

## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in Arusha municipality in Tanzania with the aim of assessing the factors constraining the performance of women owned micro-enterprises (MEs) on the global supply chain with a specific focus on female entrepreneurs owning curio shops in the municipal. The study, which was a survey of women owners of curio shops, involved a total of 62 respondents. Data were collected by the use of questionnaires and through focus group discussion.

Particularly, the study paid attention on various factors that are considered to affect profitability, the ways through which factors like size of the initial capital, access to loan, working environment and level of education/training affect growth of women owned MEs. Besides, the study examined diversification strategies that are used by these female entrepreneurs in order to improve their logistics capabilities, the extent to which taxation, local governments' regulations and customs requirements affect growth and global supply chain management of women owned curio shops.

The findings of the study revealed that the performances of women owned curio shops were generally poor due to among other reasons, lack of enough initial capital, difficulties in accessing loans due to harsh conditions by most microfinance institutions (MFIs) and banks, poor working environment, seasonality of the business, lack of business education or training and customs requirements. Other constraining factors that were also identified include licensing procedures, local government bureaucracy procedures and information technology systems barriers.

The study recommended that Arusha municipal could improve the performance of women owned MEs especially curio shops by introducing a lending scheme with softer conditions that can be afforded by women owners of curio shops, providing business education in collaboration with Business Development Services (BDS) providers and encouraging women entrepreneurs to use other product/market strategies such as product development and market development in order to minimize risks associated with diversification strategy.

