

ABSTRACT

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) contribute a lot to the economy. In Pakistan entrepreneurship contribute over 30% to the GDP and 25% to the country's total export earnings (SMEDA, 2019). Pakistan has the lowest rate of female entrepreneurship in the world, with only 1% of female entrepreneurs compared to the 21% of male entrepreneurs. Access to finance is one of the worst factors preventing females to be entrepreneurs; only 5% of females have access to formal credit (World Bank- Survey 2017). However, the number of females in the field of entrepreneurship is increasing but their survival seems difficult. It is not easy for women in comparison to men because of societal perceived behaviour i.e. female entrepreneurs lack entrepreneurial attributes and role of female is mainly for housekeeping. They are bound to follow religious prescriptions and they cannot exceed their limits and so on. So given the importance of female entrepreneurship in the context of Pakistan, this research aims to find out entrepreneurial attributes possessed by them and their response to risk and to extract the extent to which female entrepreneurs avoid using external sources of finance due to the credit terms and conditions imposed as a result of glass ceiling effect. Research carried out the survey of female entrepreneurs in Hyderabad city of Pakistan who are using external sources of funding. The targeted females were involved in trade of textile, stitching, parlour servicing, vocational centre and traditional accessories. Data is collected through random sampling and analysed using SPSS. Research model consists of four independent variables i.e. awareness about available sources of finance, access to source of finance, entrepreneurial attributes and risk taking propensity; a dependent variable i.e. female entrepreneurs and an intervening variable i.e. credit conditions. For finding the mediation effect, the Baron and Kenny's mediation model was followed by putting each value in the model and their mathematical calculations thereon. Mediation model resulted in partial mediation that indicates that somehow female's decision to go for external financing is effected by the credit conditions.

Female scored high in leadership, autonomy, low need of support and high endurance but still they seems to be risk averse. However, this suggests that there are other factors too,

that effect female led business growth and success like social, cultural and religious factors.