are the bread winners of their families, and some of them many children and other extended family members that depends on them. In Nigeria, Ethiopia and Ghana where there is no social system that supports families and citizens of these countries: Therefore, the female entrepreneurs in that family serves as the only means of financial support system for the family. For example, most female entrepreneurs in Nigeria, Ethiopia and Ghana are being affected by the burdens of the family in caring for the needs of the entire family and also for the needs of their extended relatives. For instance, using the profits and incomes from their business to take care of their family needs instead of re-investing the profits and part of her income into the business. This in turn, affect her ability to secure loan from the bank in case of a counter-part funding, collateral or other valuable assets that will enable her obtain a loan.

In comparison to South-Africa where there is social system, and the size of the family is more smaller than those countries mentioned above. the female entrepreneurs (FE) in south Africa are at advantage and in a better position to access fund (loans) since she can re-invest her profits and income in the business or acquire assets required by financial institution of lending as collateral. In essence, these female entrepreneurs (FE) financial family responsibility can be linked to lack of social system and poverty.

### **5.8.2 Education and Experience**

The level of education among these female entrepreneurs varies, from one female entrepreneurs in one country to another female entrepreneurs in another country. Thereby limiting the less educated entrepreneur to use of modern technologies that her business required for growth. For example most female entrepreneurs in South Africa attend tertiary institution of higher learning

(McClelland, et al., 2005). This has given them an edge over other female entrepreneurs in the other part of the continent. These could be attributed to the fact that the government has a good policy on education that helps eliminate gender disparities. Unlike Nigeria Halkias et al., (2011) emphasized that lack of education is a major issue facing female entrepreneurs in Nigeria as they are often afraid of failures; as well as lack of knowledge on financial capital of their business, lack of information, and awareness on better business opportunities which are available for FE. In other words, most Nigerian FE's are less educated and some are not even educated. This could be as a result of weak policies of the female child education and also male and female disparities. For example, most families prefer to school the male child over the female child. In turn, the female child takes into entrepreneurial activities without proper knowledge and skills that she needed in running a business. In essence, this puts the Nigerian FE at a disadvantage position over the South-Africa FE's.

### **5.8.3 Technology**

The use of modern technological tools for business in South-Africa is at an advanced stage compared to Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Botswana. Based on the advancement of modern technology in South-Africa, the FE in South-Africa has more access to technologies, for example; the use of internet access (computer literate) pushes the South-Africa FE to gain access to international market. For instance, based on her use of technology the FE is able to increase her business productivity, increase communication and collaboration between the FE and her customers as well as having the opportunity for more business exposure.

The FE in South Africa has more advantage to the international market because of her use of modern technology compared to FE's in Ghana, Nigeria and Botswana. For example, most of the FE in Ghana, Nigeria and Botswana are not computer literate which restrict their access to international market as well as better effective business network. However, these hinderances in these countries could be inter-linked to lack or less infrastructural and technological development needed for a better internet access which will lead a business to flourish.

### **5.8.4 Religion**

Religion contributes to the forces that affect female entrepreneurs in some part of the world and Africa. These have led to some kinds of variance between the Christian and the Muslim FE's: for example, in the northern part of Nigeria or most Muslim women cannot engage in a formal or some entrepreneurial activities based on religious reasons; for instance, a Muslim woman cannot sell alcohol. Yusuf, (2013), argues that in Nigeria, Hausa and

Fulani women entrepreneurs can only be found in the informal sectors of the economy due to mainly cultural and religious practices. This in line hinders her ability to excel in her chosen areas of entrepreneurship because it hinders her from competing, networking in a formal business sector with other FE's. Based on these reasons, these leaves the Muslim FE's at a disadvantage position in obtaining marketing informations such as improved technology that will help her business for productivity and growth, access to finance (obtaining a loan), skills and training needed for her business to excel; for example most of these training needed for her business requires both female and male entrepreneurs to receive the training at a particular venue; which maybe against her religious believe to sit with a man who is not her husband. However, the Christian FE's are allowed to do business in both formal and informal environment. As a result, this places the Christian FE's at a better advantage than the Muslim FE's because she knows the market information (new technologies, financial informations) as well her ability to attend trainings and serminals organised in both formal and informal way (Governements, NGO's or other business organisations) with either male or female entrepreneurs (FE).

