Path to entrepreneurial success: the journey of women CEOs

Aksanti SHAMAMBA Patient ¹ and Linda Yollande Muhigwa ¹

¹Affiliation not available

May 29, 2024
Path to entrepreneurial success: the journey of women CEOs

By Patient Aksanti Shamamba* et Linda Yollande Muhigwa **

*: Bachelor in Economics and Management and Master 1 in Management of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises at the Catholic University of Bukavu (UCB) and Entrepreneur.

**: Master of Economics and Management with a Financial Management option at the Catholic University of Bukavu (UCB).

Correspondent email address: aksanti.shamamba@ucbukavu.ac.cd

BUKAVU / DRC
Path to entrepreneurial success: the journey of women CEOs

Abstract

With several hats: women, mothers and wives; women entrepreneurs continue to have successful businesses. What makes the female business owner different?

This study uses a qualitative approach to examine the careers of women entrepreneurs who are business leaders. Our results show that entrepreneurship is essential in the career of women business owners as a necessity and an emergency, an alternative to leaving unemployment. 90% of the women surveyed started entrepreneurial activities just after their marriage with the support of their husbands. During their journey, the birth of children had become a source of motivation. With the concern for independence and despite the difficulties related to the reconciliation of family and work, entrepreneurship for these women is transformed into a professional life. The journey of women entrepreneurs is summarized in four points: risk-taking, vision, exploitation of opportunities and financial resources. In conclusion, these women are mompreneurs.

Key-word: Mumpreneurs, Women entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurship, Motivation.

Subject classification codes: M13, C25, J16
1. Introduction

With tensions between social representations of femininity; women mothers, wives, and also successful women entrepreneurs (see Paula, 2009), researchers are invited to re-examine the concept of entrepreneurship from its origin (Jennings, Perren & Carter, 2005; d'Andria & Gabarret, 2017) to understand the emergence of new profiles of entrepreneurs, such as mompreneurs (Cobe & Parlapiano, 2002; Richomme-Huet, Vial & d'Andria, 2013; Landour, 2015; Andria & Gabarret, 2015) and social entrepreneurs (d’Andria & Gabarret, 2017). Entrepreneurship must be studied from a dynamic perspective (Katz & Gartner, 1988; Hernandez, 2001; Sammut, 1999; Fayolle, 2004; Moreau, 2004), based on the different phases of the entrepreneurial process (Tounès, 2003) to build an explanatory model of entrepreneurial success or failure (Moreau, 2007).

The use of influential work as a theoretical basis has led researchers to focus on entrepreneurs and their psychological traits (Laveseur, 2016). Gartner’s (1988) call for researchers to go beyond the study of the entrepreneur and focus on the entrepreneurial activity and process, that is, what entrepreneurs do and not what they are. As a result, the entrepreneurial process includes all the functions, activities and actions associated with the detection of opportunities, risk-taking, strategy development, the creation of a new activity by combining means of production and gathering scarce resources Bygrave & Hofer (1991). This approach attributes the success of a company to the strategic actions of the entrepreneur (Moreau, 2007; Nadia, 2011).

Commonly called "female entrepreneurs" (d'Andria & Gabarret, 2017), women have been the subject of several studies in entrepreneurship (Cromie, 1987; Cromie & al., 1992; Buttner & Moore, 1997; Duchéneaut & Orhan 2000; Bird & Brush 2002; De Bruin, Brush & Welter 2007; Hughes & Jennings 2012; Jennings & Brush 2013; Léger-Jarnioui, Nelson & Chasserio 2015; Andria & Gabarret, 2017). The contribution of women resulting from the success of their entrepreneurial activity at both the microeconomic and macroeconomic levels is well established in the development of countries. The number of women-owned businesses has skyrocketed in recent decades, with one in three companies in the world owned by women, with considerable variations across regions. Ranging from a minimum of 18% in South Asia to a maximum of 50% in Latin America and the Caribbean (Halim, 2020), there is a growth of women business owners in the United States from 4.6% in 1972 to 42% in 2019 (American Express, 2019). American estimates show that since the 1980s, women have created businesses at a rate more than double
that of men (Brush 1992). In addition, in France, 40% of sole proprietorships were created by women in 2019, as well as 30% of women were identified as owners or heads of businesses compared to 48% of the entire female working population (Escandon, 2020). In Sub-Saharan Africa, about half of businesses are owned by women (WorldBank, 2019). According to World Bank statistics, in the DRC, there is a growth of 0.8 women business owners out of the total percentage of the female population employed from 1991 to 2019 (World Bank, 2022). In view of these statistics, the path of the female entrepreneur deserves special attention.

Several studies describe the factors of success (Moreau, 2007; Hannu, 2000; Lasch et al., 2005; Alexander, 2007; Wiklund, 1999; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2001) or failure (Bacq & al., 2016, McGrath, 1999; Smida & Khelil, 2010; Ucbasaran & al., 2012) of entrepreneurial activity without focusing on gender. However, Constantinidis (2014) show that work on women's entrepreneurship is organized around four general themes: the profile of women entrepreneurs; the profile of businesses run by women; the creation or takeover process; and how to be in business. Nevertheless, within these four themes, there are more studies on motivations (d'Andria, 2014; Hughes & Jennings, 2012; Andria & Gabarret, 2017; Jennings & Brush, 2013). Most of the empirical studies carried out so far have not analyzed the journey of women entrepreneurs from the beginning to the success or failure of their entrepreneurial activity.

Entrepreneurial failure for some authors refers to the discontinuity of entrepreneurial activity (Singh & al. 2007) and others to the economic failure of the new enterprise (Zacharakis & al., 1999; Smida & Khelil, 2010); whereas to measure entrepreneurial success, the authors use certain factors or successive variables to have an impact on the entrepreneur. In general, many variables are used to produce predictive models of entrepreneurial success, Hannu Litunen in 2000 found three variables influencing entrepreneurial success: the characteristics of the entrepreneur (knowledge, skills and competencies), external factors (push and pull), and the variable related to environmental characteristics. While Lasch & al. (2005) explain that entrepreneurial success is influenced by three components: the profile of the entrepreneur, preparation for creation and organizational characteristics such as financial resources. According to Hernandez (2001), there are two conceptions of entrepreneurial success, the first applies to any business created that survives in its market regardless of its size, the second concerns the performance of the new business. For Moreau (2007), the entrepreneurial success of a company comes down to remaining
active in its market for a minimum of three years. Thus the entrepreneur is at the center of his activity, it is for this reason that those who experience success are those who believe in it the most intensely and the longest (Wiklund, 1999). In this sense, McClelland (1961) reveal that the success of a business is linked to the personality of the entrepreneur. In view of the above, entrepreneurial success relates to the characteristics and skills of the entrepreneur to create and sustain a business over time while increasing market share in its sector.

