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THE VIEW OF FEMALE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS IN SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT

Social enterprises have exhibited beneficial contribution to the monetary and geopolitical circumstances of a nation. The involvement of women entrepreneurs in social enterprises is currently developing in Saudi Arabia. Thus, this work was carried out to analyze the views of women entrepreneurs in the proliferation and development of social enterprises in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This work was done based on the method of quantitative research. Questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of nine questions. The sample size of this study is 100 female respondents. The results of this study have shown that most participants have agreed that a social enterprise is a strategy that can solve the community's issues. Furthermore, the results of this study have shown that Saudi women entrepreneurs face difficulties in terms of family problems, social problems, transportation problems, government regulatory problems and other related challenges. In addition, the results of this study showed that the majority of participants were neutral in terms of government assistance for women entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, results have shown that most women in Saudi Arabia are willing to become entrepreneurs and participate in social enterprises.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is the process of seeking change, adapting that change and exploiting it as a marketable and profitable opportunity [1]. The founders of novel and socially focused business pursue dramatically different goals. This phenomenon develops and cultivates new business methods, making conventional business practices obsolete. Thus, individuals or groups engaged in social work and making a change in society can be called 'Social Enterprise Groups' [2]. This group measures their success by the amount of positive contributions made by their ventures to the community [3].

The goals of social enterprises are mostly cultural, environmental and community based [4]. It is therefore observed that many such businesses and ventures are associated with non-profit organizations. Sometimes it can happen that the non-profit organization works to gain some profit in order to spend again on social activities and not on their personal agenda. These organizations are often known as the main players that shed light on society in order to find out the abnormalities and necessary reforms in it [5]. The very popular and basic type of social enterprise is community business that helps the local community. Based on geographical data, the community can start a particular business that is very abundant and easy to start based on natural resources [6].

Sepulveda [7] stated that social enterprise is the phenomenon that can track and provide a solution to the problems in society. Many people believe that it is still in its growing stage in both developed and developing countries due to its lack of support from the conventional business system. Bull et al.[8] reported that mostly social enterprise tries to help government and other sectors by raising funds and putting them in the right sectors of society. This is by far the great humanitarian cycle that has worked perfectly in many countries around the world. Ganz et al. [9] pointed out that this does not mean that socially oriented business institutions are not focused on profit generation. If a company loses the way it can invest in social goals and it will be impossible for them to achieve their goals in these sectors. Therefore, whatever profit is earned through business, the organization puts it in the social sector and fulfills the motives for those who are unable to do so [10]. Furthermore, it has great potential to run side by side with an established intact business system [10].

This sector has attracted many eyes in the Gulf area due to its advantages. Social enterprises provide multiple opportunities for pro-active people who face many hurdles in this society but who can also become a part of it and make a change for others [11]. This phenomenon is gaining popularity among people especially in Saudi Arabia [12]. Driven by the booming oil industry, the country's economy is changing to ensure that the country is less dependent on international oil exports, allowing social enterprise to fill the gap left by the country's oil exports [12].

The main hurdle for women to participate more in this field is the laws and rules of government [13]. If there is a change in them, then the whole community and women can easily participate in it and make a great change in society [13]. It is a surprise that mostly women are working in this field and their number is far greater than of men. The sheer number currently working in social enterprises gives great hope and a moment of joy for the community. The only thing that should be taken into account is that such enterprises and laws should coexist in such a way that everyone ends up being benefitted.

In the wake of more women-based social enterprises erupting on the scenario in Saudi Arabia, it is necessary to analyze the view of women in this development. Thus, this work has analyzed the view of women in the

proliferation and development of social enterprises in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

METHODOLOGY

This work was done based on quantitative research method. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of 9 questions. The sample size of this work is 100 female respondents, comprising students from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's main educational foundations, women who are effectively engaged in business life, and women who work for charitable associations. The data was collected by sending out survey questions to the respondents. The data were analyzed in terms of basic statistics and were presented in graphical form.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Questionnaire Analysis

For this work, the respondents were asked several questions to investigate the role of women in social enterprises in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the feedback to the questions is presented in this section. The respondents were asked 'Is it possible to using social enterprises as a method of solving the problems of the community?' Based on Figure 1, 66 % agreed, 26% strongly agreed, and 8 % disagreed.