Finally, literatures suggest family responsibilities can have a positive or negative effect on performance. for example studies by some scholars suggest family responsibilities on performance have typically been explained on two basic approaches as human capital or statistical sexual disparities method (Lobel & Clair, 1992; Cowling, 2009) and demographic factors such has education, age, social class, marital status, and ethnicity (Ogunsiji, 2013). However, these approaches were argued to have linked to family responsibilities which has adverse effect on work effort particularly for women (Lobel & Clair 1992). In otherwords, this means low working effort for women means low opportunities as well as low performance. Another empirical findings reveals that women that has children are considerably lower in occupational commitment compare to women without children (Campbell, Campbell and Kennard 1994). This suggest that family reponsibility has an effect on FE's as many African culture suggest that a women must get married and have children. So child-bearing period in a woman life requires much effort to care for the children and others argues that family influence can as well have positive influence on an entrepreneurs life for example relationship with a role model, family members such as father, mother, spouse may influence the performance of an individual entrepreneurs (Scherer et al., 1989 and Teoh & Chong, 2007). Other option means that careered or educated female entrepreneurs are more likely to perform better in business than those women who are not educated. Because the educated women are always allowed by their families to practice their career to succeed. However, education, skills, training and experience in reasearch has been found to influence performance in business, for example Carter, (2000 and Cowling, 2009) found that education and training influenced performances in male and female business situations. in other words, an entrepreneurs years of experiences and the skill he or she posses can relate to positive business performance. other factors such as religion

also plays a major role in women participation in trade; for example in most male dominated societies (e.g Muslim countries) married women participate less in business startup activities as well as achieve lower social positions in their societies because of cultural restriction on their movement especially in creating an efficient business network (Naser et al, 2009). These factors are issues in mostly developing nations. Other major factors that mainly affect women is access to finance, several FE's finds it difficult in gaining financial access to start a business; (Carter et al, 2001) made an assertion that FE's have difficulties in raising a start up finance.

Most of these reason has been blamed on the social positioning of women in most African nations; for instance the collateral system that does not give women the ability to provide tangible assets in obtaining loans from banks. In essence, this put many women at a disadvantage position in getting a good association from money lenders such as banks and other financial institutions and these puts these FE's in a vulnerable position in experiencing sexual discrimination and stereotypes. In other words, these may limits her ability in starting a business which is more formal. since she lack a startup capital, as the only option maybe through personal financing.

Another issue is access to technological and infrastural development in improving their business performance. Technology has is seen as the modern day tool in enabling a business performance because, technology can be used to maintain sustainability and growth as well in transformation of business for instance in the area of costing, supply and demand performance. But most developing countries lack access to technology in helping their business to accelerate. and issue that hinders access to technology for example in most African countries infrastural development has not really gone wild. In some countries there is less electricity access which may not help businesses in performing better. The ever changing world of business environment has never remained constant: because change has always happened and will continue to happen in the market place. However, it does not matter the challenges our businesses might be facing today; but it will become something good if the business will overcome its challenges and look forward to a better future. Nevertheless, in identifying the factors which influences the performance of African FE's most of the literature suggest that these FE's are facing a lot challenges in operating their business to a successful business. However, the next section will offer some recommendations in helping African FE's.

## **5.9 Recommendation for Helping Female Entrepreneurs [FE's] in their Performances in Africa**

This paper reviewed literature on FE's across Africa; as well finds out common factors influencing the performance of FE's in Africa. The study revealed that several factors influences FE's in Africa. However, this study will therefore recommend the following principles to any possible organizations such as governments (policy-makers) and NGO's, private institutions across Africa to help FE's in mitigating these factors, for example (1) Providing FE's with effective and adequate support services: for instance creating a better awareness on the availability of services for all FE's. Others include availability of networks for selling of their products for both domestic and international markets. (2) Women entrepreneurs across Africa should be realistic in their image of entrepreneurship; for example, accepting responsibilities for their business ownership; we all know that starting a business can become a burden, but it can also be rewarding. (3) It is important for Entrepreneurs to become self confidence on their entrepreneurial abilities as well as empower themselves through individual and government training programs: for instance; skills and acquisition. (4) Educational training may include entrepreneurship studies and trainings (workshops and seminars) others may include follow-ups services through social media and other network affiliations. It may include computer and technological trainings for example the use of internet may help FE's about the trends and issues of entrepreneurship around the world and within their business environment. (5) Access to finance through micro-financing; micro finance institutions should be able to review business plans of eligible FE's as well invest in FE's who are already existing in business (6) Access to policy makers in terms of effective training in integrating FE's and FE's should be able to be recognize by their policy makers in lobbying for change in most of the laws which affect female advancement in most African society, for example laws that make women not to benefit from their communities and families in ownership to land as well social-acceptance in the society. Other recommendation will be some kind of business performance strategies for development and growth. The next section will give more details.

## 5.10 Suggestion for Strategic and Managerial Approach in Helping African FE's Performance

There has been few women studies discussing mainly the strategic and the managerial approach to female entrepreneurs, but often, it is important that women need these skills in order to succeed in any type of business. For example, women entrepreneurs need to understand their start-up patterns in terms of finance and growth. Scholars have agreed that having a business idea is a very important factor in triggering entrepreneurship (Scott et al., 1988; Wong et al., 2002; Phan, Wong, & Wang., 2002 and Madsen et al., 2003) they also agree with the importance of work experience and its help in developing a business idea can lead to business performance.