Unknown, the journey of women entrepreneurs is explained only at the extremity, the beginning, and the success. And yet, it is difficult to tell the story of an entrepreneur by focusing on just two points, knowing that the whole journey remains connected. How did they get started? How did they succeed? What difficulties did they face? How and why did they persevere when so many others gave up? What do they have in common? These questions show us that it is important to analyse their experiences of their entrepreneurial journey in order to understand how they navigate this complex environment.

Numerous studies have reached conclusions about the motivations for creating an entrepreneurial activity, with some authors confirming the hypothesis that the creation of an activity is motivated by an opportunity and others by a necessity (pull and push motivation) (Moult and Anderson, 2005; D'andria and Gabarret, 2016).

In this work, we show that, beyond the creation of the business, the entrepreneur's journey is the result of a different lifestyle, not limited to the creation, but a path that includes all the actions related to the detection of opportunities, risk taking, the reconciliation of work and family life, difficulties in management, strategy development, the management of entrepreneurial activities through the combination of means of production and the collection of scarce resources. In short, the objective of this work is to examine the path through which women entrepreneurs and business owners go to achieve their success; the obstacles and threats they face; the opportunities they seize, the strengths they mobilize and the sacrifices made to achieve their success. This study is based on the following question: How did women entrepreneurs and business owners in the city of Bukavu achieve their success?
The "how" question calls for a qualitative approach. This work analyses the content of the direct interviews with women entrepreneurs who have succeeded in their business in the city of Bukavu through the software Nvivo 11.

The female entrepreneur from the city of Bukavu is a special case; victim of violence and witnesses of various so-called wars in eastern DRC, her entrepreneurial journey deserves special attention. Since 1998, the East of the DR Congo in general, and particularly the Province of South Kivu whose capital is the city of Bukavu, have been converted into sanctuaries of armed conflicts, having led to enormous consequences, including the worsening of poverty, looting, the burning of available economic structures (markets, stores, shops, etc.), the flight of certain foreign investors (Malinga Mwati, 2020). However, some women entrepreneurs have distinguished themselves despite these various recurring crises.

Apart from this introduction and conclusion, the first section explains the different factors of women's entrepreneurial motivation. A review of the literature on the entrepreneurial journey is presented in the second section, while the third section highlights the methodology of the study. It presents the data collection technique and explains how the data were processed. The fourth section presents, processes and discusses the results. Finally, the conclusion is given.

2. Theoretical approach

The theoretical model of our study is based on entrepreneurial motivation, in particular necessity and opportunity motivation (pull and push motivation), with a focus on the experiences of women entrepreneurs. Necessity-based entrepreneurial motivation is often triggered by external factors such as unemployment or economic insecurity, which force individuals to start their own business to support themselves. In contrast, opportunity entrepreneurial motivation is based on a positive and proactive view of entrepreneurship, encouraging individuals to take advantage of market opportunities and realise their career aspirations. However, women's entrepreneurial journey is characterised by specific challenges, including lack of recognition, gender stereotypes, discrimination, difficulties in accessing finance and professional networks, and work-life imbalance.
2.1. Entrepreneurial motivation

Studies in female entrepreneurship have developed a lot in recent years (Bird & Brush, 2002; De Bruin, Brush & Welter, 2007; Jennings & Brush, 2013; Léger-Jarniou, Nelson & Chasserio, 2015; d'Andria & Gabarret, 2017). Based on the theme of gender, the results on the motivations of women entrepreneurs are often different (Hughes & Jennings, 2012, d'Andria & Gabarret, 2017). Motivation is what causes the individual to act, think and change (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It designates the desires, the needs that explain the behavior of people (Kumar & al., 2003). It constitutes internal and external forces producing the initiation, direction, persistence and intensity of behavior (Vallerand & Thill, 1993). According to Onana (2011), motivation is a set of conscious and unconscious factors which influence behaviour and are the basis of everything that prompts the individual to action. It therefore has an abstract character. For Jones-Evans, (1995), the motivation of individuals to enter and stay in business is determined by a combination of factors rather than a single isolated factor. Thus the motivations can be like signals of rupture (Muchielli, 2001). They turn out to be signals marking moments of disruption in the life trajectory of individuals. These are forces that can be assimilated to triggering or stimulating factors in their immediate or personal environment that act and lead the individual to deviate from his trajectory (Onana, 2011).

As a result, the motivations for starting a business differ little between men and women according to most studies. For women entrepreneurs, the desire to create their own job allowing a balance between professional and family life is often presented as a main motivation (Borgas & al, 2008; Duchéneaut & Orhan, 2000; Brush, 1990; Holmquist & Sundin, 1990). Thus, challenge and self-determination were identified as the most important factors, followed by work-family balance and lastly frustration with career advancement opportunities, including discrimination (Buttner & Moore, 1997). By analyzing the distinction between the motivations of women and those of men entrepreneurs, several studies have noted that women tend to prioritize social and economic goals, while men seek monetary rewards (Cadieux, Lorrain & Hugron, 2002; Holmquist & Sundin, 1988). However, even if the balance between work and family turns out to be an important component of motivation for some categories of women, it is not for other categories (Buttner & Moore, 1997; Brush, DeBruin & Welter, 2014).
Other studies have come to similar results in that they indicate that women place more emphasis on intrinsic goals (Manolova, Brush & Edelman, 2008; Cornet, Constantinidis & Asendéi, 2003; Kirkwood, 2003). This helps to explain the fact that women-owned businesses are often smaller and less growth oriented than those of their male counterparts (Minniti, Arenius & Langowitz, 2004; Orser, Hogarth-Scott & Wright, 1997). According to Louart (1997) the concept of motivation serves to translate the dynamic aspects of human life. For him, the concept explains the links between the activation of internal energy and its orientation towards particular goals. He emphasizes that man acts in directions that can be interpreted causally or projectively. For the first perception, motivation is the fruit of more or less conscious determinations. In the second, it mobilizes the subject towards goals constructed from representations and issues that he sees for himself.

The contradictory results of several studies on the motivation of female entrepreneurs require us to think in another way. Thus, according to analyses of work on the motivation of women entrepreneurs, the sources are heterogeneous from socio-economic motivations to personal motivations and that women become entrepreneurs by virtue of a complex mixture of constraints and opportunities.

