

Sustainable Business Practices Among Women Entrepreneurs: A Strategy for Poverty Alleviation

¹Dr. J. Robert Edwin Chester, ²Dr. S. Angel Raphella, ³Dr. B.R. Celia, ⁴Dr. V. Vijayalakshmi

¹Associate Professor

Department of Commerce

KLEF, K L University, Andhra Pradesh, India

²Associate Professor

Department of Management Studies

Loyola Institute of Technology and Science

Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu, India

³Professor

Department of Commerce

Saveetha College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

SIMATS, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

⁴Professor

Department of Commerce (BME)

Saveetha College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

SIMATS, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT: Women Entrepreneurs play a significant role in breaking the poverty cycle. The break the poverty cycle by self-motivating themselves and others in being successful. Entrepreneurship is a concept through which the women are given opportunities to develop their skills. It also develops their creativity and improve their productivity and hence the acquire a good income. They gain financial independence and share the contribution to their families and others. This paper deals with the opportunities developed by the women entrepreneurs in breaking the poverty cycle.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Skills, Poverty cycle, Women Entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION

Employment opportunities are created for other people as a result of women's entrepreneurship. Because it is a source of revenue, it helps to alleviate poverty. As stated by Singer (2006), poverty may be defined as a lack of income or a paucity of resources. According to Adenutsi (2009), poverty is caused by low levels of production as well as financial restrictions.

It is possible to produce new ideas and then offer them to the market. It is through the implementation of successful ideas that individuals are able to enhance the quality of their lifestyle. Women's entrepreneurship contributes to the development of societal concerns such as education, healthcare, and environmental protection. Additionally, the improved productivity and creativity might be attributed to the entrepreneurial endeavours of women. Diversity in the corporate world is something that women entrepreneurs are excited about.

Changes in people's lifestyles have been brought about as a result of shifting trends and situations in the socioeconomic sphere. When it comes to the family, women have historically been supportive. In order to provide assistance to the other members of the family, they are involved in all aspects of home administration. According to Halabisky et al. (2016), women have sentiments of entrepreneurship that need to be cultivated or nurtured. The women business owners have made the reduction of poverty their primary objective, and they are working to achieve this by improving their economic status. According to Kakwani and Pernia (2000), the

mission of poverty alleviation is to promote the human welfare of those who are impoverished. According to Nor and Ramli (2016), women are responsible for making timely repayments on loans that they have obtained from financial institutions or other sources. Women entrepreneurs have seen an increase in their quality of life as a result of the government's assistance in the fight against poverty, which has led to the development of businesses.

When it comes to improving their family's financial situation, women put forth a lot of effort. The majority of newly created jobs are discovered to be in the realm of small businesses that are controlled by women. In comparison to males, women have twice as many sources of origin as men have (Buttner, 2005). The fast expansion and development of women's entrepreneurship has been a significant contributor to the country's economic growth and the creation of new job opportunities. Personality qualities are associated with increased opportunities in the corporate world (Ardichvili, 2003). In addition, women who are internally driven are the ones that develop organisations that are able to endure and thrive (Gimeno, 1997). According to the findings of a number of studies, women entrepreneurs who get proper training have a greater ability to do their jobs effectively (Salman, 2009).

According to Hechavarria et al. (2019), female entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant component in the worldwide effort to achieve sustainability. It has the capacity to bring about a transformational change in the way that modern economic, social, and environmental concerns are addressed. Women entrepreneurs are playing an increasingly major role in the creation of enterprises that not only provide economic value but also contribute positively to society and the environment (Chen et al., 2023). This is occurring in a setting where sustainability has become a must for the success of businesses. Several different theoretical viewpoints have been used in order to investigate female entrepreneurship. A crucial framework for understanding gender dynamics in the context of entrepreneurship is provided by feminist theory. This framework differentiates between liberal, social, and poststructuralist perspectives, which are used to explain the various motives, impediments, and tactics used by female entrepreneurs (Ahl and Marlow, 2012). Social feminism places an emphasis on the variations in the value orientations and leadership styles of women entrepreneurs, who often prioritise social and environmental aims (Lewis, 2014). Liberal feminism, on the other hand, places an emphasis on equal chances and access to resources. (Ipinnaiye and Olaniyan, 2023) Women entrepreneurs are often at the vanguard of projects that directly address concerns such as poverty, gender inequality, quality education, climate change, and responsible production. These initiatives are generally formulated by women entrepreneurs. Due to the sensitivity of the population regarding economic, social, and environmental difficulties, female entrepreneurship is a challenge that is related to corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies (Harakati et al., 2024).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To evaluate the Factors behind Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs
- To determine the relationship between the various Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise
- To identify the reliability and validity of the items in the questionnaire

