

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ITS INFLUENCING FACTORS: THE CASE OF WOMEN EN-  
TREPRENEURS IN KUWAIT

BY

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SSBM

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### **Abstract**

Entrepreneurship, a major economic dynamism aspect that transforms ideas into opportunities is one of the vast facets recognized as critical drivers of a country's economic growth, employment, productivity, and innovation. In Kuwait, a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem with women plays a crucial role in its development but the population of women in the business is still significantly lower than their men counterparts. This is attributed by many challenges including social and cultural barriers, lack of self-confidence, economic challenges, and lack of education and support networks. This study aimed to determine factors influencing female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in Kuwait in the current competitive business arena. Specifically, the study focused on the influence of sociocultural aspects and economic factors in determining the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, the role of self-confidence, and women's education in encouraging them to become successful entrepreneurs.

The study used a deductive research approach and a quantitative research method. Using convenience and snowball sampling technique the study select 100 women entrepreneurs and collected data with the help of well-structured questionnaires. The data was collected through questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses.

The findings of the study concluded that there are insignificant relationships between socio-cultural factors, economic factors, and self-confidence and female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in the current competitive business arena of Kuwait. The study concluded that education level among women entrepreneurs in Kuwait plays a critical role in encouraging them to become entrepreneurs, but insignificantly influences their performance and growth.

**Key Words:** Entrepreneurs, Effectiveness, Socio-Cultural Factors, Economic Factors, And Self-Confidence

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Entrepreneurship is one of the vast facets recognized as critical drivers of a country's economic growth, employment, productivity, and innovation. According to Islam (2019), it is considered a major economic dynamism aspect that transforms ideas into opportunities. Study indicates that the willingness of pragmatic individuals who are innovative and entrepreneurial to take risks have been able to exploit different opportunities that have contributed to economic progress over the last years (Naser et al., 2012). Wube (2010) indicated that entrepreneurship has rapidly contributed to industrialization and accelerated economic growth. However, the role of entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurship in social and economic development has been underestimated.

Additionally, a growing number of people worldwide are interested in entrepreneurship as a means of eradicating poverty, a trend that can be attributed to knowledge of the achievements of large-scale projects in developing nations (Makisimov et al., 2017). Besides, the United Nations has created the 16 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve them by 2030 (Carlsen & Bruggemann, 2022). Gender equity is the subject of the 5<sup>th</sup> SGD goal that seeks to guarantee women's involvement in governance and public life by giving them equal access to economic empowerment (UN, 2022). According to Canton (2021), to guide and enable the achievement of the 5<sup>th</sup> SGD goal, the growth of women-owned enterprises is one of the prerequisites for fulfilling this goal.

Mote (2015) asserts that there is an increasing understanding that indeed entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurship are major contributors to economic development. Nevertheless, most enterprises are owned by men indicating that women-owned businesses especially in developing countries like Kuwait are not common (Mathew, 2020). The concept of women's entrepreneurship and practices has emerged relatively recently, with little being known about it until the 1980s (Kamberidou, 2020). Before then, attention and research were predominantly focused on male entrepreneurs leaving women largely in both practice and academia. The trend shifted in the 1980s, marking the beginning of scientific discourse on women's organizations and entrepreneurship led and owned by women (Tedesse, 2020).

Various benefits have been connected to women entrepreneurs such as raising their economic security, restoration of their dignity and confidence, ability to make purchases, involvement in major household decisions, and decline in contraceptive usage and domestic violence (Hassan and Almubaak, 2016)). Despite this, women's entrepreneurship continued to show very limited growth characterized by high poverty among entrepreneur women (Mathew, 2010). Lack of education, discrimination, lack of education, social cultural practices, and lack of information became the deterring factors facing women entrepreneurship. Solesvik et al. (2019) pointed out that women in the entrepreneurial culture get support from their families but later the support is limited, withdrawn, or restricted to their husband's fear of losing dominance over them. Besides, lack of self-belief and confidence, passive learning methods, lack of strong and relevant networks, and starting up capital have significantly limited the accessibility of women to business experience (Rashid and Ratten, 2020). Jones et al. (2022) also indicated that although financial resources have been a major problem to women's effectiveness in entrepreneurship, educational and work background, motivation perception, training and skills development, psychological characteristics, and perception and career efficacy are also main obstacles.

Governments in different countries aimed at achieving industrialization by 2015, by focusing on poverty elimination and equity, a strategic plan aimed to increase opportunities for all people including women (Asad et al., 2019). This increased women's participation in social, economic, and political decision-making processes and their access to health, business opportunities, justice, housing, and health services. Besides, women in self-employment increased with most of the women starting new ventures. In Kuwait for instance, where small and medium enterprises play a significant role in economic development and job creation, most businesses were breasted no later than 1990 (Al Mutairi and Fayez, 2015). Nevertheless, there are substantial challenges facing women entrepreneurs, particularly in SMEs. Geerguri-Rasiti and Rotabi (2021) assert that traditional barriers, and religious, and cultural practices are the main barriers that impede women's access to finance and credits, hindering them from establishing, operating, and expanding their businesses.

## **1.2. Female entrepreneurs in Kuwait**

Female entrepreneurs in Kuwait play a crucial role in the growth of gross domestic product. According to Gerguri-Rashiti and Rotabi (2021), for the last few decades, 2% of the business enterprises in the country were owned and run by women. However, there has been a significant

rise of females in entrepreneurship, where more than 15% of the total business owners in Kuwait are females. The increase proxies a certain level of breakthrough in the engagement of women in economic growth, where males dominate the economy. Nevertheless, women continue to receive limited support from institutions in a manner that reduces their confidence and success level (Mathew, 2010). Besides, women-owned businesses and those owned by men continue to have disparity, with women-owned ventures being smaller in terms of assets and revenue.