2.1.1. The push and pull theory

Work on motivations is more and more numerous, according to Onana (2011), two theoretical families are given in the study of the motivations from which the entrepreneur can embark on an entrepreneurial process. The theory of contents which explains “by what one is motivated” while the processual theory of motivations explains rather “how one is motivated”. The literature on entrepreneurship traditionally considers the creation of a business as an exclusive choice or a constraint. Originally developed by Shapero (1975, 1982) and Vesper (1980) then taken up by Gilad and Levine (1986) and Schjoedt and Shaver, 2007, the pull and push approach explains the causes that lead a person to create his own business. In the logic of this theory, two motivational orientations are distinguished: "the opportunity" or chosen entrepreneurship, in the case of pull theory, and "necessity", or sudden entrepreneurship, in the case of push theory (Oxenfeldt, A., (1943), Acs & al., 2005; (Reynolds, Bygrave, Autio, Cox & Hay, 2002).
However, Brenner R. (1987) explains that great entrepreneurs are born and are generally trained in adversity. Regarding the pull and push approach, in the first case, an entrepreneur, attracted by a business opportunity or by a desire for independence, decides to set up a business. This creation, underpinned by pull factors, is called “opportunity” motivation. In the second case, the individual not finding an alternative job or feeling dissatisfied with his current job is solo pushed as a forced decision to start a business or take over a business (Hakim C., 1989 and Aronson R., 1991) to cope with negative situations (Mallon M., 1998). However, Mallon adds that few of them subsequently wish to return to a salaried job, even if they were initially forced to create.

2.2. Entrepreneurial journey and success

The entrepreneurial process is a journey of an individual who, at some point in his or her life, questions the act of entrepreneurship, prepares for it and prepares to give an entrepreneurial orientation to his or her professional life (Fayolle, 2003). Based on female entrepreneurship, women still face specific obstacles in their entrepreneurial journey (Carter, S., Anderson, S., & Shaw, E., 2001; Landour, 2015; Querrec, 2018; Escandon, 2020). Firstly, women face prejudices, stereotypes of all kinds and barriers that are often internalized by women entrepreneurs themselves (see Escandon, 2020). They may be seen as less competent or less ambitious than their male counterparts, which can hinder their ability to find funding or gain respect from their peers. This can also affect their self-confidence and motivation to pursue their careers.

In addition, women face challenges in terms of work/life balance (Korsgaard, 2007; Richomme-Huet & Vial, 2014; d’Andria and Gabarret, 2017). They are more responsible for family work and childcare, which may limit their ability to devote time and energy to their business. This may also make them more vulnerable to stress and burnout.

Finally, women may face barriers in terms of access to finance, investment, and networking (see Richomme-Huet & Vial, 2014; Landour, 2015; Escandon, 2020). Investors and business partners may tend to favour men over women. Women also tend to have fewer professional networks than men, which can make them more isolated and give them fewer prospects in terms of business opportunities.
As a result, the entrepreneurial journey from intention to entrepreneurial success is represented as a period during which the entrepreneur faces several constraints and implements several strategies to achieve the goal of success.

Entrepreneurial success, in contrast to failure, which is observed through default or bankruptcy, is a complex phenomenon and includes many criteria, both financial and non-financial (Gorgievski, 2010; Orser, 2009; Stephan et al., 2015). The diversity of aspects that entrepreneurs value and seek to achieve implies that it is necessary to extend the traditional definition of economic success to a more comprehensive definition that includes many pecuniary and non-pecuniary criteria. (Stephan, 2015).

3. Methodological approach

This part is subdivided into three sections. The first focuses on grounded theorization, the second looks at the techniques used to collect data from women entrepreneurs, and the third focuses on the presentation of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

3.1. Grounded theorization

It was with the aim of filling the gap between the theoretical and empirical approaches that the grounded theorization was first proposed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The main objective of grounded theorizing is to generate a theory "anchored" in the data empirical (Tremblay, 2010). According to the latter, the grounded theorization is done without a formal starting framework, the researcher collects data in the field and throughout his data quest, and he proceeds to construct his model using a structured analysis method (Paillé, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). After analysis, each new data is compared to the emerging theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Studies in entrepreneurship using ingrained theorization are increasingly numerous (Tremblay, 2010; Paula, 2010; Fedenia, 2005; Ullmen, 2002; Markman, Phan, Balkin & Gianiodis, 2005; Siu, Lin, Fang & Liu, 2006). When it comes to a new research subject arising from an observation of a particular phenomenon and often on a large scale, grounded theorizing is an impeccable choice of good method. (Eisenhardt, 1989). In pursuing our research objective, grounded theorizing was the best method to properly illustrate the paths of women entrepreneurs: we referred to the work of
Paula (2009), Tremblay (2010), Lavasseur (2016), Nongaineba, (2018) to develop our study model and develop theories adapted to the realities studied, such as Turner's (1983) vision.

3.2. Collection of data.

Our approach consisting in understanding the journey of successful women business owners, we needed a methodology capable of telling this dynamic. The subsection presents sampling techniques and the conduct of the investigation itself.

3.2.1. Sampling and the actual survey.

In this study, we followed a qualitative approach (d’Andria, 2014, Richomme-Huet, K. & d’Andria, 2013). The sample is not predetermined, does not require a large size (Avenier & Thomas, 2015) or even statistically representative, it is rather defined throughout the research (Lavasseur, 2016), as is done particularly in the founded or grounded theory. This process is referred to in the literature as theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Locke, 2001; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). To do this, we carried out a step-by-step data collection respecting the semantic saturation criterion. In the last stage of data collection, it was important in our study to use the snowball sampling method (Quivy & Campenhout, 1995). The target population of this study is made up of successful women entrepreneurs. Data available to the Federation of Enterprises of Congo (FEC)\(^1\)/South Kivu report 102 women entrepreneurs affiliated in June 2019 in South Kivu. They collect information on women entrepreneurs and their businesses. Based on semantic saturation, the study favoured 10 women entrepreneurs via a qualitative analysis built around individual interviews. The women were chosen on the basis of the type of activity, the reputation and the number of branches, drawing on the database provided by the Federation of Enterprises of Congo (FEC).

The survey was carried out in accordance with the basic principles of theoretical sampling and the criterion of semantic saturation. As a result, the investigation takes place in two stages. First, with the list of women entrepreneurs in Bukavu, we contacted these women to make an appointment, some numbers not being accessible at the time, so we thought it best to go to the headquarters of these companies. This approach allowed us to have a total of 8 women.

---

\(^1\) The Federation of Enterprises of Congo is an employers’ organization in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, governed by the provisions of Law No. 004/2001 of July 20, 2001 with representation in each province.
entrepreneurs. As the grounded theorization advocates, we went through the transcription of that data and then we did a content analysis.

We then proceeded with a second data collection. We wanted to use the list again but without success. Some women were travelling, others were always rescheduling appointments. Thus, by always communicating with the president of the FEC, she has led us to other successful women. This is where snowball sampling was applied.

Arriving at the 10th respondent, the next one had not brought us any more interesting new information, in accordance with the criterion of semantic saturation. It was wise to stop at the 10th woman entrepreneur.

The data was collected on the basis of an interview guide in whom the women were called upon to narrate their entrepreneurial journeys. Data collection on women entrepreneurs was carried out from April 29 to July 22, 2019.