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were framed and tested

HYPOTHESIS I: There is no significant difference between mean ranks towards the various Empowerments of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise

HYPOTHESIS II: There is no significant difference among various Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise

HYPOTHESIS III: There is no significant relationship among Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Women Entrepreneurship makes a social impact on the society by promoting sustainable practices. Though there are various advantages, Women Entrepreneurs face several issues and problems from the society and family. Accessing resource is found to be a barrier for the Women Entrepreneurs as they do not have a good network for resources. Balancing the work and life is yet another issue as they do not get a proper support from the family and society. They limit their willingness to satisfy the family members necessity. Hence, they suffer a lifestyle of low or medium level. Their poverty level is still stagnant. This paper deals with the poverty cycle, the women entrepreneurs come across and how they overcome it.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper brings together findings from several researches, the authors have been involved in examining the dimensions of Women Entrepreneurs in Chennai city, Tamil Nadu in India. 236 women entrepreneurs in ten different sectors such as Flower/ Gift shop, Buying & Selling Clothes, Beauty care and Spa, Pappad making, Food Units, Agarbatti making, Aari & Tailoring, Creche, Xerox/Recharge, Bakery from the above city is taken as sample and surveyed with the help of questionnaire for the study. Out of 300 questionnaires distributed only 236 (78.8 per cent) were complete questionnaire and 23 (7.6 per cent) questionnaires were not returned and 41 (13.6 per cent) questionnaires were incomplete. The study is an empirical. The secondary data is obtained from numerous reliable sources like books, newspapers, journals, and through access to various websites. Descriptive research design is followed in the study.

SAMPLING PLAN

- 1) Sample Unit: Respondents from Chennai city, Tamil Nadu
- 2) Sample Size: 236
- 3) Sampling Selection: Simple Random Sampling
- 4) Sampling Techniques: Non-Probability
- 5) Sampling Instrument- Structured Questionnaire
- 6) Sampling Statistical Tools- Likert scale method, Friedman Test, Paired t- test, Correlation Analysis. The reliability of the variables was tested with the help of Cronbach's Alpha and validity with the help of Confirmatory Factor Analysis in AMOS.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In the study the various variables such as Economic Empowerment, Decision making Empowerment, Social Empowerment, Familial/ Interpersonal Empowerment, Psychological Empowerment and Political Empowerment are included. The attributes are Acquisition of assets, Income generation, Contribution to house-hold income, Upgrading standard of living Dealing household expenses, Family budgeting, Education/Career/Marriage of children, Saving, Borrowing and Investment in business, Self-identity, Getting /extending help from/to others, Responsiveness about social issues, Raising voice against social corruption, Extending Support to family members, Development in house hold amenities, Perfection in family bonding, Capability to solve family related issues, Self-confidence and Self-reliance, Accomplishment of Knowledge and Skills, Decision making ability, Capacity to tackle business threats, Involvement in local bodies, Awareness about reservation for women in politics, Knowledge on political and legal rights of women, and Alertness on political benefits for women.

Table:1 Demographic background of Employees

Demographic characteristics		n (Total=236)	% of n
AGE	Less than 30 years	9	3.8
	30 years – 60 years	126	53.4
	60 years & above	101	42.8
MARITAL STATUS	Married	152	64.4
	Unmarried	84	35.6
EDUCATIONAL STATUS	School level	37	15.7
	Graduation	170	72.0
	Post-Graduation	29	12.3

Source: Primary data

n - Number of respondents

It is clear from the table:1 regarding the age of the Women entrepreneurs that those belonging to the age group of between 30 years and 60 years (53.4 %) are higher in representation in the study and only 3.8 of them belong to age Less than 30 years. 42.8 % of the women entrepreneurs belong to the age group of 60 years & above. 64.4 % of the women entrepreneurs in the study are married and 35.6 % of them are unmarried. Regarding educational status, 12.3 % of the women entrepreneurs in the study have Post-Graduation and 15.7 % studied only school level education. 72.0 % of them are graduates.