According to Al Mutairi and Fayez (2015), there is an increased number of women venturing into small-scale enterprises due to limited opportunities in the formal sectors. However, women-owned enterprises in Kuwait generate lower income compared to male-owned enterprises due to inadequate economic resources, socio-cultural pressure, and poor management experience. This necessitates a deeper understanding of these dynamics to facilitate their empowerment and success. Assefa and Cheru (2018) observed a similar pattern with women entrepreneurs contributing significantly to economic growth and development despite facing obstacles such as limited access to capital, cultural constraints, and lack of entrepreneurial training and motivation (Asad et al., 2019). Understanding factors influencing women in entrepreneurs and their business context is crucial for devising effective solutions to enhance their contribution to economic growth and development.

The current study focused on women entrepreneurs in Kuwait specifically those in small and medium enterprises, as more women are working in this sector and they show very limited trends in growth (Asad et al., 2019). Besides, most businesses operate either in permanent, semi-permanent, or temporary structures, and the owner has one or several employees working on their premises. One of the major factors affecting women entrepreneurs is socio-cultural balance such as home and business life balance. According to Umar et al. (2022), women after selling the stock from their businesses use the money to buy foodstuff instead of re-stocking. The performance of a women-owned business is related to how they choose to balance their socio-cultural life. Roomi and Harrison (2010), found that balancing family and business is the biggest obstacle affecting women in managing business. However, it is this reason that motivates women to own a business as they are more focused on their family needs, while their male counterparts focus on economic reasons. Women in SMEs find it difficult to balance family and business life, as the sector requires a lot of time to make items and sell them, and also attend to the family needs.

Moreover, lack of support from business support agencies networks is a social factor that deters women in entrepreneurship. Few men-owned businesses employ male workers leaving out women (Farhat and Mijid, 2018). Besides, women business owners are often discriminated against in business networks and mostly rely on their spouses for information and ideas support instead of external business advisors. Therefore, as women entrepreneurs require networks to acquire ideas and material support for their businesses to be successful, they must know how to get support into the networks for their business growth.

Self-confidence is a personal quality to recognize take the opportunity and gain the courage to start a business. Women entrepreneurs can overcome social stereotypes and biases that hinder their entrepreneurial pursuits. Zeb (2018) argues that women who take calculated risks and pursue their ambitious goals are likely to be successful in their businesses, as they can foster resilience, network, and pitch ideas, making them more assertive and capable of negotiating deals. Women entrepreneurs who exude self-confidence serve as role models, inspiring others to believe in themselves and break through gender barriers (Makisimov et al., 2017). However, women in entrepreneurship often face unique challenges such as societal expectations, male-dominated environments, and access to resources that impact their self-confidence (Nasir et al., 2019). Women entrepreneurs often face barriers to entry, lack of representation, and implicit biases, which erode their confidence. Besides, balancing entrepreneurial endeavors with family responsibilities is challenging, leading to feelings of guilt or self-doubt. Al Mutairi and Fayez (2015) found that women feel undeserving of success and fear of being exposed as a fraud, fear of failure, which is heightened by societal pressures and personal expectations has inhibited risk-taking and decision-making in entrepreneurship (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

Economic factors are a significant problem influencing not only women-owned businesses but also men-owned businesses. Financial problems, one of the major economic factors result in businesses running out of stock and even closing down due to a lack of funds to sustain their operations (Rezaei et al., 2021). Women in SMEs encounter different degrees of economic difficulties such as the ability to raise their funds, and the lack of guarantee required to acquire external funding especially those that require credit track record and personal assets (Al Mutairi & Fayez, 2015). Bugawa and Aljuwaisri (2020) found that lack of starting and operating capital is the main barrier to the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

Lack of training and business knowledge is another key factor that causes a lack of courage among women to become entrepreneurs (Zeb, 2018). Women in these enterprises have limited working experience in the area where they set up their businesses, unlike their male counterparts. This negatively impacts the growth of their businesses. According to Roomi and Harrison (2010), education can limit women entrepreneurs from reaching their profitable growth.

Based on the background, it is evident that women's entrepreneurship continued to show very limited growth, with socio-cultural factors, economic factors, lack of self-confidence, and limited women's education playing a crucial role in women entrepreneurs' effectiveness and performance. Therefore, there is a need to study the factors influencing women in entrepreneurship to try and assist them make a living since they are more vulnerable to economic uncertainty than their male counterparts (Asad et al., 2019).

### **1.3. Problem Statement**

Kuwait has a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem with women playing a crucial role in its development. However, despite the population of women in the business cycle increasing in Kuwait, the number is still significantly lower than their men counterparts (Makisimov et al., 2017). Women entrepreneurs face many challenges including social and cultural barriers, lack of self-confidence, economic challenges, and lack of education and support networks. Besides, there are limited studies conducted with a specific objective to study the influence of social-cultural, economic, education, and women's confidence on the women entrepreneurs' success. The first reason is that female entrepreneurship has gained recognition as a significant but underutilized source of economics. By offering society unique answers to issues related to business, organization, and management, and the exploitation of entrepreneurship chances, businesswomen generate jobs for both themselves and other people. Nevertheless, they still represent a small percentage of all entrepreneurs (Asad et al., 2019). Therefore, there is a gender gap that prejudices women's ability to start their businesses and achieve success. To effectively use the economic potential of this significant population, policymakers and the government must address this market breakdown against women.