To deepen the data analysis, we did the content analysis (Andreani & Conchon, 2005). All the material was then imported into an Nvivo project. It is from this software that the analysis by rooted theory was carried out. All the coding and use procedure in the data analysis under Nvivo was respected (Strauss 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998a; Turner 1983, Glaser & Strauss 1967, Berelson, 1952).

3.3 Characteristics of the sample

The table below gives us more information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.
### TABLE N°1: PROFILES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS INTERVIEWED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent’s number</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Civil status</th>
<th>Study level</th>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Sectors</th>
<th>Expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 1 (E1)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Trade, building, breeding, ...</td>
<td>Over 30 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 2 (E2)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Graduated and more</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Trade, agriculture and animal husbandry</td>
<td>Over 18 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 3 (E3)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>Over 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 4 (E4)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>General trade</td>
<td>+ 25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 5 (E5)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Commerce, hotels, buildings, etc.</td>
<td>Over 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 6 (E6)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Graduated and more</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hotel, inn and general commerce</td>
<td>+ 7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 7 (E7)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Pentecostal</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Bakery and general trade</td>
<td>Over 26 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 8 (E8)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Restaurant, building and hotel industry</td>
<td>Over 40 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 9 (E9)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Graduated and more</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>General trade</td>
<td>Over 17 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 10 (E10)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>General trade</td>
<td>Over 15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>± 22 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data collected in the field

In view of this table, 70% of women are married but with a portion of 30% of widows. A total of 10% of women have a graduate degree, 30% have a state diploma and went to university but did not reach the graduate diploma, 30% are state graduates, 10% stopped at the primary school certificate and finally 20% did not see the school benches. Experience being a key element in entrepreneurial success, 40% of women entrepreneurs have more than 25 years of experience in entrepreneurial activities, while 50% have 10 to 25 years of experience in entrepreneurship and 10% of the women surveyed have more than 7 years of experience in entrepreneurial activities.
With regard to children, 20% of the women surveyed have 4 children, while 80% of the women surveyed have more than 4 children as shown in the table above.

The results of the mean test on our samples showed that the average age of the entrepreneurs interviewed was 56 years, with an average family size of six children. Regarding the average level of education, our results show that the women interviewed have a university degree. In terms of sector of activity, the women interviewed invest in all sectors (general trade).

4. Analyses, interpretation and discussions of the results

This part revolves around the presentation of the career of women entrepreneurs and finally, it discusses the results.

4.1. Success path for women entrepreneurs.

Most of us know their names, and use their services. But most of the time, we don't know much about them or their background. They are women entrepreneurs who have stood out among the rest in our region. How did they get started? How did they make it a success? What difficulties did they have to face? How and why have they persisted, where so many others give up? What do they have in common? And of course, what lessons can we take away from it, whether we are already an entrepreneur or whether we plan to become one?

4.1.1. The beginning.

Entrepreneurship research has long developed the idea that the decision to start a business is the result of a maximization process in which the individual compares the potential income from different activities and chooses the most profitable solution (Arenius & Minniti, 2005; D'andria & Gabarrat, 2016). This idea has allowed the expansion of many works known as “push / pull” motivation or even necessity / opportunity (Johnson & Darnell, 1976, Shapero, 1975, Shapero & Sokol, 1982; Vesper, 1980). Indeed, according to this theory, an individual will turn to entrepreneurship if this option allows him a better economic return, either in the case of a lack of employment (push), or because he hopes to earn more (pull) (D'andria & Gabarrat, 2016, Reynolds & al, 2001).
4.1.1.1. Entrepreneurship as a necessity and / or an opportunity

In the comments collected, entrepreneurship is presented as the only solution (Bosma & Levie, 2009) to be able to meet the needs of their family in a context of difficulty in finding a job (Shamamba, 2016). Entrepreneurship is essential in the course of our respondents as a necessity and an emergency, an alternative to leave unemployment (Cowling & Bygrave 2002, Bosma & Levie 2009) and it is generally in these terms that it is mentioned by our respondents (E5) “….. I was a state agent before being dismissed with the arrival of President Mobutu. After marriage my family endowed me with a certain amount, I saw fit to start....”

Not finding a job weighs heavily in the decision to start a business, despite unpleasant circumstances. The latter can be described as entrepreneurship out of necessity. Unemployment is one of the first factors studied in the context of push / pull or necessity / opportunity entrepreneurship (Johnson & Darnell, 1976). The words of E1 better illustrate the entrepreneur by necessity (E1) “…. I found a job at the bank, this last paid very well. Unfortunately she went bankrupt after more or less two years; I was at the unemployment.... ” As the respondents E1 and E5 testify, most often these are careers of employment ended by the failure that pushes women to consider entrepreneurship as a valid solution.

According to the words of our interviewees, the marriage aspect appears to encourage entrepreneurs to engage in entrepreneurial activities: 90% of our respondents revealed that they started their entrepreneurial activities just after the wedding apart from the remaining 10% who resumed entrepreneurial activity after marriage, but also with the support of the husband. Some passages illustrate this, (E3) "…. I was financed by my family after my marriage….. "(E7) said that he had the idea to start his business with the financing of her husband after his dismissal (E7) “…. After marriage my husband endowed me with a certain sum.....” For E8, it was the money from the sale of her husband's field that helped her to have start-up capital. (E8) “…. I started with a capital of $ 50, because right after my marriage, my husband had sold their family field …… »

Rachdi, (2016) shows that marital status has an important effect in entrepreneurial decision-making as well as the development and sustainability of the company created. According to her study, the majorities of women entrepreneurs are married or in a relationship and that marriage plays a stabilizing role in their profession. While other authors such as Sophie P. (2002) compare the careers of women and men by noting that marriage and the birth of children appear to be a
brake on women's careers, but an incentive for those of men because these family events would make the man more responsible in these activities. For D'andria & Gabarrat (2016), family life has a negative impact on the advancement of female managers with young children. De Singly, (1997); Marry, Gadea, (2000) supported the “inverted staircase” theory, this theory states that the more children men have, the more they reach a high status in a company, contrary case for women.

The financial side plays an important role in the choice to undertake, most studies affirm that financial resources, especially those at the start are factors of the success and development of young companies (Covin & Slevin, 1989; Wiklund, 1999; Cooper & al., 1994; Lasch & al., 2005, 2007). The initial financial resources are reflected in the words of women entrepreneurs, some of them had loans, others support from relatives, particularly the husband or family as indicated by the comments below (E1) "… My salary and the savings that I was building helped me considerably to form an initial capital… »; (E7) «…. My capital was from a basin of tomatoes that my husband had given me… "; In-kind capital was strongly mentioned by women entrepreneurs as start-up capital, some women started with a box of soap, others with loincloths or a thrift store, and spades.

4.1.1.2. The husband as the first resort

Cheung & Chow (2006) find a positive relationship between the fact that an entrepreneur is married and success entrepreneurial. This is how the fact that the husband is the wife's first resort is justified. In view of our results, women praise the contribution of their husbands when they start their activities. Kirkwood (2009) asserts that no woman starts a business without the support and consent of her partner. The support of the husband requires great importance, insofar as the wife consults him before any entrepreneurial decision (Brush & Hisrich 1991).