Research has shown a connection between planning in much entrepreneurial business enterprise and small businesses performance. Strategic managerial approach has also been linked to firm performance which has been studied by various scholars they highlighted a positive relationship between strategic planning and firm performance (Mintzberg, 1973; Miles & Snow, 1978; Mintzberg, 1994; Brush and Bird, 1996; David, 1999; Porter, 1980; Miller, 1981; Bracker & Pearson, 1986; Bracker, Keats & Pearson, 1988; Meers & Robertson, 2007 and Karlsson, 2009). Others emphasized on the importance of strategic planning for entrepreneurial business success (Hirsch and Peters, 2001 and Timmons and Spinneli, 2003). However, Miles and Snow (1978) stated that successful, proactive firms have the propensity to invest time in strategic planning. On the differing opinion, unsuccessful, reactive firms do not invest time in strategic planning, "Rather they Loss" in their businesses (Saffu and Manu, 2004, p.5). In other words, strategic managerial approach can help firms to make useful strategic decisions by continually being observant to the threats and opportunities arising from a dynamic business environment. Strategic management approach has been seen as a tool that enables organizations to start and influence activities as well as to implement control over its own actions. Business owners, leaders and organizations have recognized and realized the real benefits of strategies and management approach in dealing with business situations. This is because the basic principle advantage of strategic management has been to help organizations in creating better strategies through the use of the more logical and balanced approach to strategic choice. Bracker et al (1986 and 1988) found that firms that undertook strategic planning performed better financially. In essence, this may be seen as a result of solid foundation laid for the development of strategic performance. However, women owned enterprises were thought to use less strategies, for example Brush and Bird, (1996) argued that women put less stress on long-range, formalized strategic planning which shows the reason for low performance among women owned businesses. However, in terms of variation on the performance of women and men; many literatures suggest that firms owned and managed by males had more difficulty in planning compared to female owned or managed businesses: female owned

businesses grow rapidly than those that are owned and managed by men (OECD, 2000 and IFC, 2013).

Entrepreneurship is seen as part of strategic management: because strategic management in general is seen as a major connection concerned with identifying the diversity among enterprise performance in analyzing their efforts in developing a sustainable competitive advantage as determinants of their ability in creating value (Ireland et al., 2003). Nevertheless, management skills are very essential for all entrepreneurs, because, a good managerial ability maybe beneficial to the success of any enterprise. An entrepreneur must be a good leader as well as a good manager. This is because managerial approach to entrepreneurship is the entrepreneurial approach needed in a business in defining the structure and flexibility to succeed in a business (Driessen and Zwart, 2002). A manager with good entrepreneurship skills must be able to have the aptitude of familiarity in accepting the changes which often happens in the market environment and at the same time putting his or her ideas into actions. These principles are seen as essential in developing a company's growth as well as the survival of the firm (Santarelli and Vivarelli, 2006, p3 and Nkonoki, 2010). An entrepreneur with good management skills must possess some characteristics such as creativity, passionate, honesty and innovative in keeping the vision and mission of the firm on the part for continuity. In other words, for organizations to succeed companies need well organized and capable individual that are ready to serve in position to grow the company both physically and financially, because these signs that demonstrate that a company is in good position (Rowe & Nejad, 2009). Although, the problem which was associated to ongoing business enterprise management were discussed by Carter et al, (2001), they argues that previous experience, work-related experience can improve relative business performance. other scholars like (Buttner, 2001) emphasized on the management styles of women entrepreneurs as being unique pattern in enacting their roles in their own enterprises in many ways such as the use of empathy, nurturing, sharing of information, collaboration and mutual empowerment. However, these dimensions have been linked to firm performance and at the same time associated to women in diverse or similar occupations (Buttner, 2001). Other forces that influence performance in the labour market were revealed to be motivation; education and prior experience were thought to have positive effect on higher earnings in the market place (Aidis and van Praag, 2004). Others scholars such as (Nanda and Sorensen, 2008) agreed with other scholars that an individual's careers experiences can affect entrepreneurial behavior, but they argued that working with former entrepreneurs may influence performance positively. Carter et al, (2001) also emphasized on the type of (network, market and regional sectors) that are used by female entrepreneurs may be different in their business performances because their entrepreneurial abilities such as prior experiences in the labour industry, and motivations in accessing these networks and markets may positively or negatively affect their labour market performance and success. Others scholars like (De-Waal, 2007) in his literature suggested for a general performance management among people in developing



countries are necessary for a business continuance. Although, to his literatures reveals that performance management across Africa seems to be something new and still developing. In conclusion, strategic planning has been a tool used in most business startups that are successful today. And it is not an exception for female owned businesses because the market entry strategies that are used by entrepreneurs may influence strategic options and organizational outcome of the firm. The figure 5 below is what I called the entrepreneurial strategy analysis which discusses some strategies that can help female entrepreneurs in their business growth.

