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DOES FAMILY NEGATIVELY AFFECT FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP? THE CASE OF CAMEROON FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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≈ INTERACTIVE PAPER ≈

**DOES FAMILY NEGATIVELY AFFECT FEMALE
ENTREPRENEURSHIP? THE CASE OF
CAMEROON FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS**

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Principle Topic

The availability and nature of capital has extensively been studied as the major challenge that faces novice start-up entrepreneurs. But less attention on how the source of capital could affect business performance. The debate on why and how female entrepreneurs in Africa access and manipulate various sources of start-up and operating capital has not well been investigated in the entrepreneurship literature.

It is assumed that the family is the central form of financial support for start-up business. This is not always the case. The family could boost the capability of female entrepreneurs to obtain starting capital for their business, but the same family relatives could hinder the. This paradox provides the research focus of this paper.

The context is Cameroon, a country where family authority and tradition is a powerful influence. Women have had little traditional access to the ownership and claim on family financial resources. A context of widening sources of start-up finance. This research verifies and explain the different types of financing choices, and the extent to which the family invest in female owned businesses.

It demonstrates that access to different sources of capital depends crucially on the ability of the entrepreneur to manipulate and counterbalance different types of networks. In the case of negative family influences.

Method

Researching the role of the family on Cameroon female entrepreneurs in the African gender context is a new research focus in entrepreneurship research. An inductive qualitative approach was used. A case study design was adopted. Semi structured interviews were administered to twenty four female entrepreneurs in Buea from four different sectors, (food, clothes, crafts and vegetables). Eight more detailed unstructured follow up interviews were administered. Business performance was measured on sales turnover. Entrepreneurial performance was indicated by the number of businesses owned.

Results and Implications

The study has found that although the family does support female entrepreneurs to raise start-up capital, this support is not out of a complete altruism. Female entrepreneurs have to explore other sources of start-up and operating capital to grow their business. The study has

Implications for future research on the impact on the sources of start-up and operating capital on the performance of female entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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