

**THE CHALLENGES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN BUSINESS EXPANSION
A CASE STUDY OF WOMEN MEMBERS OF HANDICRAFT COOPERATIVES IN
NYARUGENGE DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to assess the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in business expansion specifically in handicraft cooperatives. The objectives are to analyze the government policies for support of women entrepreneurs in business expansion, to examine the contribution of business expansion on the income of women entrepreneurs, to identify the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in business expansion and to analyze the strategies proposed by women entrepreneurs to overcome challenges. Women face many challenges in business expansion but the study tried to analyse financial, technological, government policies and regulations and personal challenges.

The study also provided useful insights into the issue of promoting entrepreneurship for women in handicraft cooperatives. The findings from the study was most useful for government of Rwanda, women policy and PSF for entrepreneurship option, and the future researchers it help as a document source on women entrepreneurship. In methodology used is the stratified random sampling. The main reason for this is to ensure that all respondent fairly represent the target population. The population have been divided into strata or sub-groups and then the simple random sample has been selected within each strata or sub-group. The data was collected from the sample of 132 women entrepreneurs engaged in six handicraft cooperatives.

Based on the findings from the fieldwork to achieve the purpose, the study analysed the government policies for support of women entrepreneurs in business expansion, the contribution of the business expansion on the income of women entrepreneurs, the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in business expansion and the strategies proposed by women entrepreneurs to overcome their challenges. Despite the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs to expand their business there was life improvement in life style. Other improvement has been seen in health insurance, children education, increased in nutritional status and they could get money to plan for a project for the future.

In light of the challenges, the study came up with the recommendations which were addressed to the government of Rwanda, to the bank and other financial institutions, and to the women entrepreneurs.