The husband is presented as a mentor, an adviser on all levels starting with the identification of the opportunity, the mobilization of financial resources, the difficulties in the course until the success of the entrepreneurial activity. Nikina & al. (2012) study the role of the spouse in female entrepreneurship; they note that the support of the spouse is expressed in the activity, entrepreneurial choices and domestic life. The decision of the husband at the beginning of the activity is like a green light for the women, the latter consult him for the current affairs of their activities. (E3) "…..Subsequently, I was financially supported by my husband who worked at the OCC. Without forgetting that it was the latter who enlightened me on the ideas of opportunities… "; (E4) "…. My husband had 2 residential houses. I rented one with a $ 300 guarantee. With this
amount of money, I bought a small table at the market… "The husband plays an important role during entrepreneurial difficulties: (E6)"….. my husband reinforced me whenever i was morally and financially disappointed….. "; (E1) "….. I was still holding on and that gave me courage since my husband also supported me financially and morally….."

Family cooperation is essential in the management of the business as long as it concerns the wife or the husband. Laufer (2005) underlines that conjugal cooperation and negotiations took place at the expense of women, insofar as it was the husband's work that imposed its dynamics. In our work, our respondents are more satisfied and confident when their husbands support them. Following the example of E8 “….. I trust especially in my children and my husband, because my family is too large…..” It is this cooperation with my husband that makes me strong and confident….. ".

The solicitation of the man for the financing of the female business (Paula, 2009) is one of the interesting aspects mentioned by our interviewed women; this mobilization of financial means is when the woman requests the financing of her business through her husband. In our study, 80% of women entrepreneurs received funding from their husbands either at the start or during the course of their entrepreneurial activities. The money these women entrepreneurs receive from their husbands is like proof of their success and they translate this directly into practice.

4.1.2. Concern for independence

The literature on factors for starting a business (McClelland, 1961; Shapero, 1975) identifies self-actualization, financial success, recognition and independence as valid reasons or motivation for starting a business. When a woman is financially independent, her whole family benefits (Mayoux, 2001; De Gobbi, 2005).

By making financial decisions within her household, she is more in control of her own life and that of her children (Kizaba & al, 2016). Entrepreneurial activity gives women an income and a status enabling them to be heard better in their community and to work for the health and education of their children. (E8) "…. I encourage women to be independent, not always to resort to their husbands even when the child needs a match, not always to beg, to acquire pride as well. Thus, to prove to her husband that one is capable of producing something, without being considered as a burden…. "
4.1.3. Children and family are sources of motivation

Lewis (2013) recognizes entrepreneurial profiles such as those oriented family, those oriented growth and those who do not seek growth. According to the literature, as children grow older the opportunities for women entrepreneurs increase and the demands and costs of raising children of a certain age decrease (Moult & Anderson, 2005), while for some women the mature age of children is one of the reasons for female labour because of the increased needs of the latter. In the literature of women entrepreneurs, the context of motherhood is a factor favourable to the expression of entrepreneurial motivations of women (Aldrich & Cliff, 2003). This literature is developed around the theme of mumpreneur considered to be new figures in female entrepreneurship (d'Andria, 2014, D'andria & Gabarrat, 2016). The mumpreneur concept is a bond between being a mother and an entrepreneur (Cobe & Parlapiano, 2002), i.e. the way in which the business and the child are conceived almost simultaneously (D'andria & Gabarrat, 2016). This is how entrepreneurship intervenes to meet the needs of mother and child.

Our results show that the children appear as managers and others as consultants. Kizaba & al, 2016 notes in its study that 62.6% of children of a certain age work actively within the company and assist their mother in entrepreneurial activities. Women work for the daily breads of children, for schooling and for their development. (E1) ".... Indeed, when I realized that if I give up, me and my children will starve, I still held on and that gave me courage… "

4.1.4. Difficulties.

It is not surprising to learn that women entrepreneurs may encounter more difficulties in the exercise of their profession, at least compared to men (Khayoussef-Gassib, 2017). Everything rests on his head, he is at the same time a helper for the family and a driving force in his business. She is identified in the literature as someone seeking a balance between work and family (Shelton, 2006; Hughes, 2006; Humbert, Drew 2010). He plays two roles at the same time and does his best to get by.

When it comes to business, family and the state, women find themselves disturbed, but they still advance with courage to get out of it, these passages better illustrate the experiences of women entrepreneurs. (E1) "...it was not at all easy, in fact, with the financial crisis observed in our time, it has become difficult to pay my workers, also the burden that the State places on Congolese entrepreneurs, my business made me a mother almost absent at home, especially when my children..."
were still small .....Sometimes I lacked customers, which caused me a loss because my merchandise is degradable or even perishable.... ".

The woman entrepreneur is at the center of the problems; her family sees in her the reference person to find solutions to all their problems. At the same time that the woman is looking for a solution for her family, she is conquering to have a superior personality in her entourage: (E1) ".... I suffered to build my personality today..... I often welcome members of my family and I help them because it is I who has the means higher than the others...."

Continue or stop? This is the equation that women entrepreneurs try to solve when they go all day without even selling an item in their businesses, but "as long as there is life, there is hope". In this word that women still regain the courage to continue: (E5) "... Looking for money is difficult at all levels; money never comes to us on its own. The questions that we always ask ourselves to continue or not when you end a day in the blazing sun without even selling an item. To deprive yourself of something even though you have the money with you just to progress in the activities. The biggest problems are those of choosing between leisure and work, between depriving oneself and filling oneself, between this or that....". With a sad look, E10 remembers these beginnings in entrepreneurship, she whispers "I came from far away", impossible to give up in any situation: (E10) "... Life is not at all easy. I was marked by great fatigue especially due to the breaking in of the vegetables that I was doing and afterwards I sold the various products until 9pm. My husband stayed at Burega2 and let me manage the whole house and the children on my own. Once tired, I had no one to lean on in the evening and it pained me too much.... ".

The difficulties raised by women entrepreneurs are relative such as the lack of financial support, the stress linked to work, the heaviness and complexity of taxes and the economic climate. These present themselves as obstacles on the entrepreneurial journey. The perception of obstacles has been studied by some researchers such as Shamamba A. P, 2016; Verheul & al., 2010; Van der Zwan & al., 2016). The results show that perceptions are different from one dimension to another, with regard to finance or the economic climate on the one hand, and according to the entrepreneurs on the other hand. Shamamba (2016) explains that an entrepreneur will only achieve success when he has overcome these obstacles. Thus Verheul et al. (2010), show that the perception of the lack

---

2 Commonly called Burega: it is the remote places of the city of Bukavu where minerals are exploited or often Shi men leave to sell items to buy in town sometimes non-existent in these regions or existing but rare.
of financial support, complexity of taxes and levies increase the probability of being an entrepreneur of necessity rather than opportunity.