While various studies indicated that women significantly contribute to economic growth and development, there is still insufficient knowledge describing the specific impacts. OECD countries have implemented the initiative to fill the existing gap by focusing on the attention of

researchers and policymakers (Makisimov et al., 2017). To efficiently and effectively address this gap, more knowledge of women entrepreneurs is needed. The current study focused on enhancing knowledge about the factors contributing to poor performance among women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

Moreover, women's involvement in entrepreneurship has been widely disregarded both in society at large and within the realm of social sciences (Umar et al., 2022). Women frequently opt to establish and manage businesses in different sectors than men and also exhibit a lower participation rate in entrepreneurship than their male counterparts (McGowan et al., 2012). The industries favored by female entrepreneurs are retail, teaching, and other service sectors, which have been undervalued in terms of their contribution to economic development and growth compared to manufacturing and high-tech sectors dominated by men entrepreneurs. Thus, achieving gender parity in entrepreneurship remains a critical challenge (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

According to, most women-owned businesses have failed to grow from small and medium enterprises and have stagnated because of the lack of many shortcomings faced by women entrepreneurs (Makisimov et al., 2017). More so, their study indicated that unequal access to land and property shows that women are unable to secure loans to finance their businesses. Therefore, they are unable to grow their enterprises and they remain stagnant at small and medium levels. This study focused on assessing the different factors that influence the performance of women's entrepreneurial ventures in Kuwait.

Although the results of small businesses to economic development are accepted, women entrepreneurs face different challenges that deter them from long-term continued existence and development (Minniti, 2010). Different prior studies have found that starting a business is a very risky venture, which requires self-confidence to make decisions and invest (Bugawa and Aljuwaisri, 2020; Kepler\$ Shane, 2007; McGowan et al., 2012). Bugawa and Aljuwaisri (2020) indicated that most women lack self-confidence and are never ready to take the risk of starting a business. Besides, there is a high rate of failure of businesses owned by women compared to those owned by men since they have various barriers.

Women's entrepreneurship is closely related to the role women play in society and the obligations that come with being an entrepreneur. To provide women entrepreneurs accessibility

similar to their male counterparts, certain challenges must be addressed. According to Bugawa and Aljuwaisri (2020), women may face barriers in some nations when it comes to owning property and signing contracts. Besides, improving women's status in society and self-employment requires a greater number of Women in the labor force. Therefore, this study aimed to provide holistic insight by investigating factors influencing female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in Kuwait in the current competitive business arena.

#### **1.4. Research Aim and Objectives**

The main aim of the study was to determine factors influencing female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in Kuwait in the current competitive business arena. The study is guided by four research objectives including;

- i. To determine sociocultural aspects that affect women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait
- ii. To establish the role of self-confidence in promoting the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait
- iii. To determine the role of economic factors in determining the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait
- iv. To establish the role of women's education in encouraging them to become entrepreneurs

This research sets out primarily to analyze the essential factors influencing female entrepreneurs in Kuwait's competitive business climate. It exposes an understanding of the special challenges and opportunities facing the woman entrepreneur in this field (Makisimov et al., 2017). In trying to empower the female lot in entrepreneurship, besides diversification of the economy, it is very critical for Kuwait to find those factors that help or hinder the success of such entrepreneurs.

This study tries to provide information relevant to stakeholders in an effort to make the atmosphere friendly for female entrepreneurs.

The first relates to identifying the understanding of the impact of society on Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs. Most economies have cultural, societal expectations, and domestic responsibilities that shape business decisions and practices made by women. Similarly, in Kuwait, Islamic culture and conservative values may be admitted to shape facilitating and constraining effects on women seeking to start and develop their businesses (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). This would include identifying such sociocultural variables, including how family support is

considered in entrepreneurial projects and societal demands concerning work-life balance, to help understand precisely what makes female entrepreneurs tick. Having identified these elements, the research might further go on to indicate how issues relative to sociocultural standards could be resolved.

The second objective shall deal with how self-confidence among the women in improving their work performance. Confidence is a vital attribute that any entrepreneur must possess, as it relates to risk-taking, decision-making, and always finding a way out of challenges (Makisimov et al., 2017). In this case, Kuwaiti women's confidence may be influenced by internal beliefs and support networks. The objective of this is to understand the process of self-confidence development among Kuwaiti female entrepreneurs and the decisions that lead to the expansion of their companies. By stressing this aspect, the study also wants to contribute to supporting activities that enhance self-confidence in would-be woman entrepreneurs to have richer and more confident corporate leaders.

The third objective explores economic issues and outcomes on performance of women entrepreneurs. It is significant to note that a country's economic stability, multiple choices of sources of finance, and an easy approach to financial facilities are crucial for enterprise development. In Kuwait, the special challenges that owners of women businesses will face revolve around access to finance and dealing with organizations offering financial services to achieve ends. The study is thus expected to depict financial constraints that women could face, as well as the economic policies bolsters or dent female entrepreneurship. Helping policy operatives create a level playing field with increased access to resources for women to incentivize more economic participation, this study can support policymakers in developing more equitable financial environs.

While the fourth objective views the role of education in enabling women to set up their own ventures, it arms them with the necessary business skills, and enables them to feel confident enough to take up leadership (Makisimov et al., 2017). Access to quality education and training programs can affect the intentions and motivations of women towards entrepreneurship in Kuwait. This objective examines the relationship between education and entrepreneurial success, focusing on how the educational background of women influences their financial literacy, business practices, and overall confidence in operating a firm. This objective may thus highlight



education-focused policies and initiatives which equip women with the necessary tools to flourish in the business sphere in Kuwait.

Each of the aforementioned objectives complements the others in an effort to provide overall knowledge regarding the different factors influencing women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Given that the research will delve into the complexity of female entrepreneurship through social, psychological, economic, and educational aspects, its results may have an impact on future legislation, educational programs, and support networks targeting Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs. In this regard, Kuwait can establish an entrepreneurial climate through policies that, presumably, will help women overcome obstacles and succeed in business by finally contributing to the nation's economy.

### **1.5. Research Questions**

1. What are the sociocultural aspects that determine women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait?
2. How does self-confidence promote women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait?
3. What are the economic factors that determine women entrepreneur's success in Kuwait?
4. What roles does education play in encouraging women to become entrepreneurs in Kuwait?

