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Challenges of Entrepreneurs in Establishing of New Venture, in Ethiopia: In a Case of Some Selected Small and Micro Enterprises of South Ethiopia, Wolaita Sodo Town

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Abstract:

This study investigated challenges that are faced by entrepreneurs in establishing new venture in case of Small and micro enterprises in Wolaita Sodo town, Southern Ethiopia and the objectives were to identify challenges and suggest solutions. Followed these qualitative and descriptive research design were adopted and structured questionnaires together with unstructured interviews were used to gather data from the respondents. Small and Micro Enterprises (SMEs) owners and managers in the Wolaita Sodo town were the target population. A sample of seventy-two respondents was drawn using stratified sampling method. Most of the respondents who participated in the study were from the service sector, manufacturing sector, urban agriculture and the construction sectors. Key challenges identified to the establishment of new venture were: working capital, working place, access to finance and credit services, poor vertical communication to government offices, inadequate government and other stakeholders support. Managerial skills gap to business, suffer from lack of knowledge on business plan preparation, poor in record keeping, lack of reliable technology, low price for new product and services in market, and customer attitude on new products. The research concludes that the challenges of SMES would be solved by a collaborative effort of SMEs themselves, the government and the other concerned stakeholders.

Therefore, it is recommended that since SMEs are the back bone of reducing poverty and creating job opportunity for Ethiopian nation, the government should provide working place and capital access for SMEs, financial institutions set more flexible, affordable and attractive requirements in financing micro and small enterprises. The SMES also should work for the better of their business through getting training on managerial knowledge gap, and their other limitations.

Keywords: SMEs, Challenges; Enterprises, Entrepreneurship; innovation, Venture

1. Background of the Study and Its Justification

Entrepreneurship is one of the most important economic resources. Besides to this which it is concerned with an individual's initiation, creativity, innovation and motivation towards bringing something new or modifying existing things for the benefit of a given society by looking into profit oriented business unit for the production and distribution of economic goods and services Gibretensae (2007).

Entrepreneurship also strengthens the economic growth of a nation, as well as gives power to society, speeds up modernization and transforms way of thinking of the common man. Unemployment is a chronic problem of under-developed countries. Entrepreneurship is certainly the best way to fight the evil of unemployment. In this way, entrepreneurs play an effective role in reducing poverty in the country which in turn aids in economic development of the nation and serve an important purpose in the society by contributing to the improvement of the economy in a number of ways (David, 2000).

This has been true in both the development and developing nation in the world. As a result, various scholars of economies argued that in any economies of the world over 95% of these small business enterprises are provides goods and services that owned and managed by individuals and group of individuals known as entrepreneurs (MOE, 2001).

To minimize the poor economic development and poverty from the country, it is important undertaking the entrepreneurial activity on creating new business venture to contribute the country and its society employment opportunity, change social life and increasing productivity. So entrepreneurial development in developing countries are the main tools of economic diversification, future growth, high living standards and increasing level of self-reliance (Nigus yisbe, 1985). Small scale industry can be a means of achieving a smooth transition from tradition to modern industrial sector (Stephen and Wasuu, 2013).

Study made by Fabayo (1989) observed that one major claim for focus on SMEs is that they are large employers of labor and this makes them vital in coping with the problems of unemployment and poverty. According to him, strong evidences based on country and regional experiences exist to show that small firms are major source of employment opportunities for a wide cross-section of the workforce: the young, old part-time workers and the cyclically unemployed

Ethiopia has been a victim of drought, war and discouraging environment of business which leads to economic and social problem. Success into day creative and innovative environment is increasingly a function of effective entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activity. Especially entrepreneur makes the difference between prospect and poverty among nations. Due to this entrepreneurship in the business development process and as critical factors in the economic growth of nations have become priority agendas of least developed countries, like Ethiopia (Hisrich and Peter, 1998.).

1.1. Challenges of Entrepreneurs

As distinguished by Kumar.R and Santhi.N(2011) the study made by Bassent and Tidd, (2007) Entrepreneurs confront several challenges before or during operation of their business. The major challenges faced by entrepreneurs to start and manage business includes Obsolescence of the technology, specific to the industry shortage of working capital, in adequate and high price raw material, non-availability of qualified staff, weak markets for a product, non-existence of strong institutional support and inaccessibility of resource. In addition to these major factor entrepreneurs also hindered by factors like Lack of access to land: the availability of plot of land premises in strategic areas for micro and small enterprise to produce and market their products is essential. Lack of appropriate place tends to force entrepreneurs to operate their business at home or revolt unsuitable and sometimes unsanitary condition. This issue of land acquisition has become very prohibitive to the emergence of new enterprise (Down Son, 1990). In addition to the above challenges Down son (1997) and Moutray.C (2008) also cited in the Tezera (2006, p 26) strengthen the above stated entrepreneurial challenges.