4.1.5. Entrepreneurship as a professional life for women

In female entrepreneurship, the relationship between professional and family life appears as a distinctive theme of research on women entrepreneurs (Rachdi, 2016). The Most women think that the reconciliation between privacy and business management requires sacrifice in relation to the time they can devote to their personal activities (Powell & Mainero, 1992).

When it comes to the organization of his work, rigor is essential. Some studies identify three factors in the conduct of entrepreneurial activities and the motivation of entrepreneurs: development, commitment to business and rigorous management ... (Naffziger, Hornsby & Kuratko, 1994). These results corroborate with the comments of our respondents: (E2) “… .. I always organize my daily work because at 8 am already I am already present at my workplace and that every working day. So this will help me to not miss any sales opportunities. I do not joke at work, and even if they are my own children ……… I have set myself a goal of growing in my business. So I can't work for someone else, the same way men seek and earn money, so can I. I believe in my ability…. ”

The entrepreneur works simultaneously with the partners: "customers, suppliers, consultants, employees or even local communities" (Sarasvathy & Venkataraman, 2011). As a result, the entrepreneur does not choose his partners, but is interested in all the actors who will allow him access to resources (Galkina & Chetty, 2015). The customer appears as a driving force behind the activity. This comment better illustrates the latter: (E2) "…… For me, the customer is king. He is the central element, because without his money I will have neither to eat nor to clothe myself. Since we all sell the same product, I attract my customers by my quality of reception and the service rendered to the customer explained by the speed, making him feel that I take care of him, support his whims,… "

4.2.5. Place of religion in entrepreneurship.

Some authors have studied the effect of religion on the economy in general (Weber, 1905; Dodd & Gotsis, 2007, McCleary & Barro, 2006) and entrepreneurship in particular (Balog & al. 2014; Dana, 2010). Praag (2003) investigated the relationships that may exist between psychological elements such as religion and the success and survival of the new business. According to its results, religious beliefs can promote entrepreneurial success. Gray & al. (2006), meanwhile, confirmed
the significant relationship between religion and success. For the results of our survey, it is God who grants success to women entrepreneurs: (E7) “…. I bless the name of God for all that he never ceases to do for me, I am nothing, but presently he has raised me up. Everything is grace…. ” "When it comes to talking about God, E6 is very smiling: (E6)"…. It is only God who has given me grace. In life...

4.1.6. Particularity of successful women

With the success that they have been able to achieve in these companies, these women entrepreneurs have gone through various moments in the course of their activities. They are witnesses to a life that deserves special attention. They have overcome the obstacles in their entrepreneurial paths. Some women starting from nothing, or with a box of soap, a basin of tomato today they are owners of large companies, and the company is very grateful for their contributions in the economic development of the region. What did they do in particular to get to this point?

FIGURE N°1

Image 1:

Life course

Our results under Nvivo 11

It emerges from this image that the journey of these women entrepreneurs is centred on the word "life". We notice that the life of these women was not easy: "… the choice. Today live a life..."
which deprives me of everything ...» Some women set high goals for themselves: "... never limit yourself in life, always aim for the top and ...". As shown in this figure above, women have endured so much and gone through various trials to have entrepreneurial success. According to (E1) "....I think that women think a lot instead of going into business. You always have to be daring, and even if it doesn't work, you have to persist because you never know when this business will bear good fruits. Indeed, in the business world, one day it's fine and another not....." The case of E1 calls out to us to take risk and persistence in business. The risk-taking aspect evoked precedes a decision-making character of the woman, according to these women; the decision in the entrepreneurial activities is important and allows a woman to assume the responsibilities which result from it. Decision making seems to be conditioned by aversion to risk (Sexton and Bowman-Upton, 1990) while the latter, i.e. risk run is positively correlated with yield, the term yield can be substituted in entrepreneurship by the word reward (Kuratko, 2009), in the case of companies this term is linked to the growth of firm (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2000, Shepherd & Wiklund, 2009). For Knight (1921): "The entrepreneur hopes for an income commensurate with the risk incurred". The risk involved leads to persistence in business to achieve the desired rewards. In the words of (E1) ".... Money doesn't come so easily, you have to take work seriously......"

E3 raises the notion of exploiting the opportunity: (E3) ".... Indeed, I always lend an ear to opportunities present before investing in each sector. Finally, I always have a vision to move forward, I do not soar in situations of disappointment..... ”. Entrepreneurial opportunity implies a potential for action, a capacity to act, whether through the creation of a business or profitable economic activities (Kirzner, 1979; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Singh, 2000). The opportunity therefore implies a potentially profitable, beneficial result (Tremblay, 2010). As a result, vigilant entrepreneurs use specific means that allow them to identify opportunities (Gaglio, 1997; Gaglio & Katz, 2001; Valliere, 2013). The opportunity therefore implies a potentially profitable result, beneficial (Tremblay, 2010). As a result, vigilant entrepreneurs use specific means that make it possible to identify opportunities (Gaglio, 1997; Gaglio & Katz, 2001; Valliere, 2013). E3 is identified as a vigilant3 woman entrepreneur because it lends ears to different opportunities to take advantage of the information received. She keeps within her this vision of always going forward. She continues by explaining: (E3) “..... For me, you should never limit yourself in life, always aim

---

3 For Gaglio 1997, vigilant individuals see a situation as a sum of capacities and gains to to exploit
for the top and always have the courage to dare. Today, I can deal with all sectors of activity and I have had the privilege of being among the first investors in almost all. I am a woman who always takes the risk and thus, I earn more….”

For E4, it is the savings that allow women to prosper, according to her; you must always save during your activity: (E4) “…. I save my own business, if I earn $10; I eat 3 and the 7 I reallocate them to my wealth. Unlike other women who can have a small table that wins them $100 a month and want to eat them all …"With E5, saving is a choice to deprive yourself today in order to hope for a better return tomorrow: (E5) "…. I know how to make the choice. Today, lives a life that deprives me of everything in order to leave poverty for good tomorrow… "For her, financial gain is essential to define entrepreneurial success (Parker, 2009).
4.2. Discussion of results

By analysing the stories of the lives of the 10 women entrepreneurs, two results deserve to be detailed from a theoretical point of view: These are (1) the criteria for the success of the businesses of these women and (2) a concept that some call "Mumpreneure". Beyond the criteria recognized in the literature, our interviews retain:

4.2.1. Success criteria for women entrepreneurs

Figure 2: Schematic of the entrepreneurial journey

Our conception.
The figure above represents the entrepreneurial process of successful women entrepreneurs, so the lines below briefly explain each point.