The first theme seeks to identify the sociocultural factors that impact female entrepreneurship in Kuwait. These sociocultural variables may include those that focus on cultural perceptions, family expectations, and societal norms. These may have a very strong bearing on how women explore business opportunities. Traditional norms within the Kuwaiti culture, along with Islamic beliefs, shape how women entrepreneurs might be perceived, either to their advantage or detriment (Makisimov et al., 2017). This research into various cultural processes at play aims to find the enabling and constraining factors within Kuwaiti society with respect to women's participation in entrepreneurship. The effects should be duly understood when devising supportive frameworks that assist women entrepreneurs by reflecting the respective cultural norms.

The second question is about the role of self-confidence in encouraging female entrepreneurs in Kuwait (Makisimov et al., 2017). Accordingly, entrepreneurs who are confident can surmount challenges, take calculated risks, and make sound business decisions. In this regard, cultural expectations, role models, personal experiences, and even educational background may affect a

woman's self-esteem level in Kuwait (Thai & Turkina, 2014). The goal of the research will be to investigate the level of women's resilience concerning entrepreneurial success in the competitive market of Kuwait and their confidence level. Taking into consideration this aspect, the research should allow bringing substantial outputs for developing self-confidence, attracting more active women interested in taking up and succeeding in their entrepreneurial enterprises.

The economic elements of defining the success of female entrepreneurs comprise the third variable. Capital availability, investment opportunities, and economic stability go hand in hand with the growth and sustenance process of business enterprises. The question would like to address issues of some exclusive economic disadvantages faced by women, such as lacking access to finance or support from any financial institution, and highlights any beneficial economic policies that may foster female entrepreneurship. In addressing this topic, this study tries to bring into light a number of the economic deterrents and facilitators in Kuwait and makes suggestions toward creating a more just financial environment to encourage female company owners.

The fourth question deals with how education can motivate Kuwaiti women into initiating self-employment projects. Education endows the person with the necessary leadership qualities, financial management acumen as well as the basic business skills necessary to put through their entrepreneurial ventures. In an Arab country like Kuwait, education of the female and the availability of the right kind of training programs will impact her decision to initiate her company. The present study explores the role of schooling in building women's confidence and preparedness to attempt entrepreneurship activities. By understanding how education and entrepreneurship are interlinked, researchers can bring forth the importance of educational initiatives and supportive policies that help women build a strong foundation for successfully running businesses.

All these research questions thus attempt to provide comprehensive understanding of factors that shape the influencing forces of Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs in a holistic method (Makisimov et al., 2017). Specific opportunities and challenges faced by female entrepreneurs are targeted by the research by investigating factors regarding social, psychological, economic, and educational issues. Addressing such concerns, efforts toward the country's larger goals of innovation and diversification, along with improved economic inclusion, could be realized through an

entrepreneurial climate which better empowers women in Kuwait (Thai & Turkina, 2014). This study will provide relevant information that will help financial institutions, educators, and lawmakers further improve the Kuwaiti entrepreneurial climate for women.

### **1.6. Significance of the study**

The importance of this study on women entrepreneurs highlights the significance of women establishing their enterprises and venturing into entrepreneurship due to the diminishing prospects of employment opportunities in private, non-government, and government organizations (Naser et al., 2012). This would only be possible if challenges were faced by women entrepreneurs. Therefore, this study has the following significance;

First, the significance of this study was to generate policy suggestions to enhance the expansion of women-owned enterprises, thus fostering a conducive environment for businesses and promoting women-owned ventures (Makisimov et al., 2017). This knowledge is valuable to family members who intend to support their women in starting or growing their businesses. the study also sheds light on the economic attributes of women that hinder entrepreneurial advancement.

Second, the study provides insight into gender issues and growth in Kuwait entrepreneurship, a field of study that has to be given careful consideration, especially in light of the current economic situation. Therefore, this study provides valuable information for economic reconstruction to fill the gap by focusing on factors influencing the effectiveness of women entrepreneurs.

Third, women entrepreneurs can use the findings of this study and apply them in their business ventures to foster growth, especially in Kuwait, a developing country where the creation and ensuring the success of new businesses is a major economic challenge (Makisimov et al., 2017). The study also adds knowledge in the field of research on the factors that influence women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, where efforts to boost entrepreneurial culture can be a crucial factor for economic growth (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). The study also provides recommendations that women entrepreneurs can use to improve the growth of their businesses.

Additionally, the study is also valuable to financial institutions. It provides valuable knowledge that can help financial institutions to assist women in achieving their entrepreneurial dream. The

study also acts as a reference tool for researchers to provide women with the necessary knowledge and finance to help them grow their businesses. Through this study, support agencies can assist women to grow their businesses and also provide financial recommendations to women-owned SMEs, thus helping them to grow.

### **1.7. Scope of the study**

The study was conducted in Kuwait City in the state of Kuwait. The city provides an excellent ground for accessing women in various entrepreneurship such as hotels, beauty and cosmetics, and social media (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). The city is a rich economic hub that attracts nationals and foreigners. Such an attraction makes it a great platform for operation by most business owners including female entrepreneurs.

Because of the thriving economy in Kuwait City, it is a very good location to study woman entrepreneurs. The city encompasses a wide variety of enterprises: social media marketing, beauty, cosmetics, hotels-all offering great avenues for growth and expansion. A vibrant atmosphere in Kuwait City helps the women entrepreneurs by catering to a very heterogeneous clientele-local and foreign. As a city, diversity nurtures business and is also a very good setting when it comes to research factors that surround the success of females as entrepreneurs.

The basic regional economic hub is Kuwait City, which attracts many investments and provides enormous opportunities for female aspirant company entrepreneurs (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). With its high living standard and huge profits from oil, a flourishing economy presents a good atmosphere for entrepreneurial ventures. Women entrepreneurs could venture into niches such as retail, personal care, and luxurious services, among others (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Due to the direction of high-income customers, Kuwait City is well positioned to witness entrepreneurship growth in that a woman business owner could service a clientele appreciative of quality and innovation.