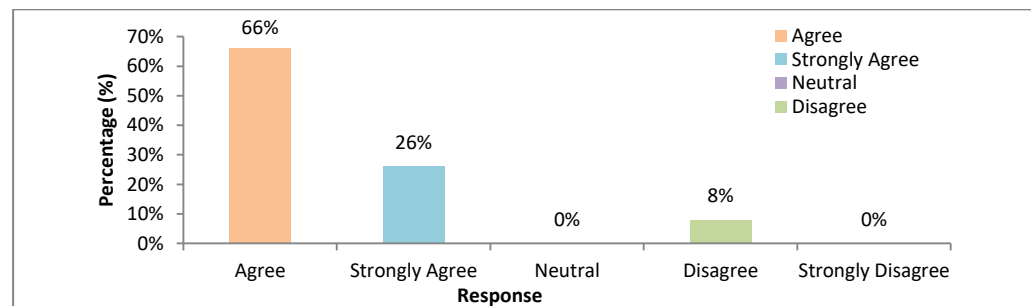


Figure 1. Social enterprises as a method of solving the problems of the community

The respondents were asked 'Do you think it is important for women to participate in social enterprises in Saudi Arabia?' Based on Figure 2, 53 % agreed, 40% strongly agreed, and 7 % disagreed.

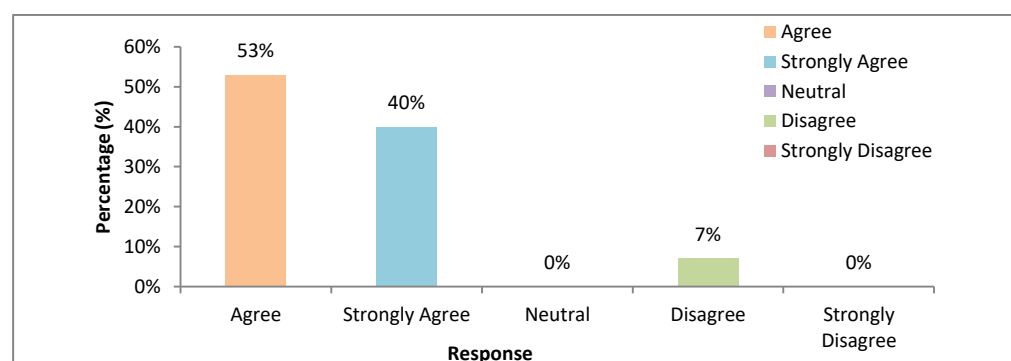


Figure 2.Important for women to participate in social enterprises in Saudi Arabia

The respondents were asked ‘What type of industry do you think women should go to?’ Based on Figure 3, 40 % stated education field, 22 % stated medical and health field, 28 % stated government field and 10 % stated manufacturing field.

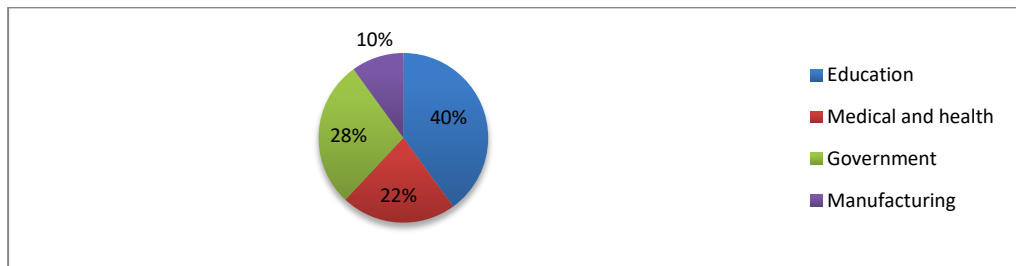


Figure 3.Type of industry women should go to.

The respondents were asked ‘What are some of the challenges faced by the Saudi women that are participating in entrepreneurship?’ Based on Figure 4, 26 % stated family issues, 27 % stated society issues, 24% stated transportation issues, 18% stated government and 5% stated other issues.

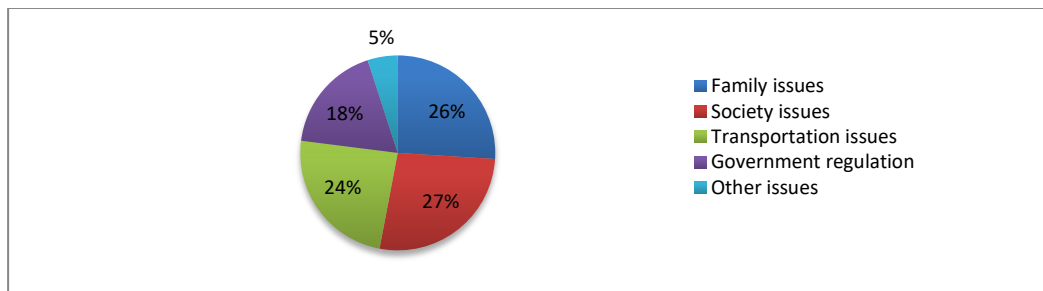


Figure 4 Challenges faced by the Saudi women

The respondents were asked ‘Do you think men are dominating the Saudi market?’. Based on Figure 5, 40 % agreed, 29% strongly agreed, 27 % were neutral and 4% disagreed.