(Downs on, 1990). In this section boldly outlined is the five major challenges that small business owners will face in the coming years. These are (1) strengthening the overall economy, (2) taxes and regulation, (3) the cost and availability of health insurance, (4) attracting and retaining a quality workforce, and (5) global competition.

Vuvor.s and ackah j (2011) Next to the above well defined entrepreneurial challenges as situational in which new goods, raw materials, markets and organizational methods can be introduced through the formation of new means, ends, or means-ends relationships. In different studies made, they adapt definition of entrepreneurship as the process by which "opportunities for creating future goods and services are discovered, evaluated and exploited. (Shane and Cusson, 2000) and (Eckhardt, 2003). Contextually, to the other literature Eckhardt (2003) offers three ways of categorizing opportunities: by focusing on the changes that generate the opportunity, by the source of the opportunities themselves, and by the initiator of the change.

1.2. Empirical Evidence

As noted by Getahun M (2016, p.25.) Lichtenstein & Brush (2001) they illustrate that accounting, cash flow, and marketing need management skills and lack of them is a major cause of failure. Weaknesses in these areas are found to impact on all other areas of the business. A lack of management skills and expertise is a major constraint hindering the progress of the SME sector in Kenya. As the same time the studies conducted by Ibrahim (1986), provide evidence that management skills are critical factors in both the failure and success of businesses (Lichtenstein & Brush, 2001).

Similarly, according to data from a survey by Mulatu (2005: 67–68), there are 587,644 small enterprises, accounting for 99.9% of the total industrial sector in Ethiopia, while large and the medium enterprises account for only 0.1%. This indicates that the absence of an enabling environment makes it difficult for small enterprises to grow to the next level. Gebrehiwot (2006: 73–74) argues that the generally unfavorable environment, including aspects such as a lack of access to productive resources (finance and business development services), a lack of access to market and other premises, an uncertain policy environment and weak institutional linkages are all potential constraints that inhibit enterprises from contributing a great deal to the national GDP (Seyoum M, 2015.P. 56).

1.3. Statement of the Problem

As cited in Naf International paper (2016) generally, in most fast-developing countries, SMEs by virtue of their size, location, capital investment and their capacity to generate greater employment have proved their powerful propellant effect for rapid economic growth. The sector is also known as an instrument in bringing about economic transition by effectively using the skill and talent of the people without requesting high-level training, much capital and sophisticated technology (FDRE, MoTI, 1997).

The study done by Mezgebe, W. (2012) and the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor (2006), most MSEs in Ethiopia face critical constraints both at the operation and start up level. Some of these constraints include lack of access to finance, access to premise, infrastructure, training in entrepreneurial and management skills, information on business opportunities, and social and cultural factors particularly related to deficient entrepreneurial culture and excessive corruption.

The problems of SMEs are both external and internal, among the external problems which are most to them are those related to capital shortage, taxation and regulations, product liability patent and franchising abuses. The internal problems of SMEs include: inadequate working capital, stiff competition from larger companies, difficulties in sourcing raw materials, low

capacity utilization, lack of management strategies, poor educational background of operators, and huge financial problems while the external problems include: policy inconsistencies, multiple taxation, harsh regulatory requirements and trade groups. It is also important to note that SMEs are not immune from the aforementioned challenges in their day to day operations hence it becomes necessary to embark on a study that investigates the issues, challenges and prospects of small and medium scale (Emeti I and Agwu, O.2014. P.103.).

As the noted by Haile Yesus (1999) By and large, entrepreneurs are requisite to assess the environments, identify opportunity or prospects to improve their activities and implementation to maximize opportunity. In present day, Ethiopia even though a significant measure has been taken micro and small enterprise faces serious obstacles at start up level, various studies show that there is a general lack of knowledge on entrepreneurial activity and similarly noted by Gimbaru (2007) there is a wide gap in entrepreneurship between developed and developing countries. This is because of the existing enterprise in developing countries falls in the category of micro and small business, which are limited by financial, technical and many other problems. Therefore, by having this problems and challenges of SMEs mind, the study was assessed to address the challenges of entrepreneur in case of micro and small enterprise, in Southern Ethiopia, Wolaita Sodo Town.

1.4. Research Question

This research has tried to answer the following basic research questions.