The other aspect that makes Kuwait City an exemplary location for research involves its cultural aspects. In Kuwait, women are often engaged in business activities while maintaining the standards of a cosmopolitan cultural influence coupled with traditional Islamic values (Makisimov et al., 2017). It is because of this perceived balance that the researchers can observe how the cultural aspects influence the business strategy formulation and decision-making dynamics of female entrepreneurs (Thai & Turkina, 2014). The culture variance between

different countries can provide insight into the way business operations are conducted and, most importantly, how females work through cultural expectations to still be able to succeed in their respective fields. For this reason, Kuwait is a unique city-a blend of modernity and history that makes the experiences of female entrepreneurs even more fascinating.

Such infrastructures provide excellent facilities for businesses to thrive and function in the most feasible manner. Kuwait City has good internet connectivity, established transportation networks, and a sampling of modern comforts that help in doing business easily within the city. These factors ensure smoother function flow and enable business owners to work on core tasks without major logistical challenges. Access to such infrastructure enables women-led businesses, particularly those in services or e-commerce activities, to expand and enjoy better competitiveness at the Market, thereby making it an attractive place where entrepreneurship projects can be set up.

Social media is one of the channels through which female entrepreneurs in Kuwait promote their companies (Makisimov et al., 2017). More and more use of social media like Instagram and Snapchat might be helpful, enabling women entrepreneurs to access bigger groups. Such media may be used by women for the promotion of businesses, brand awareness, and communication directly with clients. This works especially well within the beauty, fashion, and lifestyle sectors, as appeal plays a huge role in the attraction of clients. One of the ways Kuwait City has responded to contemporary trends in marketing is by incorporating social media into its company strategy.

Social media platforms have totally revolutionized the business landscape by making tools of marketing and networking more accessible, especially for female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. This is especially so with platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat, which allow them to showcase visually what they have on offer, a factor that is so vital in industries where aesthetics play a huge role. According to Makisimov et al. (2017), social media empowered women to break through barriers traditionally prohibiting better business opportunities because of limited mobility or access to capital. These platforms are visual in nature, making brand storytelling easier-a process that builds customer loyalty and trust. Moreover, analytics on social media enable an entrepreneur to trace the level of engagement and thus adjust their strategies for the

best effect. The access and insight that such media provide have really made social media a game-changing platform for women entrepreneurs in Kuwait's dynamic market.

Of them all, Instagram was a big hit as a medium for woman entrepreneurs in Kuwait. The essence of Instagram is super relevant to visually engaging fashion, beauty, and other lifestyle-related companies. Examples include Instagram Stories and Reels. These features were added to permit direct communication with followers and customers in real life. This develops an excellent rapport that helps in proliferating awareness related to the brand. This means, for instance, that entrepreneurs from Kuwait work a lot with the so-called local influencers to drive attention to their products and increase reach due to their following. Also, with the functionality such as Shopping Tags and Links, seamless discovery-to-purchase transitions can happen inside the platform. As such, Instagram acts as an equally important storefront for their offerings, much more than a channel to execute a marketing activity. These features integrated together have placed Instagram as a key component in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Kuwait, particularly for women.

Among all, Instagram has emerged as the most potential platform for female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Its visual nature complements the needs of fashion, beauty, and lifestyle verticals. Entrepreneurs use features such as Instagram Stories, Reels, and Live to connect with the audience in real time, developing a more substantial connection and enhancing brand visibility. For instance, entrepreneurs in Kuwait have been partnering with local influencers on the platform who can offer the brand their follower base. It also has features such as shopping tags and links, allowing easy navigation between discovery and purchase. In that sense, Instagram is a storefront just as much as it is a marketing channel. These features integrated together have placed Instagram as a key component in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Kuwait, especially for women.

Social media use by Kuwaiti female entrepreneurs goes beyond business growth to include women's empowerment. An online presence helps in challenging ascribed gender roles and capabilities in the business world. Instagram and Snapchat provide a space for female entrepreneurs to share success stories that inspire others and build support networks. As Makisimov et al. (2017) explain, social media has become a critical enabler of women's economic participation in Kuwait, breaking down societal barriers and creating new

opportunities. In addition, the global reach of these platforms allows Kuwaiti entrepreneurs to connect with international markets, broadening horizons and fostering cultural exchange. In this way, social media isn't just about marketing; rather, it functions as a catalyst to bring about this social change, pushing boundaries toward greater equality in Kuwait's business landscape.

Social media platforms are used for more than just product promotion in the marketplace. They are also an effective means of engaging customers and soliciting feedback. Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs are increasingly engaging directly with customers, responding to queries and issues, through social media networks such as Instagram and Snapchat. Two-way communications between the enterprise and respective clients thus solidify loyalty and repeat patronage. These interactions, according to Makisimov et al. (2017), make especially great effects for small enterprises that are reliant on every customer's positive feedback and word of mouth. Further, social media allow entrepreneurs to hold a poll, provide questionnaires, and have a live Q&A session in which valuable ideas regarding what customers prefer most may be known. Such immediate responses mean a business would adapt with the market trend easily, adjusting their products toward relevance and competitiveness within the market.