Table:2. Frequency Distribution of Nature of Business

Nature of Business	Frequency	Percent
Flower/ Gift shop	15	6.4
Buying & Selling Clothes	37	15.7
Beauty care and Spa	31	13.1
Pappad making	5	2.1
Food Units	26	11.0
Agarbatti making	11	4.7

Aari & Tailoring	47	19.9
Creche	14	5.9
Xerox/Recharge	6	2.5
Bakery	44	18.6
Total	236	100.0

Source: Primary data

The table:2 depicts that the nature of business of the women entrepreneurs. 6.4 per cent of the respondents have Flower/ Gift shop, 15.7 per cent of the respondents nature of business is Buying & Selling Clothes, 13.1 per cent of the respondents have Beauty care and Spa, 2.1 per cent of the respondents nature of business is Pappad making, 11.0 per cent of the respondents nature of business is Food Units, 4.7 per cent of the respondents nature of business is Agarbatti making 19.9 per cent of the respondents have Aari & Tailoring business, 5.9 per cent of the respondents nature of business is Creches, 2.5 per cent of the respondents nature of business is Xerox/Recharge, 18.6 per cent of the respondents own Bakery.

HYPOTHESIS I

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between mean ranks towards the various Empowerments of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise

Table:3. Friedman test for significant difference between mean ranks towards the various Empowerments of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise

Empowerment	Before starting the Enterprise			After starting the Enterprise		
	Mean Rank	Chi-Square value	P value	Mean Rank	Chi-Square value	P value
Economic Empowerment	3.11	289.21	0.005** Significant	2.22	670.124	0.001** Significant
Decision making Empowerment	4.72			5.50		
Social Empowerment	2.26			3.19		
Familial/ Interpersonal Empowerment	3.51			4.58		
Psychological Empowerment	2.75			1.93		
Political Empowerment	4.60			3.47		

Source: Statistically analyzed data

** Denotes significance at 1% level

Table:3 depicts the mean ranking of the Empowerments of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise. Since P value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1 percent level of significance. Hence it is concluded that there is significant difference between mean ranks towards the various Empowerments women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise. Based on mean rank of Empowerments women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise, 'Decision making Empowerment' (4.72) is the best

Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise, followed by Political Empowerment (4.60), Familial/Interpersonal Empowerment (3.51), Economic Empowerment (3.11), Psychological Empowerment (2.75), and Social Empowerment (2.23). Based on mean rank of Empowerments women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise, 'Decision making Empowerment' (5.50) is the best Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise, followed by Familial/Interpersonal Empowerment (4.57), Political Empowerment (3.48), Social Empowerment (3.19), Economic Empowerment (2.22), and Psychological Empowerment (1.93). Compared to all the six various Empowerments, Decision making Empowerment has the highest representation followed by Familial/Interpersonal Empowerment, Political Empowerment, Social Empowerment, Economic Empowerment, and the least is Psychological Empowerment.

HYPOTHESIS II

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference among various Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise

Table:4. Paired t - Test for significant difference among various Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise

Empowerment		Mean	SD	Correlation	t value	P value
Economic Empowerment	Before starting the enterprise	26.83	6.256	0.678	10.163	0.000**
	After starting the enterprise	30.58	7.263			
Decision making Empowerment	Before starting the enterprise	33.75	5.018	0.289	26.479	0.001**
	After starting the enterprise	43.21	4.382			
Social Empowerment	Before starting the enterprise	24.63	6.001	0.713	21.092	0.000**
	After starting the enterprise	32.65	8.646			
Familial/ Interpersonal Empowerment	Before starting the enterprise	29.79	4.199	0.144	23.563	0.032*
	After starting the enterprise	39.62	5.623			
Psychological Empowerment	Before starting the enterprise	26.21	5.615	0.621	4.286	0.002 **
	After starting the enterprise	27.57	6.187			
Political Empowerment	Before starting the enterprise	33.89	5.900	0.532	2.783	0.008**
	After starting the enterprise	34.94	6.274			

Source: Statistically analyzed data

Note: ** Denotes significance at 1% level

* Denotes significance at 5% level

Table:4 shows the Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise. There is significant difference between Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise among Economic Empowerment. The correlation of Economic Empowerment between women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise is 0.678, is strongly positive. There is significant difference between Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise as Decision making Empowerment. The correlation of Decision-making Empowerment between women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise is 0.289 and is low positive.

Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise as Social Empowerment has a significant difference. The correlation of Social Empowerment between women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise is 0.713 is strongly positive. There is significant difference between Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise as Psychological Empowerment. The correlation of Psychological Empowerment women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise is 0.621 is strongly positive. Also, there is significant difference between Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise as Political Empowerment. The correlation of Political Empowerment between women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise is 0.532 is moderately positive. There exists a significance at 0.01 percent and the null hypothesis is rejected at 1 percent level of significance.