- What are the major challenges of entrepreneurs that they face during establishment of new business?
- To what extent the stakeholders support SMES to overcome their problems?
- To what extent the SMES struggle to solve their challenges?
- Is culture of the society become challenge for entrepreneurs to start new business?
- What are the major opportunities the SMES have in their surroundings?

1.5. Objective of the Study

1.5.1. The General Objective of Study

The main objective of this study is to assess the challenges of entrepreneurs on establishing new venture in a case of some selected small and micro enterprises of south eastern Ethiopia, Wolaita Sodo town

1.5.2. Specific Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study were

- To assess the major challenges of entrepreneurs that they face during establishment of new business
- To know the extent the stakeholders support SMES to overcome their problems.
- To what extent the SMES struggle to solve their challenges.
- To assure that culture of the society become challenge for entrepreneurs.
- To be familiar with the major opportunities the SMES have in their surroundings

2. Research Design and Methodologies

2.1. Research Design and Sources

This study has adopted descriptive research design. The main purpose of this design is to describe what would prevalent with respect to the issue or problem under study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The research has been conducted by using primary and secondary data sources. The primary data was collected using questionnaires, unstructured interview and personal observation instruments and the secondary data was collected from the review of relevant and related materials.

2.2. Sample Techniques

The study would have consumed stratified random sampling technique to select the sample. Kothari (2004) recommends stratified random sampling because it is accurate, easily accessible, divisible into relevant strata and it enhances better comparison; hence representation across strata.

2.3. Sample Size

The target population was drawn from all micro and small enterprises in Wolaita Sodo town market in SNNPRS, Ethiopia. According to the town Food security and job creation office evidence currently the total micro and small enterprises registered (2017) are 772 and 10% from each population, which was 78 entrepreneurs are taken as proportionate strata sampling based on their proportion of entrepreneurs who engaged each sector. It has been determined by using this formula

$$ni = \frac{n \cdot Ni}{N}$$
 where, Ni= total population of strata i, ni= sample from strata I, n = sample from the total population of selected SMEs, N total population of the selected sectors of SMES from Wolaita Sodo.

No.	Sectors	Total Number of Entrepreneurs from each strata(Ni)	Proportionate Sampling $ni = \frac{n \cdot Ni}{N}$
1.	Service sector	258	26
2.	Manufacturing	183	18
3.	Urban agriculture	125	13
4.	Construction	206	21
	Total	772	78

Table 1: Sample size determinations

Source: Wolaita Sodo town Food security and Job creation office manual (2017)

2.4. Data Analysis and Presentation

Data obtained from the field in raw form is difficult to interpret unless it is cleaned, coded and analyzed. Qualitative analysis consisted of examining, categorizing, tabulating and recombining evidences to address the research questions (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003) and for this purpose SPSS version 20 has been used.

2.5. Data Presentation and Analysis

For this study 78 questionnaires were distributed to the target SMES and 72 questionnaires were collected, this indicated 92.3 percent legitimate to judge the collected data was valid to represent the total population.

Sex			Age			Marital status			Education level			Business type		
Sex variables	Frequency	Percentage	Age variables	Frequency	Percentage	Marital status variables	Frequency	Percentage	Education level variables	Frequency	Percentage	Business type information	Frequency	Percentage
Male	42	59.7	Below 20	10	13.9	Married	10	23.6	primary	13	18.1	Urban agriculture	8	11.1
Female	30	40.3	20-30	38	52.8	Unmarried	62	76.4	Secondary	28	38.9	service	32	44.4
			31-40	17	23.6				First degree	5	6.9	manufacturing	13	18.1
			Above 40	7	9.7				Diploma	12	16.7	construction	19	26.4
			-	-	-				Certificate	4	19.4			
Total	72	100		72	100		72	100		72	100		72	100

Table 2: Summary of data presentation and Analysis of respondents' background information

Source: Survey study, 2017

In terms of sex (59.7%) of the respondents are male and (40.3%) are female. As to the age group (52.8%) of them are from age 20-30 years and the next age group is about (23.6%) are from 31-40 and which are followed by (13.9%) that are below 20 years. Only (9.7%) of the respondents were above 40 years. As shown in the above Table 2, (76.4%) of the target population were unmarried and (23.6%) of the respondents were married. The educational level of the respondents for the study as revealed in the above table (38.9%) of the respondents have the education status of secondary school complete and (19.4%) were primary school complete. Whereas, (19.4%) of the respondents have college certificate and nearly (18.1%) are primary school complete and only (6.9%) are first degree holders. The service business owners (44.4%) and (26%) are from construction manufacturing sector with (18%). The small groups of business type of the respondents are from urban agriculture (11.1%).

