

WOMEN AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: EVIDENCE FROM LEBANON AND UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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Abstract

Background. The principle reason for this paper is to completely understand females' business involvement in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) zone. Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates provide a good environment for research about women's status in business and this topic requires more thorough exploration.

Research aims. The purpose of the article is an initial analysis of women's situation in the Arab countries and assessment of the risks and open doors for women who are willing to own and work their establishments all through the MENA region, however the remarkable attention was given to two chosen nations from the region: Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates.

Methodology. The paper is in light of composing a review of the conducted research and data gathered on females' business in MENA area. It takes into consideration studies done on women in Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates and the analysis of figures and tables. Thus, it is a literature review and an analysis of secondary resources of data.

Key findings. Females' business has not reached its full capability. Now is the time to enhance women's entrepreneurship. Women in Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates are still facing several social, cultural, and economic obstacles as part of the workforce. The ability of administrations both to generate measures that are valid, reactive, and inclusive and to improve gender orientation balance is crucial.

Keywords: business, women, participation, MENA.

INTRODUCTION

Both men and women are a driving force for development, economic growth, and well-being. Yet, despite their dynamism, women still

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have unequal access to schools, jobs, and leadership positions in many regions of the globe.

Worldwide concern in females' entrepreneurship progress and the investigation of the supportive strategies has developed in the modern years. This strategy awareness is strengthened by two main evidences: first, the gender gap in business activity among females and males shed the light on variation in chances, and second, the underdevelopment of females' entrepreneurship signifies untapped development and success prospective (OECD, 2012a).

The main concerns of decision makers in the advancing Middle East and North African nations include generating job opportunities, decreasing poverty and improving the private sector.

In the advanced MENA (Gulf) markets, the importance seems to be focused more on domestic effectiveness, financial divergence, and larger presence of inhabitants in the local employment marketplace.

Most of the states' Constitutions comprise requirements for the equivalent privileges of females and equal opportunity in all aspects of the social order. In some circumstances, governments incorporate particular focuses for integrating more females into the workforce play (OECD, 2012b).

Minnitti and Naude (2010) clarify that considering female endeavour adds to our comprehension of business and human lead and allows researchers to make investigations which shed light not just on what legitimate reason females accept in their activities, additionally on the linkages among huge business and riches creation, human capital gathering, work business segment development, and different others.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The Middle East and North Africa region's background

Nabli (2008) mentions that the Middle East and North Africa area is considered as Arab countries in Asia, Africa, and North Africa. The nations that form the Arab world are variously positioned regarding size, geology, and level of wage, regular resource endowments, monetary structures, human capital and abilities, social structures, financial arrangements, organizations, and some more.

Agreeing with Azzam (2002), the Arab countries face enormous challenges as they move into the twenty-first century. The strengths driving changes experienced all through the worldwide economy are clear. Another era of Arab administration has begun to surface in a few Arab nations, one that is acquainted with innovative world, which grasps a worldwide vision and can reasonably seek to adopt first world countries' measures of prominence. More rapid economic growth is essential to solve the region's employment problem and achieve prosperity.

According to Mirkin (2013), building solid, reasonable majority rules systems from the rubble of fizzled fascisms is a long, moderate procedure with numerous considerable impediments. It obliges rebuilding government foundations, particularly protected change, great initiative, ability to trade off, reasonable and delegate decisions, the right to speak freely and express appreciation for human rights in society, in addition to other matters. While the Arab Region is encountering the same demographic move to lower populace development and ripeness that different nations have officially experienced, for some nations in the area, the move is happening at a fundamentally slower pace or sometimes has slowed down. The changing age structure, consolidated with other demographic patterns in nations of the Arab region, represents a large group of genuine difficulties to the administrations in such countries as unemployment, underemployment and employment creation, low work power interest, insufficient females' strengthening, ecological corruption, nourishment and water deficiencies, fast urbanization, and the procurement of administrations.

Nadereh, Klapper and Muzi (2008) note that advancing females' business can halfway address these three difficulties (occupations creation, financial structure change, empowering women) and produce a unit of women pioneers.

The essence of female entrepreneurship in the global context

The female business is progressively the worldwide consciousness issue being explored in both developed and developing nations. Starting in the U.S., additionally the U.K., females' venture examination is right now coordinated via analysts around the globe. The mid-1990s, as female's number increased both as business visionaries and political performing actors, saw investigations of female entrepreneurial conduct being roused by women's activist speculations (Hurley, 1999; Greer & Greene, 2003). For Estrin and Mickiewicz (2011), despite the

fact that women enterprise all over the world is a minority, there is a significant variety crosswise nations.