Since P value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5 percent level of significance. Hence it is concluded that there is significant difference between Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise as Familial/ Interpersonal Empowerment. The correlation of Familial/ Interpersonal Empowerment between women entrepreneurs before and after starting the enterprise is 0.144 is least positive. Comparing the Mean level of the various Empowerments, ‘Empowerment of women entrepreneurs after starting the enterprise’ is better than ‘Empowerment of women entrepreneurs before starting the enterprise’.

HYPOTHESIS III

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship among Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs

Table:5. Inter Correlation Matrix on Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs

		EE	DE	SE	IE	PSE	POE
EE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.882**	0.949**	0.881**	0.855**	0.819**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.009	0.000	0.004	0.003	0.006
DE	Pearson Correlation		1	0.985**	0.811**	0.816**	0.925**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.004	0.007	0.006	0.004
SE	Pearson Correlation			1	0.971**	0.918**	0.824**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				0.008	0.000	0.005

IE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.861**	0.811**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.004	0.003
PSE	Pearson Correlation		1	0.828**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.003
POE	Pearson Correlation			1
	Sig. (2-tailed)			

Source: Statistically analyzed data

Note: **EE** refers to Economic Empowerment, **DE** refers to Decision-making Empowerment, **SE** refers to Social Empowerment, **IE** refers to Interpersonal Empowerment, **PSE** refers to Psychological Empowerment, **POE** refers to Political Empowerment

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table:5 proves that the correlation coefficient between Economic Empowerment and Decision-making Empowerment is 0.882 which in turn indicates 88 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Economic Empowerment and Social Empowerment is 0.949 which in turn indicates 95 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Economic Empowerment and Interpersonal Empowerment is 0.881 which in turn indicates 88 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Economic Empowerment and Psychological Empowerment is 0.855 which in turn indicates 86 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Economic Empowerment and Political Empowerment is 0.819 which in turn indicates 82 per cent high positive relation.

The correlation coefficient between Decision-making Empowerment and Social Empowerment is 0.985 which in turn indicates 99 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Decision-making Empowerment and Interpersonal Empowerment is 0.811 which in turn indicates 81 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Decision-making Empowerment and Psychological Empowerment is 0.816 which in turn indicates 82 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Decision-making Empowerment and Political Empowerment is 0.925 which in turn indicates 93 per cent high positive relation.

The correlation coefficient between Social Empowerment and Interpersonal Empowerment is 0.971 which in turn indicates 97 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Social Empowerment and Psychological Empowerment is 0.918 which in turn indicates 92 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Social Empowerment and Political Empowerment is 0.924 which in turn indicates 92 per cent high positive relation.

The correlation coefficient between Interpersonal Empowerment and Psychological Empowerment is 0.861 which in turn indicates 86 per cent high positive relation. The correlation coefficient between Interpersonal Empowerment and Political Empowerment is 0.811 which in turn indicates 81 per cent high positive relation.

The correlation coefficient between Psychological Empowerment and Political Empowerment is 0.828 which in turn indicates 83 per cent high positive relation.

Table:6. Measurement Model of Factors behind Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs