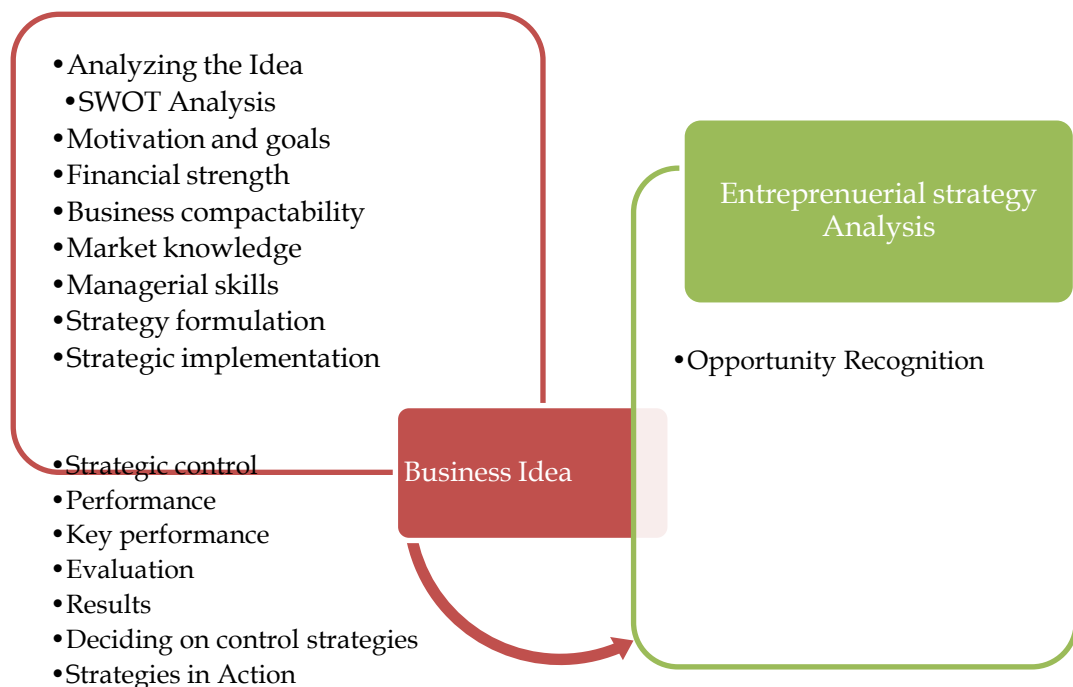


Figure 5 Entrepreneurial Strategy Analysis

In analyzing the image above, entrepreneurship has always started with the identification an opportunity. Entrepreneurial strategies are tools used often in mostly startup activities for the evaluation and understanding of internal and external strengths and weakness of opportunities and threats in all businesses (Kraus and Kauranen, 2009). However, the beginning of all businesses starts with the ability to recognize a very good business opportunity: other researchers argues that, entrepreneurial ventures start out as an idea but the venture creation process starts with an opportunity, a good idea is not necessary a good opportunity (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000) and does not necessary leads to venture creation. Singh et al, (1999) also revealed that, the process of identifying

ideas and developing the ideas can lead to bona fide business opportunities which are essential in the process of new firm formation. Though, Ireland & Webb, (2007) and Shane and Venkataraman, (2000) lay emphasis on exploiting opportunities and identifying new opportunities as an important elements on both strategic and managerial approach. Singh et al, (1999) also, affirmed that opportunity can be able to achieve its possible potential when the business environment and the skills, backgrounds of individual entrepreneurs are in line properly with the business. But, Shane & Venkataraman, (2000) had another opinion on entrepreneurial opportunities which comes in various forms; (i) the creation of new information, only occurs with the development of new technologies (ii) the exploitation of market inefficiencies which can happen as a result of information irregularity that might take place across time and geography and (iii) the response to move in the relative costs and benefits of alternative uses for resources which often takes place with political, regulatory or demographic changes. In other words, following these steps can actually move a company forward. Because, it's important when starting a business which is seen to be appropriate for an entrepreneur. It is necessary for the entrepreneur to carefully analyze its business idea as well its business environment before choosing the proper step or strategy that will lead a business to performance.

## 6 RESULTS

There have emerged in literatures both positive and negative aspect of female entrepreneurship (FE) across the world: the roles of many women across the world have changed from being a family custodian to becoming a family (income earner) for her family and her spouse. these have pushed many woman to make their own personal decision in becoming entrepreneurs at the same time, these choices has also serve as obstacles to them, in justifying their reasons for entrepreneurship. For examples; in Africa family responsibilities and access to finance has become a leading factor which has pressured many female entrepreneurs in performing better in their everyday business activities.