Liker scale	Lack of working capital as a challenge		Lack of Access to finance and credit as a challenge		Social and cultural attitude of customers on new products		Poor vertical communication to government offices		Business knows how is very low		Team spirit among enterprise members is low		Stakeholders support is low	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	49	68.1	46	63.9	7	9.7	46	63.9	10	13.9	51	70.8	19	26.4
Agree	19	26.4	19	26.4	57	79.2	14	19.4	50	69.4	12	16.7	45	62.5
Neutral	3	4.2	5	6.9	6	8.3	7	9.7	8	11.1	5	6.9	6	8.3
Disagree	1	1.4	2	2.8	2	2.8	4	5.6	3	4.2	3	4.2	2	2.8
Strongly disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.4	1	1.4	1	1.4	-	-
Total	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100

Table 3: Summary of data presentation and Analysis of basic research related questionnaires
Source: Survey study, 2017

As indicated in Table 3 above, (68.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed that working capital is their challenge and followed by this figure (26.4%) are agreed that working capital is their challenge.

The study to know the social cultural attitude of customers on new products of entrepreneur's majority of the respondents (79.2%). In terms of business know gap, the majority of the respondents (75%) agree that their major challenge is knowledge gap on business and (13.9%) of the respondents strongly agree that their constraint was business know how is low. The analysis regarding the issue of team spirit among enterprise owner's members, majority of the respondents (70.8%) strongly agree that their team spirit is very low and other (16.7%) also agree that their defect on lack of team work. Shown in Table 3 above, majority of the respondents (62.5%) agree that they have low stakeholders support in their industry and (26.4%) are also strongly agree on the stakeholders.

	Lack of working place		Lack of managerial knowledge and skills		Lack of effective strategy to win market competition		Waiting finance and other support from the government		Lack of market linkage		Low price for new products or services in market		Less moral support from society to Entrepreneurs	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	46	63.9	46	63.9	44	61.1	24	33.3	45	62.5	50	69.4	22	30.6
Agree	18	25	19	26.4	20	27.8	42	58.3	15	20.8	15	20.8	37	51.4
Neutral	6	8.3	4	5.6	7	9.7	4	5.6	5	7	5	6.9	6	8.3
Disagree	2	2.8	2	2.8	1	1.4	2	2.8	3	4.2	2	2.8	5	6.9
Strongly disagree	-	-	1	1.4	-	-	-	-	4	5.6	-	-	2	2.8
Total	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100

Table 4: Summary of data presentation and Analysis of basic research related questionnaires
Source: Survey study, 2017

Pertaining to the issue to know lack of working place majority of the respondents (54.8%) strongly agree that working place is their major problem and (25%) of the respondents agree that they have highly working place problem and large numbers (63.9%) of the respondents were strongly agreed that they have big problem in business managerial knowledge and (26.4%) were agreeing that the managerial skill is their problem. As the same time, majority of the respondents (61.1%) mentioned out that they have limitation on having effective strategy to win market competition and (27.8%) also agree that they have no effective market winning strategy. Regarding whether they are waiting finance and other support from the government or not, in this case the largest number of respondents (58.3%) agree and (33.3%) also strongly agree. To market linkage half (50%) stated that their other and most challenge is market linkage.

Regarding Low price for new products in market is their challenge or not, in this case the large number of the respondents (69.4%) strongly agrees that they have problem in market for their new product and services and (20.8%) also agree that low price in market there is their big problem. In the above Table 4, it has been indicated that the Lees moral support from society to Entrepreneurs has been seen and which accounts the largest portion (51.4%) and (30.6%) also strongly agree.

	Not paying themselves/salary		Lack of confidence on new market/business		Lack of knowledge on business record keeping		Have knowledge gap on business plan preparation		Lack of technology	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	36	50	56	77.8	54	75	17	23.6	47	65.3
Agree	30	41.7	14	19.4	13	18.1	40	55.6	18	25
Neutral	3	4.2	2	2.8	4	5.6	8	11.1	7	9.7
Disagree	2	2.8	-	-	1	1.4	5	7	-	-
Strongly disagree	1	1.4	-	-	-	-	2	8	-	-
Total	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100	72	100

Table 5: Summary of data presentation and Analysis of basic research related questionnaires

Source: Survey study, 2017

In the Table 5 above, it is presented that almost half (50%) of the respondents strongly agree that Not paying themselves salary is their other problem and following this figure (41.7%). To investigate their level of confidence on their new market for business, majority (77.8%) were strongly agree that they have no confidence on new market or product and some (19.4%) indicated that their limitation was again to the lack of confidence on new market/business. Nevertheless, only (2.8%) of the respondents were neutral to the issue. The other matter raised during this study was to know the SMES owner's knowledge on business record keeping and in this case majority (75.0%) of the respondents were suffered from record keeping knowledge and (18.1%).

