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## **A Study on Promoting Entrepreneurship: The Impact of Gender Gaps Beliefs and Perceptions**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Perceptions and established frameworks can be barriers or facilitators to the development of entrepreneurship guidelines. Institutions rely on factual data on the gender gap to evaluate their policies. However, the literature shows that the research and institutions should also analyze the impact of social beliefs on the success of these policies and enterprises. This study focuses on the impact of these perceptions in promoting entrepreneurship in SMEs (Small and Medium Scale Enterprises). Data were collected from 100 responses to a questionnaire from Malawian women and men and were analyzed using multivariate regression analysis. The results show that the perception of lack of equal opportunity increases the gender gap even if there are specific and effective policies in a society that attempt to eliminate the gender gap in terms of the role of men and women in the home or positions of power. The main result is that these perceptions ultimately affect women's entrepreneurial intentions. The results have policy implications for companies and public institutions willing to change the gender narrative about entrepreneurship and design policies and initiatives that help both men women overcome cultural barriers and effectively promote equal entrepreneurship. The data for the study has been collected in primary nature through issue of questionnaire using sample size of 100 respondents. The statistical tools namely simple percentage and Chi-Square test are employed to analyze the data using SPSS 20.

*Index Terms:* Perception, SMEs and Entrepreneurship

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Nicole Martins Ferreira (2020) stated that Entrepreneurship is the act of creating a business or businesses while bearing all the risk with the hope of making profit. In the last years, several scholarly works and international institutions have been monitoring gender inequalities and have published several directories and studies. Among these initiatives, for example, are the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Gender-Related Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index. These works have focused on setting the standards for methodical and systemic measurement of social and environmental conditions determining the gender gap.

Brush, C. G. (1992) stated that reviews empirical research studies on women business owners and their ventures, classifies the studies in a framework, and summarizes trends emerging from this research. However, as most of these initiatives follow an economic approach, information related to women's progress only tends to focus on income and stipend gaps and, to a much lesser extent, on social perceptions on the access to participation in other areas of civic, political, and economic life. Therefore, there is inadequate information about men and women's perceptions to strengthen their capacities, to improve their contributions to society, or to assess the efficiency of policies implemented to increase their development.

The study of perceptions, beyond the macro variables, can help to understand the barriers to entrepreneurship; for example, several works have shown that the perception of gender discrimination is associated with multiple negative aspects, such as poorer work attitudes, behaviors and psychological health, and work outcomes.

In this context, this research aims to complement and extend previous works and research on individuals' perception of government policies, initiatives, and strategies to minimize the gap in the participation of men and women in relevant areas of society, in particular, female entrepreneurship. Brush, C. G. (1992). Especially during the early stages of entrepreneurship, support and encouragement are needed, given that any perceived barriers can have many negative implications.

To this end, the study is framed within the social comparison institutional theories to analyze individuals' perception of the feelings they have for their opportunities in entrepreneurship. The main premise is that before facing gender inequalities, individuals should be aware of discrimination.

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## 2.NEED OF THIS STUDY

This study is of key importance to promoting entrepreneurship regardless of gender gap beliefs and perceptions in Blantyre City and other firms in terms of determining the benefits of considering both men and females in entrepreneurship. This study will also provide a platform to consider men in taking loans to boost or start up their own businesses. Furthermore, the findings from this study will provide effective measures to business owners and managers of businesses of small and medium scale businesses in Blantyre City on how to overcome the challenges they face in entrepreneurship to improve their performance and increase their profits.

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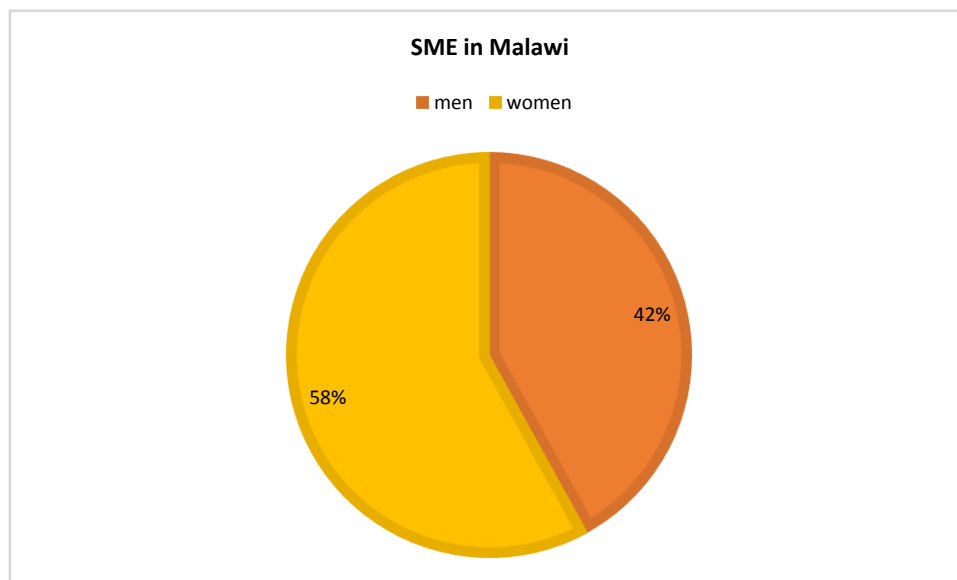
## 3.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Population and Sample

The research targeted the population of Ndirande Village, Blantyre which are part of the rural communities of Malawi and will involve those individuals whose age ranges from 18 to 56 years and above. To give every member of a population a known and equal chance of being selected, Probability sampling was used, under which the simple random sampling technic was employed in choosing the samples randomly from a group of people and the sample size of the study was 100 participants.