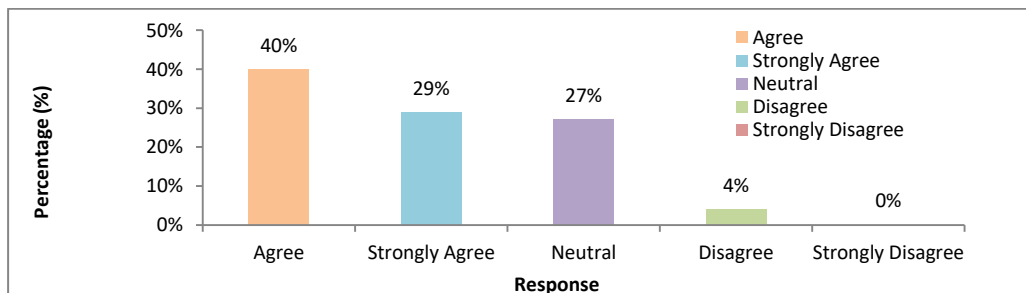


Figure 5.Men are dominating the Saudi Arabia market

The respondents were asked ‘Do you think that the government is providing sufficient support for women? Based on Figure 6, 26 % agreed, 14% strongly agreed, 43 % were neutral, 14% disagreed and 3 % strongly disagreed.

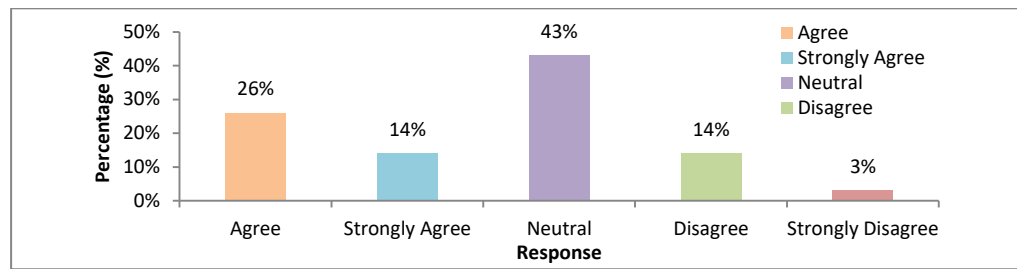


Figure 6.Government provides sufficient support for women

The respondents were asked ' Do you think society accepts and supports women who want to participate in the business of entrepreneurship? Based on Figure 7, 15 % agreed, 18% strongly agreed, 43 % were neutral, 20% disagreed and 4 % strongly disagreed.

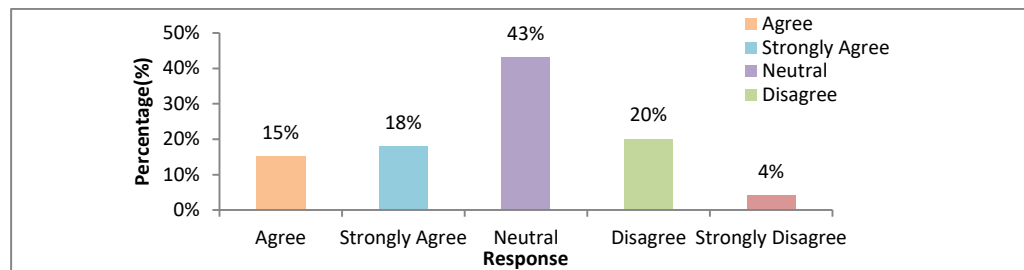


Figure 7.Society accepts and supports women who want to participate in the business of entrepreneurship

The respondents were asked 'Are woman willing to participate in the social enterprises? Based on Figure 8, 25 % agreed, 38% strongly agreed, 22 % were neutral, 10% disagreed and 5 % strongly disagreed.