Regarding the issue business plan preparation large number (55.6%) of the respondents agree that they have knowledge gap on business. Regarding the issue business plan preparation large number (55.6%) of the respondents agree that they have knowledge gap on business and at the same time even though no business plan for some and (23.6%) of them also agreed. At the end, majority (65.3%) of them strongly agree that their other and big problem is technology and as the same (25.0%) also agree that the deficiency of the needed technology and extra knowledge on the sector.

5. Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1. Summary of Findings

The study found that the following challenges are the key and most tangible to SMEs in Wolaita sodo town, Southern Ethiopia.

- Working capital problem: majority of the respondents expressed one of their main problem is working capital.
- Lack of access to finance: large numbers of the respondents were stated that lack of access to finance and credit is their life-size challenge.
- Lack of working place: the other and the most problems to enter pruners is lack of working place for their creativity and launching new ventures.
- Poor vertical communication: the most and other challenges of SMES is weak in vertical communication to run their cases in government offices.

- Lack of technology: The SMEs in Wolaita sodo town have no relevant, reliable, and accessible, efficient reliable technology and which are obsolesced in practice.
- Low stakeholders support to enterprises, the SMES have less support from stakeholders and stack older such as government office, and other financial institutions.
- Lack of market linkage: they have a big problem in market linkage and access to customers to deliver their new product and services
- Business management knowledge gap: the majority of respondents stated that they have weakness on business management know-how and technical knowledge on management
- Waiting finance and other support from the government: the SMEs setback of SMES in Wolaita Sodo is waiting finance and other support from the government.
- Customers' attitude on new product/services: in this case they have fear that customers to have no confidence on new product and they charge low price, this also hiders enter pruners on establishing new business.
- Lack of knowledge on business plan preparation: on the other hand, lack of knowhow and awareness on business plan preparation and its benefits is their challenge
- Knowledge gap on, on business record keeping, saving habit and customer handling skills: in this case majority that SMES in Wolaita Sodo town have knowledge gap and no regular record keeping and weak in saving habit and have big problem on customer handling skills.

5.2. Conclusion

From the above findings the study concludes that for enter pruners in Ethiopia, Wolaita sodo town, have challenges that hinders them to establish new venture and the most identified are: Working capital problem, Lack of access to finance, lack of working place , poor vertical communication, Lack of technology, Low stakeholders support to enterprises, Lack of market linkage, Business management knowledge gap, Waiting finance and other support from the government , Customers attitude on new product/services , lack of knowledge and awareness on business plan preparation, lack of Knowledge on business record keeping and weak saving culture.

5.3. Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusion made, the researcher found that it is important to make some recommendations to guide the enterprises, other concerned bodies and researchers. In this case for the already found problems the recommendations will have inside-out approach. This implies as to the study and observations made some of the challenges of SMEs in Woalia sodo are able to be managed by SMEs owners by themselves and others can be managed and covered by government, financial institutions and the concerned stack holders. Moreover, most of the previous studies conducted on SMEs in Ethiopia they suggest to fill their challenges almost all forward to the government, but as to this study researcher considered that for the SMEs challenges in Ethiopia, Woalaita Sodo town, the SMEs themselves, the government and other concerned stakeholders would be in collaboration responsible in order to solve the stated problems and to enhance the SMEs.

Therefore, the government and other stack holders should supply working place/land and financial accessibilities/credit to the SMES. Since the SMEs owners have weakness in vertical communication the SMEs administrative offices should give awareness and information to the enterprises, so that they can make easily vertical communications to the concerned offices and solve their tangible problems. In other ways, the SMEs have no information and access on managerial knowledge skills improvement training, so the SMEs administrative office should arrange trainings and related knowledge gap filling options to the enterprises and they also make available short-term trainings on business record keeping and business plan preparations. Moreover, it as to the enterprises owners that to create good working environment and team sprite on their working place for their success. The government and other stakeholders should also provide marker linkage and networking for the SMEs new product and services. In view of the fact that, the SMEs are the back ground of the growing economy Ethiopia, they need great and appreciable support from the government in order to overcome and reduce the poverty level of the country and to create job opportunity.

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