The cosmopolitan atmosphere of the city also ensures that the clientele is varied, therefore attracting tourists from across different social and cultural backgrounds. Such diversity allows female entrepreneurs to broaden their horizons of enterprise by targeting multiple interests and preferences (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). For example, a hotel has to offer a wide variety of cuisines that suit both domestic and international clientele. The fact that the customers in Kuwait City are from diverse backgrounds provides women owners with considerable hints towards market segmentation and aid in raising consumer's satisfaction of their goods (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

Besides that, mentorship opportunities, training courses, and support systems are also provided to woman entrepreneurs in Kuwait City. However, the resources for women seeking business are increasingly supported with the existence of community organizations, commercial organizations, and governmental initiatives within the city (Thai & Turkina, 2014). These services help women entrepreneurs develop their skills in setting up businesses and linking them with potential investors. The services provided include funding options, networking possibilities, and training. These support systems help enhance business knowledge in women, thereby

performing better and sustaining their grounds in this cruel competitive world of workplace challenges.

Lastly, high purchasing power with a stable economy in Kuwait City is an added advantage to the entrepreneurs. The high income per person in Kuwait City makes people there more too often willing to spend their money on various products and services that come with quality, thus giving room for growth in regard to the luxury brands of products. This habit of customers is beneficial to female entrepreneurs who want to create unique high-quality items (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Therefore, Kuwait City has a very appropriate economic climate for women to found successful businesses, and through those businesses, contribute to economic growth and, thus, the continued development of the city.

### **1.8. Limitations of the study**

Two limitations were experienced in the study. First, lack of sufficient resources to cover all cities in Kuwait and all ventures that women control. For instance, the cities of Al Farwaniyah and Al Fahahil have a larger population compared to Kuwait City, yet female entrepreneurs in such cities would be ignored in the study (Al-Qenaie & Naser, 2023). Second, a lack of openness among some women would hinder the provision of real information on success factors that they experience. Most entrepreneurs have trade secrets that would be complicated to reveal, making access to the truth about the success of some female entrepreneurs complicated.

The limitations of research in social and economic studies make a big difference with regard to the scope and usefulness of the findings (Makisimov et al., 2017). One of the main limitations of the study is the inability to collect sufficient data that actually represent all cities in Kuwait and also all the female-led companies in the country. Funding constraints may limit the scope of a study, due to its making it hard to obtain a representative sample of the target population (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). This might not consider the experiences of women entrepreneurs in more populated areas, such as Al Farwaniyah and Al Fahahil, due to difficulties in data collection across all cities. This denies the conclusion of the study a broad perspective that would take into consideration the diverse opinions coupled with different challenges.

If there is anything that could have placed a limitation on the generalization of the findings from this study, it is the fact that some areas were left out (Makisimov et al., 2017). Each of these



cities or regions in Kuwait can be peculiar in their own ways, with different social, cultural, and economic features and different ways of influencing female entrepreneurship. For instance, in comparison with Kuwait City, Al Farwaniyah and Al Fahahil are two areas that have more compacted populations with a diversified business environment, which means a set of opportunities and challenges for entrepreneurs. The study may not consider regional differences in women's entrepreneurship because it does not effectively cover those areas; results of which may not be representative of the reality faced by women entrepreneurs there (Thai & Turkina, 2014). This shortage keeps the findings limited to generalization for a broader Kuwaiti context and makes it hard to develop recommendations or policies that would cater to the needs of female entrepreneurs elsewhere.

**Entrepreneurial Dynamics: Regional Variations;** The exclusion of cities like Al Farwaniyah and Al Fahahil also excludes regional differences in entrepreneurial dynamics. Cities like these possess distinct socio-economic characteristics, such as more compact populations and varied business environments (Makisimov et al., 2017). For example, female entrepreneurs may face different challenges, such as greater competition or various cultural expectations that are not included in the survey. The policy and support systems for women entrepreneurs should consider such regional nuances. Future research should make use of stratified sampling techniques to ensure regional differences are captured and analyzed effectively.

**Generalization of Findings;** The general applicability of the results of this study for all women entrepreneurs in Kuwait is limited by the fact that the information covered only a small scope. Generalizations are needed to be drawn from a sample representative of the diversity of the population of the target group, which was not feasible for this research to cover. The non-inclusion of some major cities and also some sectors of business leads to a narrow perspective and limits the usefulness of the findings in informing broader policy recommendations.

This is a limitation and shows that further research needs to be conducted in a manner that is inclusive in nature, thereby considering the experiences of women from different backgrounds and regions for analysis.

**Influence of Social and Cultural Norms;** It also does not go in-depth into how cultural and social norms across various regions in Kuwait and their impact on female entrepreneurship have changed. Places such as Al Farwaniyah and Al Fahahil might have their own unique cultural

dynamics influencing women's involvement in business, unlike Kuwait City. According to Makisimov et al. (2017), such norms shape entrepreneurial behavior, opportunities, and challenges and, therefore, can add many layers to the findings. These variations being ignored, the study cannot explain important factors relevant to women entrepreneurs. These variations of cultural influence would allow a richer interpretation in future studies.

**Limited Scope for Policy Development;** The limited scope of the study to a small geographic and demographic setting also limits the usefulness of its results in developing policies that can help address the needs of all female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Effective policy development requires a deepened understanding of the challenges and opportunities available for women in different regions and sectors. Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009. Without this understanding, policy recommendations might be biased toward the experiences of entrepreneurs in Kuwait City alone and fail to consider the needs of others elsewhere. This could have been better grounded in the crafting of inclusive and effective policy measures if the scope of the research were expanded.

**The Need for Longitudinal Studies;** Finally, the cross-sectional design of the study limits its capacity to capture the long-run trends and developments of female entrepreneurship in Kuwait. A longitudinal approach may provide insights into how the entrepreneurial landscape evidences over time, particularly with regard to shifts in economic conditions and social norms. Such studies could trace the progress of female entrepreneurs from region to region and give a more dynamic point of view on their problems and success stories. It would, in fact, take continuous funding and collaboration between academic institutions, government agencies, and private organizations to overcome this limitation.