Women in business tend to face more noticeable hindrances compared to men in getting the chance to credit as a delayed consequence of “proficient” and business disillusionments and confined data of the needs of females drove associations. They are frequently not assisted by standard budgetary and business change organization suppliers, and they significantly need access to standard business frameworks and business opportunities. This is particularly the case in developing countries (OECD, 2012a).

Based on Allen *et al.* (2008), exploration shows that females around the world are beginning new business by around 66% the rates witnessed for men. For Moreno and Wach (2014), women usually have less entrepreneurial profile, which means they are less willing to start their own business than men.

One of the earliest overarching frameworks for women’s entrepreneurship research is: Brush’s (1992) “integrated perspective”. The principle reason of this viewpoint was that numerous, if not most, female business people do not see their organisations as discrete financial elements but instead as efforts tied up with different parts of their lives-especially their familial connections and obligations (Jennings & Brush, 2013).

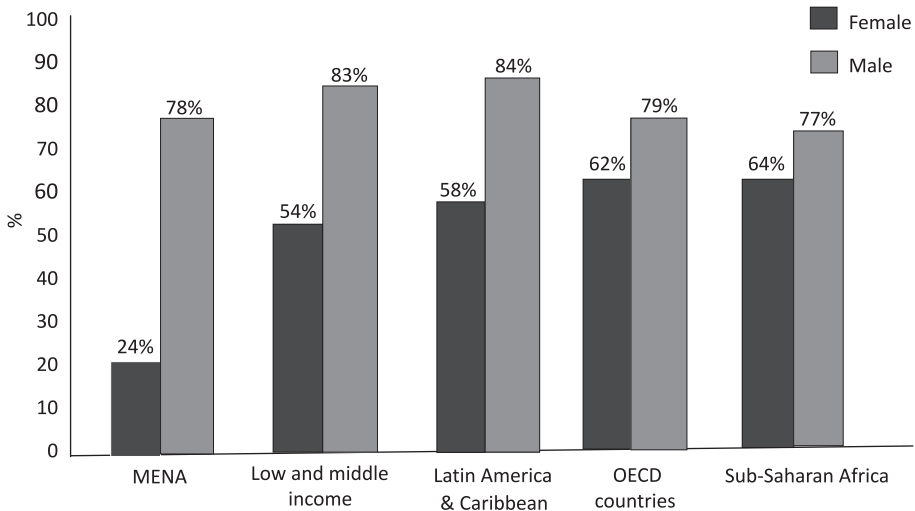


Figure 1. Male and female labour force participation rates in 2011 as indicated by the selected regions of the world

Source: OECD (2014).

Figure 1 shows the male and female participation rates in employment in different regions. It is evident that the greatest distinction in rate of men and women work power exists in the MENA district contrasted with different nations and the numbers show that the gap is immense and a great deal must be done to minimise it.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The purpose of the article is an introductory finding of women's circumstance in the Arab nations and evaluation of the hindrances for women who are willing to own and work their organisations all through the MENA district, however the exceptional consideration was paid to two chosen nations from the area, to be specific: Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates.

Lebanon is located in the heart of the Middle East. It has always been one of the most important cultural, social, and economic centres in the region. In the past 30 years, Lebanon witnessed numerous economic and political turbulences that affected development, including women's economic participation and empowerment.

For Jamali, Sidani and Safieddine (2005), Lebanon is among the Arab nations that have permitted females as far as possible duties outside the standard mother-home parts. Sidani (2002) explains that this is a direct result of a couple reasons, a considerable bit of which are bizarre to Lebanon. Estimations about women eagerness for the cash related, educational, and political circles do not describe a story that is extraordinary.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is considered as a greatly dynamic money related and entrepreneurial environment. The UAE society is unequivocally affected by religion and society, particularly in appreciation to women's part in the general public.

The proposition in this paper assumes that women's entrepreneurship in Arab countries is faced by numerous obstacles and continuous struggles in different areas including economic participation.

The paper is a literature review of the conducted research and data gathered on females' business in MENA area. The article quotes and examines the statistical data of such organizations and institutions as the World Bank (WB), the United Nations (UNDP), (ILO), (OECD), (IDRC), (GEM), the U.S. Central Investigating Agency (CIA), and

(HDR). It takes into consideration studies done on women in Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates and the analysis of figures and tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Women entrepreneurs' situation in MENA region – indications from Lebanon and United Arab Emirates

The past 30 years in the MENA region have been marked by citizen calls for greater openness and integrity of the public sector, gender equality, and inclusive growth. Indeed, MENA countries face many structural challenges including high unemployment, limited competition, pervasive corruption, and gaps in equality between men and women (OECD/CAWTAR, 2014). The access to education seems to be a crucial issue while discussing the situation of women entrepreneurs in MENA at all three levels – primary, secondary, and tertiary ones (Figure 2).