Although, entrepreneurship across the world has been ongoing with an increasing trends; women entrepreneurs in Africa appears to participate significantly on the part of economic development in their countries. These women are still struggling in making a remarkable progress in the improvement of their business environment as well as on the performances of their business growth. This however, point to the aspect of gender inequality across Africa. There seems to be a broadening gap between male and female entrepreneurs because several analyzed literatures suggest that women are still fighting for social acceptance in many African societies. Many factors seems to be affecting FE's performance and they include, family responsibilities, discrimination, gender inequality, access to financial, poor education and training, glass-ceiling, governmental regulations, access to technology and tangible assets such as land as well better infrastructural development were found to be among the leading factors influencing the performance of women entrepreneurs in African countries.

Generally, in the African societies men tend not to lose their privileges in standing on the male position society have created for them. But, women because of ignorant succumb to these norms. For example, in most African societies poor and uneducated women do not understand their rights and responsibilities in participating in decision making within the communities and home which directly affect their everyday life's. In other words, most women in Africa are powerless on controlling their own livelihoods and resources, because of

the forces within civil society and communities that has made gender inequality to be rooted in traditions and culture of people. Women in Africa are voiceless in the things that control their everyday life's, most at time in situation of communities and family on projects and others the men have the right to stand on behalf of women.

However, the result of this study shows that these factors are mainly associated with social structural problems. For examples cultures and values affecting female entrepreneurs in most African countries are almost the same with each theme of factors recurring at each specific country region. However, from the variation result of these factors shows that religion/ cultures, family responsibilities, education/ experience and technology may influence the performance of some group of female entrepreneurs in some country's context. However, evidences mentioned in these literatures (ILO, 2001 and 2003; Stevenson and St-Onge, 2005; IFC, 2006; Dzisi, 2008; Boohene et al, 2008; Singh, and Belwal, 2008; Wube, 2010; van-Vuuren and Botha, 2006 & 2010; Mordi, Simpson Singh, and Okafor, 2010; Mari, 2011; Witbooi and Ukpere 2011, Karlan, and Valdivia, 2011; Belwal, et al., 2012; Ingwu and Okay, 2013) suggest that many countries in Africa are taking steps towards the improvement of FE's by creating specific training programs and microfinance in helping FE's in Africa. As well as the arrival new types of female entrepreneurs that are motivated and are better educated and are free from family burdens or responsibilities (Garba, 2011; Aterido and Hallward-Driermeier, 2011 and Singh et al., 2010) In conclusion, these arguments seem to have emerged based on systematic findings on analyzed papers and literature from the database used above; particularly empirical and theoretical findings of other authors or scholars.

## 7 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This master thesis provides an extensive literature review on female entrepreneurship in general as well as an investigative research of female entrepreneurship (FE) in the African context. The, articles reviewed consist of literature papers beginning from the year 1990- 2013.

On this section this paper will discuss issues regarding FE's performance in the African context particularly focusing on the main issues influencing their business performance as these low levels of performance have been directly linked to the following issues: **Socio-cultural, Environmental and Economic factors**. The figure 6 below illustrates how the female entrepreneur is affected by these issues mentioned earlier. This is the author own contribution on how these factors can influence an entrepreneurs business. However, the entrepreneur's personal values, strategies can actually help in improving the performance of the female and male entrepreneurs in these environments. It also shows how the entrepreneur's personal values and strategies can gradually help influence their business performances in the areas of growth and productivity. However, the entrepreneur's personal economic values can help him or her in getting to the next level. For example, what is the attitude of the entrepreneurs in case of accepting risk? Or in case of a difficult economic times; because there is possibility that our values in dark time can help or determine how our business can function. However, personal values and strategies should be aligned into every company's business mission and vision in a way that will benefit the company on the long-run. Nonetheless, even in the presence of harsh economic, environmental and socio-cultural forces, it is likely that our own personal strategies and plans can help a business move forward.

