

Contribution of Women Owned Microenterprises Towards Enhancing Socio-Economic Empowerment in Tanzania

A Study of Women Food Vendors in Moshi Municipality

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Despite the challenges faced by microenterprises, their contribution to economic growth, income generation and poverty alleviation are widely recognised. In line to that, women engagement in microenterprises including food vending businesses is rapidly gaining prominence worldwide because of its positive effects in various countries as they contribute to employment creation, income improvement and ability to own assets, access to health and education, and improved diet. However, the roles and challenges of women owned businesses were inconclusive in previous studies and hence remain as a knowledge gap. Therefore, this study assessed the contribution of women owned microenterprises towards enhancing socio-economic empowerment in Tanzania by using women food vendors in Moshi Municipality. The cross-sectional design was applied with a sample of 100 respondents. The primary data were collected through survey and interviews while secondary data were collected through documentary review method. Data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 programme. The findings indicated that the women food vendors were playing a major role in improving socio-economic conditions such as ensuring food security and paying for education and health services. Also, the business helped them to generate jobs, improve income and acquire assets. Performance of food vendors business was found to be influenced significantly by education level, capital, and business location, capacity to balance between business and household duties and number of dependants. The study recommends that the women food vendors should be assisted so as to improve their capacities, and skills through training, credit, information and infrastructure to remain competitive and productive.