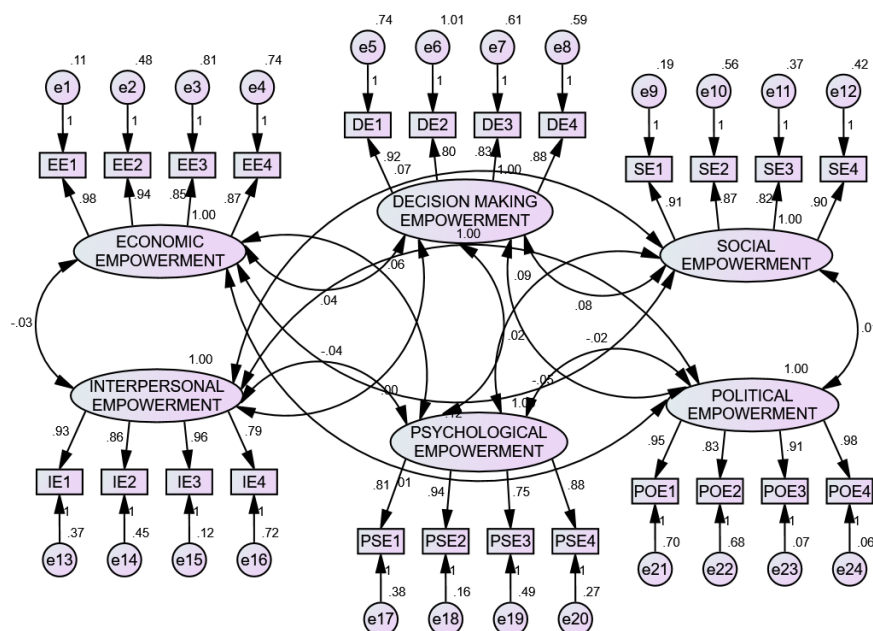
Item(s) of FEWE	Factor Item	CFA Loading	Cronbach α (Item wise)	Cumulative Cronbach
Economic Empowerment				
Acquisition of assets	EE1	0.980	0.884	0.933
Income generation	EE2	0.940	0.866	
Contribution to house-hold income	EE3	0.850	0.975	
Upgrading standard of living	EE4	0.870	0.960	
Decision- making Empowerment				
Dealing household expenses	DE1	0.920	0.961	0.939
Family budgeting	DE2	0.800	0.946	
Education/Career/Marriage of children	DE3	0.830	0.951	
Saving, Borrowing and Investment in business	DE4	0.880	0.900	
Social Empowerment				
Self-identity	SE1	0.910	0.919	0.904
Getting /extending help from/to others	SE2	0.870	0.921	
Responsiveness about social issues	SE3	0.820	0.890	
Raising voice against social corruption	SE4	0.900	0.888	
Interpersonal Empowerment				
Extending Support to family members	IE1	0.930	0.947	0.938
Development in house hold amenities	IE2	0.860	0.899	
Perfection in family bonding	IE3	0.960	0.935	
Capability to solve family related issues	IE4	0.790	0.973	
Psychological Empowerment				
Self-confidence and Self-reliance	PSE1	0.950	0.951	0.899
Accomplishment of Knowledge and Skills	PSE2	0.830	0.854	
Decision making ability	PSE3	0.910	0.846	
Capacity to tackle business threats	PSE4	0.980	0.946	
Political Empowerment				
Involvement in local bodies	POE1	0.810	0.952	0.942
Awareness about reservation for women in politics	POE2	0.940	0.956	
Knowledge on political and legal rights of women	POE3	0.750	0.933	
Alertness on political benefits for women	POE4	0.880	0.929	

Source: Statistically Analyzed Data

Table:6 enumerates the values of reliability and validity assessment of Factors behind Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs questionnaire item wise. The reliability values of Acquisition of assets ($\alpha = 0.884$), Income generation ($\alpha = 0.866$), Contribution to house-hold income ($\alpha = 0.975$), Upgrading standard of living ($\alpha = 0.960$) Dealing household expenses ($\alpha = 0.961$), Family budgeting ($\alpha = 0.946$), Education/Career/Marriage of children ($\alpha = 0.951$), Saving, Borrowing and Investment in business ($\alpha = 0.900$), Self-identity ($\alpha = 0.919$), Getting /extending help from/to others ($\alpha = 0.921$), Responsiveness about social issues ($\alpha = 0.890$), Raising voice against social corruption ($\alpha = 0.888$), Extending Support to family members ($\alpha = 0.947$), Development in house hold amenities ($\alpha = 0.899$), Perfection in family bonding ($\alpha = 0.935$), Capability to solve family related issues ($\alpha = 0.973$), Self-confidence and Self-reliance ($\alpha = 0.951$), Accomplishment of Knowledge and Skills ($\alpha = 0.854$), Decision making ability ($\alpha = 0.846$), Capacity to tackle business threats ($\alpha = 0.946$), Involvement in local bodies ($\alpha = 0.952$), Awareness about reservation for women in politics ($\alpha = 0.956$), Knowledge on political and legal rights of women ($\alpha = 0.933$), and Alertness on political benefits for women ($\alpha = 0.929$) are retrieved from the analysis.

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis loadings are calculated. By applying ALPHA method in SPSS, proved that there is an internal consistency between the items of 24 items in questionnaire related to the ‘Factors behind Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs’. The Instrument is analyzed through a purification process based on the coefficient alpha as a measure of reliability of measurement instruments. Cronbach alpha of each construct of the above 0.7 indicates the complete reliability.