- **Criterion 1: Risk taking**

The risk-taking dimension is an essential criterion in the life story of these women entrepreneurs. With a low start-up capital these women are launched into entrepreneurial activities. All of their entrepreneurial activities are seen as risky actions, by selling perishable products, the women invested all their small capital in the purchase of products (like tomatoes for E7), then hoped to sell all of them. The goods for one or two days. This raises the notion of risk and uncertainty.

This female entrepreneur is similar to the entrepreneur defined by Knight (1921). Frank Knight defines risk as chance with known probabilities and uncertainty as chance with unknown probabilities. Based on these notions of risk and uncertainty, the results of the entrepreneur are variable (Knight, 1921). This is how the woman entrepreneur has the need to act on opinion rather than knowledge and will only make a profit, provided that there is change and provided that the consequences of this change are not predictable. For Thünen (1850), the entrepreneur receives an income in return for the risks incurred. Thus, by taking risk, the entrepreneur justifies his transition of opportunity by the hope of creating (Nongaineba, 2018).

- **Criterion 2: Vision and objective**

Our results show that women entrepreneurs initially establish a vision and a goal of success in their entrepreneurial activities. The entrepreneur's goal and vision are nurtured by the pursuit of profit (Mises, 1949). By having a vision and a goal of success, a woman entrepreneur does everything possible to achieve success. The family being the primary motivation, it intervenes as an incentive. Above all, the fact that the mother wants these children to have a better life, these goals are increasing every day to gain respect from those around her. According to Sarasvathy & al. (2003) vision is linked to modes of recognition of opportunity.

- **Criterion 3: Exploitation of opportunities**

The notion of entrepreneurship is linked to that of the exploitation of opportunities. Entrepreneurship can also be defined as an activity involving the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities, with the aim of introducing new goods and services (Pesqueux, 2011). According to the results of our study, the woman entrepreneur is attentive to any
information likely to bring her a profit. The flow of information to the mother allows her to jump on all available opportunities.

- **Criterion 4: Financial source and market**

  To jump on opportunities, financial means are essential. The entrepreneur must be reassured of the availability of financial means to succeed in exploiting the various opportunities presented to her and thus contribute to the growth of her business. From the results of our study, savings are a primary means to finance entrepreneurial activities. The women surveyed say they use savings to exploit the opportunities arising from the market. As the market is a dynamic process and in constant imbalance (Lavesseur, 2016), imperfections in the distribution of productive resources create opportunities to improve efficiency.

  Financial sources or in other words money and the market have been integrated into the 5M model proposed by Brush & al. (2009) which includes all the variables having an influence on the entrepreneurial project among women inspired by the 3M model of Bates al (2007) and institutional theory, this model is considered fundamental for the launch and success of businesses (Rachdi, 2016). This model makes a difference between the contexts that influence their entrepreneurial actions and it takes into account the hypothesis of the social cohesion of the entrepreneur. The 3M model was proposed within the framework of entrepreneurship in general by integrating any form of business, 3M as Currency (Money), Market (Market) and M (Management = management of the company).

  The market corresponds to access to business and, during the creation of a new business, to access to opportunities; money refers to the access and availability of financial capital; and management relates to human capital and the organization (Ettl & Welter, 2010). Motherhood is a metaphor that alludes to family, thus drawing attention to the fact that family may have a greater impact on women than men (Laufer, 2005; Jennings & McDougald, 2007; Kirkwood, M. 2008). However, the Meso-Macro environment concept is a factor which integrates, beyond the market and institutions, the expectations of society, cultural norms and structures.

  **4.2.2. Mumpreneur: a literature under construction.**

  The grounded theorizing has allowed us to mature the theory on mothers who are at the same time entrepreneurial. This theory is developed under the name of mumpreneur (Landour, 2015) or even mumpreneurship. For d’Andria & Gabarret (2015), mumpreneurship is a literature under construction. Mumpreneurship is a form of entrepreneurship motivated by the desire to achieve
harmony between professional and private life, through an identity orientation that blurs the boundaries between the roles of mother and businesswoman (Ekinsmyth, 2011). Richomme-Huet, Vial & d'Andria (2013) define the motherhood concept as a woman who, identifying herself as both mother and businesswoman, creates a business, of which she is the owner and manager, in order to achieve a professional and private balance that is difficult, if not impossible in the salaried position and, whose business opportunity is generally related to the particular experience of having children. The peculiarity of these women is that the business and the child are conceived almost simultaneously (Cobe & Parlapiano, 2002). Motherhood is an important element in the entrepreneurial motivation of mumpreneurs (Aldrich & Cliff, 2003; Brush & al. 2009; Zahra, 2007; Bruin & Welter 2009; Welter, 2011; Richomme-Huet & al., 2013; Duberley & Carrigan, 2013; d'Andria, 2014)

According to our results, motherhood is not perceived as a motivation for these women to be entrepreneurial but the trigger for entrepreneurship is marriage. 90% of women surveyed say they have started their entrepreneurial activities just after having founded a couple united by marriage. By being in a developing country, the child is the fruit of marriage. The child is not the trigger for motivation entrepreneurial but it increases the mother's motivation in these entrepreneurial activities. Contrary to certain authors (Sophie, 2002; De Singly, (1997); Marry, Gadea, 2000) or the birth of children appear as a brake on the careers of women, especially salaried women, but according to our results the child involved in entrepreneurial activity as an incentive.

Entrepreneurial activity is carried out to prepare for the arrival of the children, the child being a burden (his schooling, his food) the couple must ensure that their needs are met. This is how entrepreneurship is a way for women to simultaneously meet their own career needs and those of their children (Cromie, 1987). As the child grows, he helps his mother in carrying out these activities; he becomes a labour force at the same time as its load decreases with these parents. As a result, by growing up, the child becomes a manager of his mother's entrepreneurial activity.

Entrepreneurial motivation for these mumpreneurs is identified as a motivation by necessity similar to that defined by Cowling & Bygrave (2002) and Bosma & Levie (2009).

The support of the husband being evoked by the entrepreneurial mothers, his contribution is inescapable. Mumpreneurs turn to their husbands for advice, for finding opportunities, and for entrepreneurial guidance. For Nikina & al. (2012), the contribution of the spouse is manifested in activity, entrepreneurial choices and domestic life. The husband is seen in our study as a mentor
and a confidant. The mother comes to share any information with her husband for advice. The contribution of the husband or the family at the time of launching the entrepreneurial activity is decisive. The couple's situation favours and participates financially in the creation of the activity (Landour, 2015).

When it comes to the balance between professional lives and family, the organization of time is crucial, these women know how to allocate working time and time devoted to the family. When the children have grown up, this reconciliation of work and family becomes easy for the woman because the time to spend with these children will be minimal. This is how the family will be a motivation for these women to continue entrepreneurial activities. The needs and requirements of the children will push the mother to be successful in entrepreneurship. As a result, work-family balance becomes a main dimension of the motivation of mumpreneurs (Korsgaard, 2007; Nel, & al., 2010; Jean & Forbes, 2012). For Le Loarne-Lemaire & al. (2012) some women embark on creation of their company in order to reconcile family and personal life.