The complication of the study was further worsened by several female entrepreneurs who refused to openly discuss reasons for their success. Entrepreneurship often involves guarding private information or trade secrets that would give an individual an edge over competitors, especially in very competitive industries. It may, therefore, be tough to get data regarding true causes of female business success due to this reluctance to release ideas. Any suppression of information will make the research not fully representative of the success characteristics of the female entrepreneurs, as results may be biased to these that were more open. Because of this

limitation, a comprehensive description cannot be made of those characteristics that make for successful female entrepreneurship in Kuwait.

Apprehensions about privacy, feeling at a disadvantage, or reluctance on the grounds of cultural values on the privacy of business information are all possible disincentives to providing the information requested (Makisimov et al., 2017). In Kuwait's small business community, the provision of personal information could imply intentions to competitors or the public. For this matter, some respondents might provide only general answers that do not reveal explicit strategies resorted to when trying to overcome the problems. The implications of this fact are that the study cannot really identify specific strategies or elements which make it successful, nor can it provide potential female entrepreneurs with specific recommendations. This limitation shows that future studies will need to use more enhanced trust-building techniques, such as increased confidentiality guarantees or anonymized data collection.

These limitations also point to one very important issue: response bias, whereby the more conservative participants sanctify vital information while the opening ones release certain ideas (Thai & Turkina, 2014). Since the collected data may reflect only experiences and not a representative sample of opinions across the female entrepreneurial community, the conclusions derived may also be affected by responder bias (Al-Mughni, 2005). For this, future research should employ different data collection methods, in-depth interviews, or alternatively-anonymous questionnaires. This will help to overcome this issue and allow respondents to be more open. This would permit more balanced findings that represent a wider range of factors that affect women's success as entrepreneurs throughout Kuwait.

The limitations found are a call for the filling of data gaps through different research methodologies (Makisimov et al., 2017). For example, a mixed-methods approach can be used that collects qualitative and quantitative data to probe deeper. While the surveys can offer wide-angle views, qualitative methods-interviews, for instance-may allow for more thorough investigations of sensitive subjects in a private, confidential environment conducive to eliciting more detailed information than might otherwise have been obtained. Comparing quantitative data with qualitative observations, a range of methodologies can help enhance the credibility of findings and create a holistic picture of Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs.

In all, awareness of such limitations clearly spells out the scope of the research and points out avenues for further research (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Any future study will, therefore, be more comprehensive and representative of proper and relevant results because some limitations like openness of respondents and availability of resources are addressed. Other future studies can be built upon the results of this research in order to provide a fuller picture of the dynamics affecting women entrepreneurs in Kuwait by considering other sources of finance, increasing sample sizes, and collecting private data. Fully acknowledging these limitations also aids stakeholders and readers in grasping the scope of the findings and interpreting them in light of the limitations experienced during the research process.

### **1.9. Assumptions of the study**

Two assumptions were applied in the study. First, women engaged in entrepreneurship in Kuwait face similar social impacts that define the success or failure of their ventures. Second, women engaged in businesses in Kuwait face similar financial challenges when they request funding from existing financial institutions (Al-Mughni, 2005). Third, the information provided by respondents is objective and applies to all other women in the country. These assumptions make conclusions from the study binding and reliable for use among current and future female business owners in the country of Kuwait (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

Assumptions are an essential part of any research in order to ensure that the findings can be generalized on a larger scale and to provide the research study with the basis for its outcomes. The first assumption would be that all Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs share the same social outcomes, which is intrinsic in acknowledging shared challenges and successes (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Entrepreneurial ventures could substantially be influenced by the societal perception of women in business, religious and cultural norms, and familial expectations. Such a study informs one that could be applied to a deeper understanding of how Kuwaiti women cope with business challenges shaped by their social environment, by assuming that these sociocultural factors are essentially invariant across female entrepreneurs (Makisimov et al., 2017). This assumption allows the researcher to generalize her findings and serve more far-reaching recommendations to female entrepreneurs operating under similar sociocultural contexts.

The second assumption provides an outline of financial barriers that women face in order to retrieve funds from banking institutions (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). This assumption is representative of the fact that female entrepreneurs, unlike their male counterparts, may face gender discrimination and therefore have restricted access to capital. Indeed, research underpins the role of gender-sensitive financial policies and inclusive lending practices, assuming that all Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs face the same kind of financial barriers (Thai & Turkina, 2014). Precisely, if this hypothesis is true, it underlines the need for equitable financial support programs that afford women equal opportunities to resources that can facilitate enterprise initiation. This knowledge can help financial institutions and lawmakers formulate laws that advance the cause of equal access to capital for women entrepreneurs, thus improving their success rate.

The third assumption regards the generalization aspect and objectivity of the information the respondents provided, which is paramount in a study to be considered valid and legitimate. The data gives an exact illustration of the entrepreneurship experience of women in Kuwait, with minimal bias evident in the data, based on the assumption that respondents gave unbiased opinions (Thai & Turkina, 2014). The assumption also allows the generalization of the findings of the studies to a more general population, meaning the recommendations are applicable to other current and future Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). In this respect, objectivity in the responses is particularly important in the case of a study dealing with self-reported data, as this minimizes the biases that may systematically introduce distortions and allows one to reach conclusions which reflect the real problems and opportunities faced by entrepreneurs and women in business nationwide (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

These assumptions therefore make this study more valid in the case of research that attempts to provide generalized recommendations. Assuming that housing, social, and financial problems are shared factors allows the study to make insightful recommendations applicable to the overwhelming majority of Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs. For instance, this assumption-based conclusion would have driven efforts meant to empower women and create supportive entrepreneurial culture if statistics show, for example, that cultural norms regularly hinder women's entrepreneurial ambitions. If access to finance is consistently a challenging chore for Kuwaiti women, the additional findings of the study may also be appealing enough to compel the

government as well as financial institutions to apply gender-equitable funding schemes as a policy, boosting women's economic empowerment accordingly.