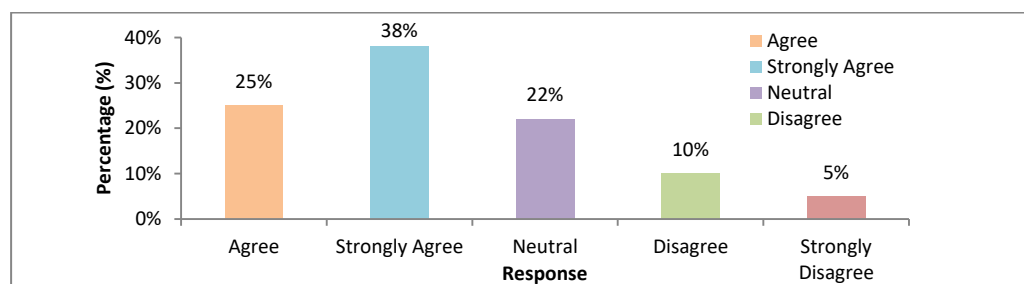


Figure 8.Woman willing to participate in the social enterprises

The respondents were asked 'What are the solutions that can help women?'. Based on Figure 9, 38% stated training programs, 30% stated government initiatives, 28 % ease of government regulation and 4 % other solutions such as financial support, advertisement and etc.

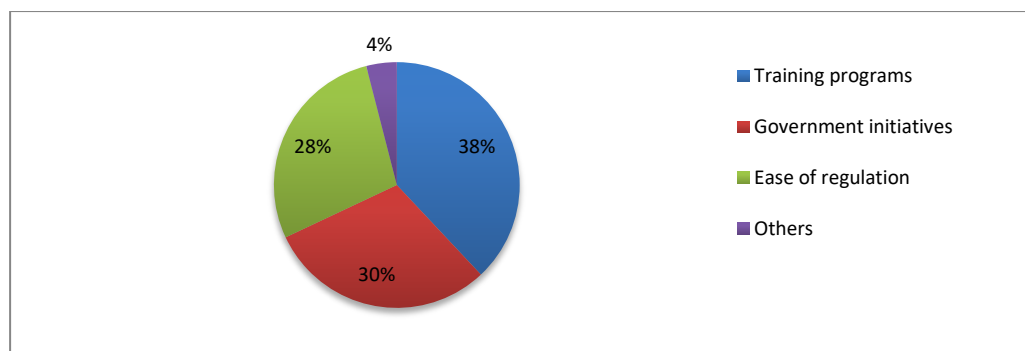


Figure 9.Solutions that can help women

Overall Discussion

The main aims of this study were to analyze the view of women in social enterprises and social entrepreneurial exercises and businesses in Saudi Arabia. The findings of this work have shown that majority of the respondents have agreed that social enterprises is a method that can solve the problems of the community. Likewise, the results of this work have shown that majority of the respondents agreed that important for women to participate in social enterprises in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the findings of this work have shown that there are few challenges faced by the Saudi women that are participating in entrepreneurship, which is comprised of family issues, society issues, transportation issues, government regulation issue and other issues. This finding is in accordance to the work of Mathew [14] where it was stated that women entrepreneurs in the Gulf region faces various challenges in being an entrepreneurs, which is comprised of family, society, financial support, government support, lack of man power and other related issues.

In addition, the findings of this work have shown that majority of the respondents agree that men are dominating the Saudi Arabia market. Basaffar et al. [15] work has confirmed that men's domination in Saudi Arabia's entrepreneurship field is a major challenge for women entrepreneurs to develop, as stereotyping still exist in the nation. Furthermore, the findings of this work have shown that majority of respondents were neutral with regards to the support provided by the government for women entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia. The work of Faisal et al.[16] has stated that government support for women entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia is available, but it needs to be further improved so that women can fulfill their potential. Furthermore, the findings of this work have shown that the majority of respondents were neutral in terms of the support and acceptance given to women entrepreneurs by Saudi Arabia's society. Additionally, the findings have shown that most women in Saudi Arabia are willing to become entrepreneurs and participate in social enterprises. Besides that, the outcome of this work have shown that training programs, government initiatives and ease of regulation is a solution to motivate the development of women entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia and contribute to the social enterprise. This is also in accordance to the work of Khizindar and Darley [17] where it has been reported that women entrepreneurs in the Middle East countries have enormous potential and need adequate support from all areas to fully develop.

CONCLUSION

In this work, the view of women in the development of social enterprises in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was analyzed. The findings of this work have concluded that women entrepreneur Saudi Arabia are adequately cultivated about the idea and the method entrepreneurship and its positive contribution towards social enterprises. Women entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia understand social endeavors as an attractive financial choice and it can assist in improving the status of the social community. Furthermore, the current legitimate and social constraints need to be improved to enable the potential advancement of women entrepreneurs and social enterprises establishments in the nation.

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