Beyond the reconciliation between family and entrepreneurial life, the effective management of entrepreneurial activity takes on an important aspect according to our results. Mampreneurs must use the means and instruments that can lead them to growth in their businesses while putting customers at the center of the business.

Financial independence is also a motivational dimension for women; we note that mumpreneurs choose entrepreneurial activity to no longer be financially dependent on their husbands. Thus, the objective of having an income and financial independence appears as a dimension for women entrepreneurs (Nel & al, 2010; Duberley & Carrigan, 2012).

Having reached their sixties, these mompreneurs say they have sacrificed everything for success in their entrepreneurial activities; the family was the only goal. Leaving aside certain luxury expenses, they devoted all of their resources to discovering opportunities but also to growing their entrepreneurial activities while guaranteeing an average standard of living for their families. Seeing their children grow up, they are relieved and they allow themselves to take vacations while entrusting the management of the business to their sons.

We can define the mumpreneur concept as the fact that a woman after marriage begins an entrepreneurial activity with the support of her husband and/or his family, in the entrepreneurial journey, the husband acts as a mentor. The births of children take place in the couple and become
an incentive for the woman in the success of the entrepreneurial activity in order to meet their basic needs.

In summary, the entrepreneurial journey of successful women entrepreneurs is based on a combination of interpersonal, intrapersonal and environmental factors. These factors include the entrepreneur's personality, management skills, professional networks, market opportunities and financial resources. Successful women entrepreneurs tend to have personality traits such as perseverance, resilience and optimism. They are also good at building interpersonal relationships with customers, partners and investors. The development of management skills such as planning, decision-making and financial management is also important for successful women entrepreneurs. Professional networks, such as business groups and associations, play a key role in developing these skills. Market opportunities and financial resources are key factors for entrepreneurial success. Successful women entrepreneurs tend to be very results-oriented. They set clear goals, set deadlines and constantly measure their progress towards these goals. They are very customer focused, knowing that the success of their business depends on customer satisfaction. They are therefore constantly looking for ways to improve their products or services to meet the needs and wants of their customers. In addition, successful women entrepreneurs often focus on building strong and committed teams around the family.

**Conclusion**

The description of these women (E1, E2, E3..., E10) contains life lessons that can be applied by any entrepreneur, regardless of gender. By becoming entrepreneurs, the women interviewed were led to differentiate themselves economically and socially, to forge a professional but also a personal identity and, at first sight, to draw a new life path.

The aim of this study was to examine the career paths of high-potential women entrepreneurs. The obstacles and threats they face, the opportunities they seize, the strengths they mobilise and the sacrifices they make to achieve success. Given the multiplicity of topics on entrepreneurship (Rachdi, 2016), more specifically entrepreneurial intention (Shapero, 1982), entrepreneurial motivation (d'Andria and Gabarret, 2016) or the entrepreneurial act (Shamamba, 2016), this work sought to differentiate itself from others by drawing out the life stories of successful women in a region with a poor history for women.
Thus, the success of women entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial journey is influenced by various factors, including opportunity motivation and necessity motivation. According to our findings, necessity-motivated entrepreneurs tend to start businesses to support themselves and their families. This motivation is driven by a lack of employment opportunities. Although these women entrepreneurs may achieve some success in their businesses, they face additional challenges such as financial pressure, work-life balance and other gender-related challenges such as stereotypes and discrimination. It is therefore essential to continue to promote gender equality in entrepreneurship and to support women entrepreneurs at all levels.

The success story of women entrepreneurs has been summarised in 4 points: the first criterion explains how these women take risks in different entrepreneurial activities. The second criterion demonstrates the vision of the women entrepreneurs in carrying out their activities. The women entrepreneurs in our study have a vision to reach the top and this allows them to grow their businesses. The third criterion is the exploitation of opportunities. And finally, the fourth criterion is the elements of the woman's environment, among others financial sources and the market, which refers to the 5M model of Brush et al. (2009).

Thus, the results of our study have allowed the emergence of the mumpreneur concept, referring to the literature, we found that mumpreneurs in the city of Bukavu are motivated to create the entrepreneurial activity only after marriage; contrary to the literature that raises that motherhood or the birth of a child is the trigger for the creation of the entrepreneurial activity (D'andria 2014, Richomme-Huet et al. 2013, Duberley and Carrigan, 2013).

In conclusion, women entrepreneurs play an important role in the economy and society in general. They bring innovative ideas, create jobs and contribute to economic growth. It is therefore undeniable that women entrepreneurs still face many obstacles in their entrepreneurial journey. However, the results of this study suggest that opportunity motivation and necessity motivation can play a crucial role in the success of women entrepreneurs.

This study can inform future research on women's entrepreneurship and women's entrepreneurial motivations, and will support the development of public policies and initiatives to promote women's entrepreneurship in different economic and social contexts. The results of this research will guide entrepreneurs in the day-to-day management of their businesses and allow the
development of programmes and training to support women entrepreneurs and improve the performance of their businesses.

Finally, it is important to stress that research on women’s entrepreneurship should not be limited to a strictly qualitative approach. Quantitative studies could be carried out to test and extend these findings. This methodology could help to identify cause and effect relationships between factors identified in a qualitative approach.

Bibliography

American Express (2019), State of women-owned businesses report.


Fayolle A., (2003), *Le métier de créateur d’entreprise*, Éditions d’Organisation,


Kizaba, G., Saga B. P., Guilluy-Sulikashvili N., Assaidi A. (2016), *Examen des motivations et des contraintes entrepreneuriales des femmes entrepreneurs de la Ville de Bunia RD Congo*

Knight F. (1921), *Risk, Uncertainty and Profit*, New York, Houghton Mifflin


Laufer J. (2005). La construction du plafond de verre : le cas des femmes cadres à potentiel ,Travail et Emploi, n° 102 • Avril-juin 2005
Levasseur, Ludvig (2016), Temps, opportunité, stratégie, croissance et PME, thèse doctorale Université Paris-Dauphine


Moreau. (2004), *L’émergence organisationnelle, le cas des entreprises de nouvelles technologies*, Université de Nantes, Thèse de doctorat en sociologie


Parker C S. (2009), *The economics of entrepreneurship*, Cambridge University press


Pesqueux, Y (2011), *Entrepreneur, entrepreneuriat (et entreprise) : de quoi s'agit-il ?*, hal-00567820, p. 2-3


entrepreneuriat et des étudiants en DESS CAAE, Thèse de doctorat en Sciences de Gestion, Université de Roue.

Tremblay, M. (2010). Identification collective d'opportunités Entrepreneuriales : une étude exploratoire, Université Du Québec À Trois-Rivières, Québec