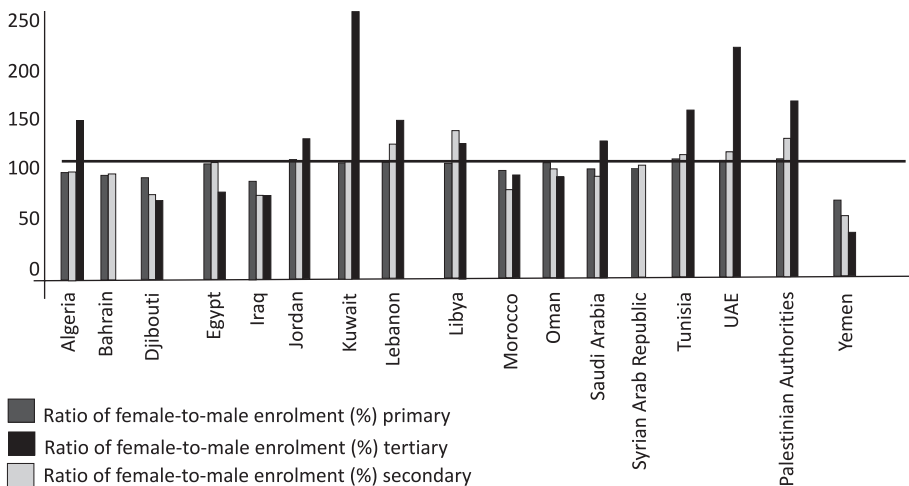


Figure 2. Female-to-male enrolment ratio in MENA economies in the years 1976–2011 (for each available year of the period)

Source: OECD (2014).

Based on the above figure, it seems that in education the picture is brighter. The gap between males and females is not that big. The

female-to-male extent in vital and discretionary direction is high in various countries. This is an important social, cultural, and economic indicator that has the ability to pave the way for equality in the long run. On the one hand, in Lebanon it can be noticed that the proportion of female to male enlistment is approximately close at all levels (between 100% and 120%). On the other hand, in the United Arab Emirates the rate at the tertiary and secondary is the same (100%) while the big difference is at the primary level (about 170%).

Nadereh, Klapper and Muzi (2008) explain that business enterprise is one of the undiscovered potential sources of development in MENA. It is influenced by earlier work experience and by training. Three primary variables may clarify why there are fewer females in business in this district than in others:

1. State of mind toward females and work may be less great to working women and, by augmentation, to feminine business.

2. Sexually unbiased impediments could have gender isolated effects. Awkward and extreme approach for opening a business and uncertain conceivable outcomes of recovering assets from a failed attempt may be more troublesome for women to succeed.

3. The locale's business and speculation laws are generally unbiased or gender orientation blind.

These factors make it necessary to address some of the main obstacles and challenges that face MENA women in their entrepreneurship process and in the struggle to become a major player in the development and modernisation of their countries.

Arab women entrepreneurs' barriers and challenges

According to McVay (1999), there have been various studies on the qualities and difficulties of females in business in MENA. The objective of the business improvement bolster (BDS) system is to help new and existing smaller scale, little, and medium-sized ventures (MSMEs) turn out to be steadier and develop so they can enhance the job of families, produce employments and add to financial development.

In response to a BDS survey in the MENA region carried out in 2013, associations distinguished various difficulties confronting the advancement of females' business enterprise in MENA economies, for example (OECD, 2014):

1. **Cultural and Social Barriers.** There are a number of cultural barriers to women's economic participation which, along with domestic constraints that limit women's career options, result in low work power support rates of females. They also often lack family support and have to struggle with conflicting family and business responsibilities (OECD, 2014).

2. **Accessing Financing.** Women entrepreneurs face difficulties in obtaining financing especially from banks. One of the reasons, although not the only one, is women's lack of property which could be used as collateral to secure loans. BDS organisations see access to financing a serious issue because, after providing women with BDS services, a woman entrepreneur's plans can be dissatisfied because she is unable to secure financing for her project (OECD, 2014).