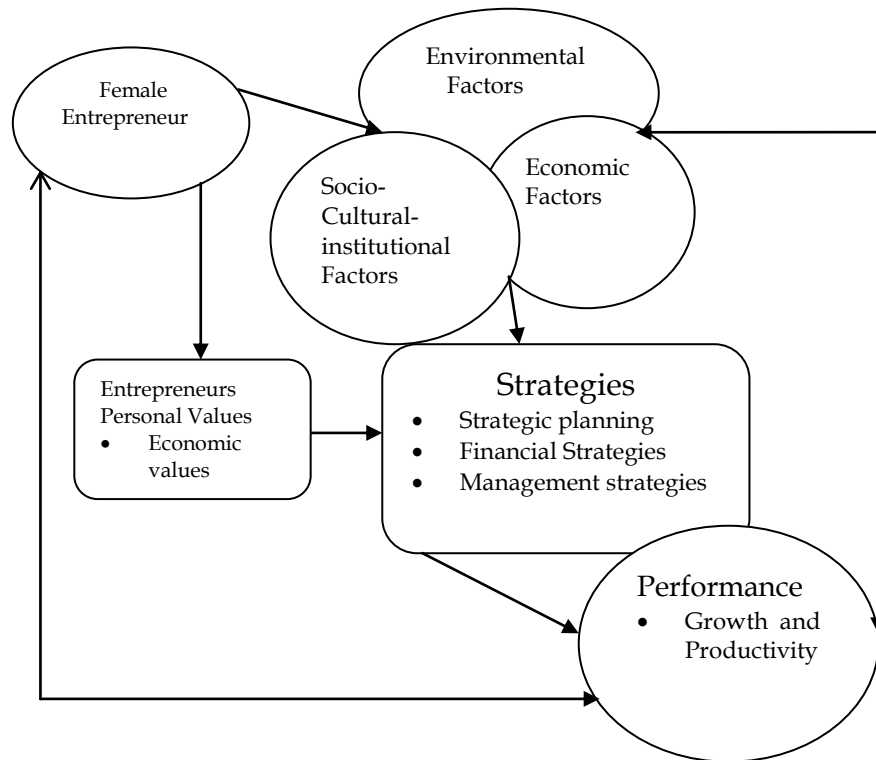


Figure 6. The relationship between the entrepreneur and the factors influencing their business performance

## 7.1 Socio-Cultural Factors

In spite of growth in literatures and articles concerning the importance of entrepreneurship in public policy, there remains the influence and effect of socio-cultural factors on the development of enterprises, which has remains understudied (Thornton, Ribeiro-Soriano and Urbano, 2011). Other scholars like Aldrich and Zimmer, (1986) highlight that entrepreneurship is surrounded with socio-cultural environment. However, a critical analysis on previous literatures suggests that Female entrepreneurs (FE's) across Africa are affected by socio-cultural factors which have a great influence on the performance of their business. For example, FE's in most Africa countries suffers from social acceptance from the society as well as from their male counterpart. This is because in most African society women have no equality in meeting up the men in term of social capital. Men have the power to own (land and housing properties from families, while women are not allowed to have ownership of this kind of tangible assets. Others factors include the inability of some female entrepreneurs not getting the rightful and adequate education and training puts many female entrepreneurs to succumb to external pressures that the society lays on them. For example

family responsibilities have been seen mainly as women's duties in caring and nurturing the children. On the other hand, division of labour between men and women can actually help many women on these circles of pressure lays upon them by the traditional roles which have been placed on women. However, scholars have laid much emphasis on the educational achievement of women; because many argues that educational shortfalls can be attributed to the difficulties faced by women; specifically women are not able to counter pressure by their husband and family members due to traditional social norms (Amine & Staub, 2009 and Siringi, 2011). Others such as Madichie, (2009) also argued about the societal structures which have impacted negatively, because the conservative socio-cultural values have fuelled socio-inhibitions by the means of traditions that has been embedded in the policy, legal environment with institutional support mechanisms.

Other issues of concern that is associated with socio-cultural factors are religion. Religion plays an important role to the development of women across many developing nations. For example, among the Muslim population across Africa it is believed that is not generally acceptable for a woman to work outside her home or to own a personal business (Amine & Staub, 2009). Other scholars such as (Naser et al, 2009) argue that these Muslim women's contribution in the labour market is being influenced by a culture which has been created to serve Islamic guidelines. However, these articles suggest that sexual discriminations are particularly more visible in the emerging nations which have connection to socio-cultural factors (Madichie, 2009, p.9; Woldie & Adersua, 2004; Naser et al., 2009; Amine & Staub, 2009; Singh et al., 2010 and Mordi, Simpson & Singh, 2010). Although, they face several traditional constraints: for example; a women in Africa is expected to fulfill her role as wife as well as fulfill her family obligation in terms of family commitment (nurturing of children and other domestic activities) which are being made to be most feminine in several African cultures.

Finally, most of these factors suggest that women in Africa are at disadvantage in performing well at their businesses because of their uniqueness in gender as well as in cultural values. Thus, women across Africa appear to be self confident, resourceful and hardworking in their entrepreneurial business. But in contrast, social support from spouse, family and friends, can really enable several FE's in achieving a well and meaningful livelihood through entrepreneurship. GEM, (2010) argues that the degree to which an existing social cultural custom can encourage or discourage individual's actions may lead to new ways of doing business and in turn lead to greater personal income wealth.