### 3.2 Data and Sources of Data

In regards to this study, both primary and secondary data were collected. The questionnaire has been used to gather primary data and other secondary sources of data for the research. This research is based on descriptive study using survey method, as the questionnaire was distributed to gather data from the public for the research about the empirical study on consumer consumption in real scenario. 100 responses were gathered from the circulation of the survey. Secondary data were collected from journal, Entrepreneurship articles from the previous researchers. Moreover, the data for this research was analyzed through SPSS software 20.



Among 100 samples 42 (42%) respondents are male and 58 (58%) respondents are female.

#### 4.COLLECTION OF DATA

A well-structured questionnaire was prepared considering Entrepreneurship under the impact of gender gap beliefs and perceptions. Five points likert scaling has been used to determine the Small Scale and Medium Enterprises under the impact of Gender gap beliefs and perceptions.

##### *Data Analysis and Interpretation*

**Table 1.Demographic details of the Respondent**

Demograoic Profile	Frequency		Percentage
	Men	Women	
<b>Age group</b>			
Below 25	13	10	23
26-35	15	10	25
36-45	9	10	19
46-55	9	11	20
Above 56	6	7	13
<b>Total</b>	100		100
<b>Qualification</b>			
School completed	25	20	45
Bachelor degree	17	17	34
Post graduate	6	10	16
Professional	2	3	5
<b>Total</b>	100		100
<b>Designation</b>			
Executive Level	4	4	8
Top level	10	12	22
Middle level	20	30	50
Low level	10	10	20
<b>Total</b>	100		100
<b>Experience</b>			
0-5 years	20	10	30
5-10 years	25	15	40
10-15 years	9	11	20
More than 15years	6	4	10
<b>Total</b>	100		100

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the respondents categorization on the basis of demographic details. It is very useful to analyze and interpret the data. In the Category of age more number of respondents in men belongs to above the age of 25. In the category of the designation more number of middle level workforce were surveyed and the largest number was 30 which were women. In the same way other details also collected and categorized.

**Table 2. Job Satisfaction of the respondents**

Level of job satisfaction	Frequency		Percentage
	Men	Women	
Highly Satisfied	20	20	40
Satisfied	10	11	21
Neutral	3	5	8
Dissatisfied	5	4	9
Highly dissatisfied	10	12	22
Total	100		100

From the above table it is understood that 40% of respondents are satisfied their job. About 22% of respondents are highly dissatisfied their job especially the men.

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## CONCLUSION

The main conclusion of the study is that governments and institutions should continue to create policies that reduce the gender gap, working at the same time on the public narrative that can change perceptions related to the entrepreneurs' gender.

Perceptions create psychological barriers in women's entrepreneurial intentions. Even when a government's actions reduce the real gap, the perceptions persist for a longer period.

Consequently, one of the conclusions of the article is that, even when there are solid policies to reduce the gender gap, if perceptions do not change, women's interest in entrepreneurship will not increase. Likewise, the study has observed that the generalized perception of men and women's difficulties in accessing higher education affects their perceived difficulties in entrepreneurship.

Similarly, perceptions of a women's role in household care or their difficulties in accessing positions of political relevance increase the perceived barriers to entrepreneurship that women can face. Though there are many organizations out there helping and assisting women entrepreneurship, there is a need for some organizations helping and assisting men as well.

There are difficulties that are subjecting men not to function in other aspects of businesses but with the help of organizations and other company bodies, it can help put men to function properly. Despite the legal context that supports gender equality, the widespread perceptions of the population in relation to women entrepreneurs have not changed significantly. Putting much effort in giving loans to both genders will help promote entrepreneurship, educating individuals in schools help also help build and promote entrepreneurship.

One of the limitations that the study is focused on analyzing is the discernments of the people who answered the survey, so they are subjective by personal knowledges related to the field of study. Further enquiries can contrast perceptions with data recollected through qualitative research, such as in-depth interviews or multiple case studies.

### Recommendations

1. Societies should adopt emerging trends in technology to strive in the emerging world.
2. To break Gender Gap Beliefs and Perceptions on Entrepreneurship in Blantyre City.
3. Government should introduce loan organizations that will also support men entrepreneurship.
4. Government to enhance development should promote innovative activities to promote entrepreneurship in Malawi

### Area For Further Study

A further study can be conducted on the Gender Gap Beliefs and how to eliminate the barrier between men and women entrepreneurship in the societies.

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