3. **Lack of Skills.** Women tend to lack skills in marketing, accounting, and financial management as well as knowledge and experience of legal requirements, business planning, and budgeting; all these affect the development, sustainability, and growth of their businesses (OECD, 2014). Attributable to particular gender orientation aspects in Middle Eastern nations, women are esteemed as deficient with regards to the abilities required for taking part in expert vocations and basically seen as useless to men and, in this manner, normally inadmissible for administration professions (Al-Lamki, 1999), disregarding the way that it has been demonstrated that gender presentation stereotyping way are progressing (Jamali *et al.*, 2005; Abouchedid, 2007).

4. **Lack of Supportive Structures for Women who want to Start and Develop an Enterprise.** Negative mentality toward generalisations of females in the working environment keep on being reflected in oppressive hierarchical practices through biased administrative enlistment and determination procedures, training and advancement opportunities, execution assessment methods, and advancement (Anker, 1997; Cleveland *et al.*, 2000; Kottke & Agars, 2005; Schein, 2007; Simpson *et al.*, 2004; Wright & Crockett-Tellei, 1994).

Indications from Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates

Lebanon

The Lebanese women who live in a turbulent economic, social, and political environment are ambitious and continuously look toward improving and developing themselves. They can effectively deal with

the confused work-family adjust trying to demonstrate that they find themselves able to raise a decent family and put their abilities in distinctive employments outside their homes. The Lebanese society is one in which the woman holds on different responsibilities. Lebanese women follow their fellows in developed countries in education and seek high positions in both private and public sectors. Lebanese women, if given the needed support, can play a crucial role in development and their skills, if well-invested, can positively influence the jobs and roles they are given.

The circumstance of female's business visionaries in Lebanon is generally more positive than in different nations in the MENA region. Lebanese females do not experience the hard effects of any formal or legitimate separation in setting up organisations, gaining formal advances from banks, or owning property and assets. Nonetheless, women's business enterprise is still low contrasted with men's: just 10.1% of females are autonomously utilised, appeared differently in relation to 33.9% for men (UNDP, 2008, p. 31).

Abdo and Kerbage (2012) add that in any case, the nonappearance of legitimate oppression of women business visionaries in Lebanon does not interpret into a great situation for setting up organisations. The laws are gender orientation ruled, implying that they do not encourage females to beat the casual separation that women confront in the public arena and the economy. Likewise, women who have effectively begun undertakings ordinarily need access to training and business improvement administrations which would help them to grow these.

In light of Jamali, Sidani and Safeiddine (2005), a study was begun to review the prerequisites experienced by Lebanese females' directors all through their vocations looking into the characteristics of the Lebanese socio-cultural environment, interviews were coordinated with 52 Lebanese females' bosses in various fields of occupation. It got to be obvious that the imperatives confronting Lebanese females can be classified into three fundamental sorts/classifications:

1. The socio-cultural environment: Lebanon in actuality appears to offer no exceptional case to Middle-Eastern worth structures that underline the title role of females as mothers and homemakers. Patriarchal men are still settled in, knowing that expanding monetary need is driving men to accept females' business (Jamali, Sidani & Safeiddine, 2005).

2. The corporate environment: Lebanese females are still witnessing a higher occupation risk than their male partners. It is typically seen that females' family and neighbourhood responsibilities will begin things out (Jamali, Sidani, & Safeiddine, 2005).

3. The basic environment: Adjacent to social and attitudinal checks, the females chatted with, identified unmistakable purposes of control, including staying away from formal and fulfilling structures, the nonappearance of isolating benefits, and corporate developmental assignments that are used to be created by a senior male director (Jamali, Sidani, & Safeiddine, 2005).

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has moved from one of the poorest nations on the planet to a pay level in every valuable sense questionable to that of the industrialised countries. Today little and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the UAE contribute 30% of GDP and records for 86% of business (Nicola, 2009). For Erogul (2014) also, the augmentation of the SME and private division is huge to further job period.

Kargwell (2012) explains that the United Arab Emirates oversaw by righteousness its financial strategy taking into account the rule of free economy to encourage improvement in distinctive monetary segments. It takes a critical place all around and pulls in the consideration of speculators around the world. Emirati women had assumed a vital part in all parts of life. Notwithstanding the monetary and social challenges which constrained their investment; by and by they had dealt with their conditions.

From data collected largely through interviews (Haan, 2004), it would appear that most families in the UAE support women entrepreneurs in their plans to go into business. Many women indicated that they had received either active or moral support. And yet, some do indicate a "neutral" or "discouraging stance" taken by family members. The battle is adjusting family commitments with entrepreneurial desire is considerably more apparent in the view of conceivable reasons there may be for the little number of Emirati females business visionaries.