## 7.2 Environmental Factors

The environment and peculiarity of individual entrepreneurs are important in determining the opportunities which are available to them. This is because the business environment can be good or bad as they are part of the external business area which the entrepreneurs cannot change or influence. For example, these environmental factors can become major constraints to entrepreneurs in the area of finance, economic, political, legal and socio-cultural factors. However, these factors are very important in determining the success of early business activities; because even in a situation when entrepreneur possesses the required personal characteristics such as education, skills, experience, motivation: the environment may still limit the entrepreneur from taking advantage of new business opportunities (ILO, 2003; Morris and Lewis, 1991; and Ekpe and Razak, 2011). Other environmental factors that can affect female entrepreneurs in Africa include inability of the government in providing basic and adequate infrastructural services (Abimbola and Agboola, 2011). For entrepreneurs who are in both rural and urban areas. For instance, lack of reliable electricity, road, transportation, technologies and water can actually affect a business performance. The African political systems give equal right to men and women to business ownership, but in terms of environmental favorability it seems to favor more men than women. For instance the absence of working capital for female entrepreneurs shows imbalance in the area of financial access in helping FE's and this is in order with (Staub and Amine, 2009) revelation that women in Africa suffer from unfavorable environmental condition in their effort in accessing funds. These factors can actually help women entrepreneurs in advocating for a change through the regulatory institution in campaigning for ways in which FE's can access funding: for example; the availability of financial institutions as well as micro finance institutions to lend to FE's instead of using the collateral lending system which hinders many women from accessing finance. It is also vital for policy maker to amend some of the rigid laws which stops women from owning properties such as land which has been made easier for men because of their birthright as being born a male. Thus, women in Africa have not been fully integrated into the wealth and economic distribution system in Africa; they are still known to be among the poorest citizens in their nations: economic empowerment of women can help reduce poverty, child mortality rate among women and children.

Also, better economic empowerment for women can help women to be more ambitious especially in areas of businesses which are more capital intensive. Such women are able to invest more in more lucrative business rather than being only in a business that generate low investments and returns and this is in consideration to the argument of (Shane, 2003) that the type of business and industrial variation may affect entrepreneurial performance because people in knowledge industry have a higher ability in accessing information's that can lead their business to better performance in terms of the size of the market and



growth. These environmental factors can either lead to the creation of business success or failures because the environment of business can be beneficial in leading to better business performance. But, environmental factors has been interlinked to the following variables (opportunity recognition, location of business, sectoral activities and socio-political variable such as government support to the entrepreneurs are all critical factors in determining the performance of an entrepreneur or a FE's (Lerner et al, 1997). Meanwhile, environmental factors that affect entrepreneurs in literatures have been studied extensively in both developed and developing countries but in reference to Africa, these effects are crucial to the development of entrepreneurship and trade to many African nations.

### **7.3 Economical Factors**

Businesses thrives better in an economic environment that is available to them in meeting the wants and needs of their customers by offering quality services to consumers and the owners. In other words they cannot do this without the help and the supervision and the direction of the local authorities in creating a better environment for sustainable long-term business principles for the entrepreneur and the customer. For example good policy on taxes is extremely required for a better economic development of entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, men and women entrepreneurs in local and global world business can sometimes be affected by the economic situation which is general in the business environments. For instance factors such as profitability, market structure, investment climate, availability of labour and other business opportunities may influence the economic environment of a business (Gibbs, 1988). The most economic factors that affect women entrepreneurs in sub-Saharan African countries includes access to finance, availability of resources, access to venture capital, access to loan and support and training services as well as access to startup capital are the most important economic factors that influence the performance.

Other economic factors that affect FE's in Africa include inflation and high interest banks interest rate affects FE's economic businesses performances. Also, the presence of Africa poverty among some FE's may have a direct influence on their business performance. Because some of these FE's are unable to afford basic services for their families because of the absence of social system that supports some of their basic economic family needs. It is possible to believe this notion which emphasizes that having a positive business attitude has a direct influence to business performance among men and women in any given business environment. This is because, entrepreneurship itself is sometimes defined as a risky opportunity which anyone can either succeed or fail in a given circumstances. Therefore, economic factors may have influence to an extent because an entrepreneur must be willing, motivated and positive minded in doing business in other to be successful.

## 7.4 The Entrepreneurs Personal Values, Strategies and performance

In conclusion on this section, it can be argued that the social cultural, environmental and economic factors have greater influence on the performance of FE's across Africa. However, it can also be suggested that an entrepreneurs personal values such as (risk taking abilities, personal motivations, management abilities, family values, responsibilities, and self confidence, education and experience) may all have influence on the entrepreneur's performance. For example; Sarah Pavey in her quotes stated that " A persons value is a central part of whom the person is and who you want to be". In other words, "your values shapes and drive who you want to be". The ability of the entrepreneurs in recognizing their values and abilities can actually drive their performance in any business environment. Also, FE's performance can be influenced by her abilities in applying or using the appropriate strategies available to her in moving the business forward. For example the use of financial, management, and planning strategies will help the entrepreneurs in a proper management of her finances. Other types of performance strategies such as growth and productivity have been shown to be dependent on the female entrepreneur's ability to penetrate the market and development of the market which already exists. Even though, Ansoff, (1986) and Dawid, (2005) argued that new market entrants depend on product development and product diversification e.g. product development and innovation which to the best interest of the consumers. Finally, I argue that an individual female entrepreneur's own strategies can influence or lead to good business performance even in the presence of harsh economic, environmental and socio-cultural factors surrounds a business, it is however, possible to develop and grow in business in mix of these obstacles.

