CONSTRAINTS TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF SMALL-SCALE SWAZI WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

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ABSTRACT
The study identified the constraints to the advancement of small-scale women entrepreneurs in Swaziland. The constraints covered include access to land, access to capital, marriage laws, mourning rituals, maintenance and business policies. Data were collected through face-to-face interview. The interview was directed to both small and medium-scale women entrepreneurs. A panel of experts from the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Swaziland; Business Women Association and Women and Law in Southern Africa validated the instrument. The instrument was pre-tested with women entrepreneurs in Bhunya and Malkerns towns. The respondents identified the following as constraints to their progress from small to medium-scale business: business policies; mourning rituals; access to capita and access to land. Suggestions for overcoming the constraints include: land should be accessible to any one who needs it; financial institutions should consider making more loans available to women entrepreneurs on no collateral basis; and maintenance orders must be enforced like any other civil judgment. However, the respondents indicated disagreement with the suggestions that Swazi Nation Land should be sold and mourning rituals should be abolished. Further, the respondents indicated that the availability of initial capital and current capital and initial credit contributed significantly to the performance of the business. The study recommended that since access to capital contributed significantly to the performance of the business, the government and relevant agencies need to steep up efforts in helping women entrepreneurs overcome the constraints hindering their advancement in business.

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