According to Naser *et al.* (2009), young females were connected by the supporting role of a wife and a mother instead of encouraging them to develop their occupations. Baud and Mahgoub (2001), note that gradually, this has been changed surprisingly in light of the fact

that females are currently being urged to get advanced education before marriage. Then again, some different issues are as yet confining women's work market decisions. Confinements of women's geographic portability is restricting their choices both as far as openness to instruction and jobs.

For Nelson (2004), Emirati females have made uncommon walks regarding overcoming social hindrances and are entering the work areas in expanding numbers. Undoubtedly, they can be seen as potential foundations of the UAE economy later on.

Finally, if we are to compare Lebanon and United Arab Emirates, it is important to note that obstacles linked to society and culture in its wide aspects is evident in both countries. This is ordinary since the two countries belong to the same region and it is expected to witness, even if small, a number of common shared beliefs and values in relationship to employment and gender issues.

On the other hand, when comparing Lebanon and United Arab Emirates to the MENA region as a whole, the World Bank (2013) report about gender equality and development in MENA shows that in late decades, extending economic chances have drawn substantial shares of females into the formal economy around the world. In MENA, however, considerable interests in women's human capital have not been coordinated by expansions in financial cooperation. Moreover, and based on the same report, social and cultural standards manage the "do's" and "don'ts" of individual ordinary behaviour (Portes, 2006). In the MENA region, these standards place high esteem on females' part inside of the home and family and her interests in family life. This enhances our discussion of the clear and direct obstacles faced by women in Lebanon and United Arab Emirates as part of the MENA region.

CONCLUSIONS

Notwithstanding supported endeavours and numerous positive steps including executed strategies and measures to diminish gender orientation gaps, huge gender separations continue in the MENA nations. The capacity of governments both to create arrangements that are confirmation driven, responsive and comprehensive and to advance gender orientation balance is basic to accomplishing worldwide fairness and comprehensive development (OECD, 2014).

Advancement of females as business people can fill no less than two essential needs while adding to a constructive move in societal judgements about the part of women in the economy (OECD, 2012b):

- By testing generalisations and fortifying the social authenticity of their part as business people.
- By giving good examples that can move more women to consider business as an alternative.

Summarising, the following actions are recommended to improve the environment for women's entrepreneurship in MENA countries (OECD, 2014):

- to make more consciousness of the part and significance of female entrepreneurship in generating more value-added and competitiveness in the economy and promote the spirit of entrepreneurship among women more actively;
- to implement laws and regulations to better integrate women entrepreneurs in the market system;
- to provide entrepreneurship education in schools and universities, especially for women;
- to create dedicated funds to assist the improvement of females' business;
- to foster opportunities for women entrepreneurs to network with, and learn from, regionally and internationally successful women entrepreneurs.

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KOBIETY I PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚĆ: PRZEGLĄD BADAŃ DOTYCZĄCYCH LIBANU I ZJEDNOCZONYCH EMIRATÓW ARABSKICH

Abstrakt

Tło badań. Głównym powodem, dla którego powstał niniejszy artykuł, jest chęć pokazania, jak funkcjonuje kobiecy biznes w krajach Środkowego Wschodu i Afryki Północnej (MENA).

Cel badań. Celem artykułu jest wstępne rozpoznanie położenia kobiet w krajach MENA i ocena ryzyka oraz szans, na jakie natrafiają te spośród nich, które chcą podjąć własną działalność gospodarczą czy pracę. Szczególną uwagę poświęcono dwóm wybranym państwom tego regionu – Zjednoczonym Emiratom Arabskim i Libanowi.

Metodologia. Artykuł ten stanowi przegląd istniejących wyników badań oraz opiera się na analizie danych statystycznych dotyczących kobiecego biznesu w rejonie MENA. Wzięto w nim pod uwagę analizy przedstawiające położenie kobiet w Libanie i Zjednoczonych Emiratach Arabskich.

Kluczowe wnioski. Kobiecy biznes nie osiągnął pełni swoich możliwości. Z punktu widzenia ekonomicznego i społecznego ważny jest wzrost przedsiębiorczości kobiet. Dużą rolę odgrywa administracja państwowa, która może podjąć działania o charakterze wzmacniającym i włączającym kobiety, które to działania doprowadziłyby do większego zrównoważenia relacji między płciami w biznesie.

Słowa kluczowe: biznes, kobieta, udział, MENA.