## 8 VALIDITY, RELIABILITY AND LIMITATION

According to Yin, (2011, p78) every study contains various claims which may be either valid or invalid, but validating these claims can possibly help in strengthening validity of the study. In this study, the systematic literature has helped in making a clear and standard explanation in understand the common factors that affect female entrepreneurs across Africa. All type of research need to ascertain the validity of its study and validity should not mean the style or the features of the research to maintain its validity (Yin, 2011, p78). The validity and the reliability of these studies centers on two specific areas for examples the literatures articles that were used are mostly empirical and methodological research finding which were published in well known journals. Such as Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice Journals, Journals of African Business, Journal of Modern African Studies, World Bank, GEM papers, International Business Journals, Entrepreneurship and Regional Development and other Journals. A valid research study simply means a study that has accurately collected and interprets its data in a way that the conclusion precisely reflects and represents the real situation that was studied (Yin, 2011, p78).

Most of the analyzed study results are crucial for the development of female entrepreneurship across Africa which cannot be disregarded; because they reported issues that concern female entrepreneurs across the African continent with literatures focusing on specific countries in helping women's entrepreneurship performance. Nonetheless, these studies discussed and talked about female and owned business as well as factors and challenges influencing their businesses across Africa; but, only few studies talked about performances of female owned businesses. Although, there have emerged some low interest in this area of research particularly on this topic of choice Female Entrepreneurs (FE's). Other weakness includes low interest in investigating and collecting more empirical data's on each country specific on gender issues. Other methods of investigating these issues of female entrepreneurship (FE's) could for example use a way narrative story in explaining the experiences faced by African female entrepreneurs (FE's) in history: A good example of this was a literature written by Madichie, (2011) on the story of a Nigerian woman called (Dr. and

Mrs. Modupeolu Faseke) the story tells the real story of a Nigerian woman who fight through the journey of time in making the story of a woman being heard by others in the society. These kinds of stories could help in understanding the real problems that faces women in Africa. Nonetheless, the results of the analyzed literatures have supported most trends that are happening across Africa today. For example, most literatures suggested micro-financing and training approach for FE's in Africa: although, these system has been in place in many countries but the ability for these organization to fully manage, control and follow up these issues concerning FE's have been a problem. However, the extent to which the literatures have been developed has shown the result to which these factors influence performance; for example many issues were covered in these African literatures; such as individual and family factors, the role of networks, political issues, micro financing, environmental, cultural and socio economic issues were all discussed in these articles with great empirical and methodological methods such as research surveys which involves face to face discussions and through questionnaires tailored to FE's. Although, I suggest more empirical research design to help in understanding more of these factors or variables in a way of more scientifically proven. However, the search and used generated results included and excluded some specific studies. The table 3 and 4 below shows more details of inclusive and exclusive studies.

**Inclusive Research Methodology**

**Measures for Inclusion**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Theoretical research studies                   | These sets of articles help provides the theory used in the papers   |
| Quantitative, qualitative, Empirical research, | These provides all empirical evidences of the existing researches on induction, deduction, testing and observation |
| Different African Countries                    | These articles enables cross country evaluation and assessment   |

Exclusive Research Methodology **Measures for Exclusion**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Research articles published before 1990   | Papers published from 1990 until 2013   |
| Methodological problems   | Studies concerning methodological issues concerning female research; eg. Stevenson 1990 was published in Journal of business ethics   |
| Student and future women entrepreneurs, women managers, women leaders, women in war zones | Articles concerning student and prospective female Entrepreneurs, Women Managers and women in oil and gas, North African women, Social Entrepreneurs, Ethnic entrepreneurs, Politicians or leaders as well women entrepreneurs in war zones across Africa were excluded |

### 8.1 Limitation and Direction for Further Research

This master thesis provides useful and positive understanding of female entrepreneurs across Africa, through the expression of factors which influences FE's in their various African countries. This study has some limitation, although the extent of this limitation lies among some African literature, for instance articles concerning women entrepreneurs in war turn African nations were not included. To overcome the limitation future research should empirically verifies the factors that has been uncovered in this thesis. This will help in understanding and ascertaining that this study is valid. Other areas of interest includes more studies on the field of female entrepreneurship across Africa for examples topic related and concerning the role of family responsibilities, access to finance, education and experience, religion and others economical factors which influences entrepreneurship among women business owners. This will help explore the role in which these factors played in influencing the performance of these female entrepreneurs (FE's). Other research areas should include the types or kinds of help or support offered to female entrepreneurs as well the methods in which these supports are guided. This is because, most literatures suggest that there is availability of government support in most African countries for FE's. There is no available literature which shows or suggests how many women are able to access these supports from the government.

From the policy making perceptive, these factors needs to be taken into consideration in attracting effective and efficient policies and programs in sup-

porting the advancement of women by creating better economic environment for the benefit of entrepreneurship across the African continent. Other research topics could also include sustainable economic development strategies for enterprises across Africa.

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