Figure:1. Measurement Model of Factors behind Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs



CONCLUSION

By contributing to the economic growth and job creation the poverty cycle of the women is changed through entrepreneurship. Despite all the struggles and obstacles, the women entrepreneurs have made the transition of the poverty form their and others lifestyle. They have a passion and involvement in business. They acquire economic independence through the establishment of enterprises of their own. Government policies and the subsidies provided to the women entrepreneurs is the major support that motivates them. Women entrepreneurs serve as role models for the younger generation is owning their start-ups. They also create a better job opportunity to other men and women in their community. This could easily eradicate the poverty among people and develop the economic status of themselves and the nation.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adenutsi, D. E. (2009). Entrepreneurship, job creation, income empowerment and poverty reduction in low-income economies. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive (MPRA)*, 29569, 1–21.
- [2] Ahl, H., & Marlow, S. (2012). Exploring the dynamics of gender, feminism and entrepreneurship: Advancing debate to escape a dead end? *Organization*, 19(5), 543–562. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508412448695>
- [3] Ali, Y. S. (2013). Why research on women entrepreneurs needs new direction. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 30(5), 594–620.
- [4] Ardichvili, A., Cardozo, R., & Ray, S. (2003). A theory of entrepreneurial opportunity identification and development. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 18(1), 105–123.
- [5] Buttner, H. E. (2005). Female entrepreneurs: How far have they come? *Business Horizons*, 39(2), 50–65.
- [6] Caird, S. (1991). The enterprising tendency of occupational groups. *International Small Business Journal*, 9, 75–81.
- [7] Chen, L., Matloob, S., Sunlei, Y., Qalati, S. A., Raza, A., & Limón, M. L. S. (2023). A moderated–mediated model for eco-conscious consumer behavior. *Sustainability*, 15(2), 897. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15020897>
- [8] Fonjong, L., Fombe, L., & Sama-Lang, I. (2013). The paradox of gender discrimination in land ownership and women’s contribution to poverty reduction in Anglophone Cameroon. *Geo Journal*, 78(3), 575–589.
- [9] Gimeno, J., Folta, T. B., Cooper, A. C., & Woo, C. Y. (1997). Survival of the fittest? Entrepreneurial human capital and the persistence of underperforming firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 42, 750–783.
- [10] Halabisky, D., Potter, J., Garcia, M. C. D., Levie, J., Hannig, S., & Lunati, M. (2016). *Policy brief on women’s entrepreneurship*.
- [11] Harakati, R., Ghazouani, I., & Hlioui, Z. (2024). Investigating environmental prioritization: Role of financial resources and female entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean Region. *EuroMed Journal of Business*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EMJB-09-2023-0254>

- [12] Hechavarria, D., Bullough, A., Brush, C., & Edelman, L. (2019). High-growth women's entrepreneurship: Fueling social and economic development. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 57(1), 5–13. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12503>
- [13] Hisrich, J. (2005). The entrepreneurial process and economic success in a constrained environment. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 17, 431–465.
- [14] Ipinnaiye, O., & Olaniyan, F. (2023). An exploratory study of local social innovation initiatives for sustainable poverty reduction in Nigeria. *Sustainable Development*, 31(4), 2222–2239. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2502>
- [15] Kakwani, N., & Pernia, E. (2000). What is pro-poor growth? *Asian Development Review*, 16(1), 1–22.
- [16] Lewis, P. (2014). Postfeminism, femininities and organization studies: Exploring a new agenda. *Organization Studies*, 35(12), 1845–1866. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840614539315>
- [17] Md Nor, Z., & Ramli, Z. (2016). A glimpse at women entrepreneurs in Penang. *Akademika*, 86(2), 79–86.
- [18] Michelacci, C. (2002). The entrepreneurial decision: Dissatisfaction or opportunity. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 3, 26–28.
- [19] Moore, D. P., & Buttner, E. H. (1997). *Women entrepreneurs: Moving beyond the glass ceiling*. Sage Publications.
- [20] Rawlands, P. (1995). Start-up capital: Does gender matter? *Small Business Economics*, 16(4), 329–346.
- [21] Salman, A. (2009). *How to start a business: A guide for women*. Centre for International Private Enterprise, Institute of National Endowment for Democracy, affiliate of the USA Chamber of Commerce.
- [22] Singer, A. E. (2006). Business strategy and poverty alleviation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 66, 225–231.
- [23] Vukenkeng, A. W., & Mukete, E. M. (2014). Entrepreneurship and poverty reduction in Cameroon: A vector autoregressive approach. *Archives of Business Research*, 2(5), 1–11.