Assumptions also affect the generalizability of the findings to other studies and practices. Given the assumption that the experiences of Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs are similar to those from other Arabic or Islamic countries, this study therefore sets a base for further research on possibly similar phenomena in such countries (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009).

These facts being true would thereby be the very basis on which comparative studies about how women entrepreneurs experience similar challenges in comparable settings-both culturally and economically-are conducted across regions. This cross-regional relevance strengthens these findings further and gives them wider applicability that may, perhaps, encourage further research to assist female entrepreneurs in culturally and economically similar areas.

The major problems facing female entrepreneurs, especially in regions with deep-seated female roles in society, have to do with the financial hurdles banking institutions create for them in their quest to raise funds. Indeed, research shows that gender discrimination does indeed often thwart women's access to capital and, in this way, creates inequalities that negatively affect business growth and development for women. Such unequal treatment signifies the critical need for financial policies which tackle gender disparity and integrate more inclusive lending practices. Assuming that all women entrepreneurs in Kuwait face similar financial barriers, the study underscores the importance of equitable financial programs tailored to equip women with resources to initiate and sustain their ventures. Such measures would increase not only the success rate of women entrepreneurs but also contribute to wider economic development by unleashing latent potential within the population.

The assumption that respondents provided objective and unbiased information is very important to the validity and reliability of the findings of this study. It must be remembered that self-reported data is very much subject to bias, and the study grounds its belief in a supposition that the answers from the participants were accurate and honest; Thai & Turkina, 2014. Due to the presence of this assumption, results are easily generalized to a bigger population size in the form of Kuwaiti female entrepreneurs, and hence, being recommended universally to everyone as well. Where answers are objective in nature, that is where conclusions on what actually

constitutes challenges and what, on the other hand, present really fabulous opportunities for a female in business actually come out. The absence of this assumption means the loss of much credibility for this study, as any systemic bias within the data distorts both the representation of women's experience of entrepreneurship and the viability of proposed solutions.

The fact that this study is based on shared perceptions of housing, social, and financial problems of Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs further strengthens its potential to provide insightful and actionable recommendations. For example, if cultural norms are consistently seen as a hindrance to the entrepreneurial aspirations of women, the findings of the present study may constitute a basis for policy intervention in the establishment of a supportive entrepreneurial culture.

However, if the problem is that of financial access, the findings may spur both the government and financial institutions to implement gender-equitable funding policies and address systemic inequalities that hamper economic empowerment among women. These recommendations are very important in creating the right environment that will allow women entrepreneurs to grow and overcome challenges that have over the years hindered their full potential.

This can also allow for generalizing the findings of this study to a broader context and opens the door for comparative research in other Arabic or Islamic countries. Presuming that the experiences of Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs reflect those from other similar cultural and economic contexts, the study provides a useful framework in which to explore common challenges and opportunities across regions. Azam Roomi, Harrison, & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009 This cross-regional relevance not only validates the findings but also encourages further research into gender disparities in entrepreneurship. Comparative studies might reveal general trends and specific nuances, thus allowing the identification of best practices and enabling the development of interventions relevant to the special needs of women entrepreneurs in differing contexts.

The assumption-based framework inspiring this study raises awareness of one other key way through which cultural-level norms may push in two or more opposing directions to shape, or reshape, women's experiences as entrepreneurs: While these may be considered barriers, they could also be avenues of innovation for women within their ascribed roles. The research recognizes the interplay between cultural expectations and entrepreneurial ambition in explaining women's success or lack thereof in business. This is yet another important perspective in

developing policies and programs that would address not only barriers but also tap into the positive aspects of cultural strengths in empowerment, such as those of female entrepreneurs, who could further empower economic growth on a sustainable basis.

Other great implications of the assumptions of the study are that they may influence policy and institutional practices one way or the other. One of the key challenges identified in this study that women entrepreneurs in Kuwait faced is financial barriers; it therefore lays the ground for advocacy aimed at reforming discriminatory lending practices. These findings will help financial institutions in the development of appropriate and inclusive products and services for the needs of female entrepreneurs, including microfinance programs, low-interest loans, and mentorship initiatives. These would not only benefit women in Kuwait but also be a yardstick for other countries to follow so as to make the playing ground level in respect of gender equity in entrepreneurship. This further puts into light that the systemic issues affecting women entrepreneurs in the study are also common to different contexts. The study presumes that challenges faced by Kuwaiti women represent broader trends, hence addressing comprehensive strategies that could be laid down to address gender disparities in entrepreneurship. These might be strategies aimed at developing women's business acumen, legal reforms for protection of their rights, and public awareness to break stereotypes. Such initiatives would have far-reaching implications, create an inclusive and equitable entrepreneurial ecosystem, and benefit all strata of society. In addition, these assumptions being presented within a research framework bring new academic fuel to the already significant discourse on the subjects of gender and entrepreneurship.

By placing the experiences of the women within the broader socio-economic context, the study, in fact, provides a critical lens through which the intersection between gender, culture, and economic development can be examined. Such a perspective is valuable for researchers that investigate the roles of women within emerging markets where entrepreneurship often plays a critical path to economic empowerment. The findings of this study will add to the future research regarding the impact of gender-sensitive policies, the role of cultural norms in shaping entrepreneurial behavior, and the effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing gender disparities. The last assumptions of the research bring up the issue of the need for an integrated approach in the solution of problems faced by women entrepreneurs. It therefore presents a broad framework for understanding the complex processes of women's entrepreneurial journeys by considering the interplay of financial, social, and cultural factors. This approach recognizes that



no single intervention can successfully tackle the multi-layered obstacles women are confronted with, but rather targeted interventions, enabling policies, and shifts in culture that will create an enabling environment where women entrepreneurs can thrive. Going forward, this would require building on the findings presented in the study for the collective action of stakeholders to advance the development of gender equity in entrepreneurship-a sector with much potential for unleashing women's full contribution to economic and social development.

Based on these assumptions, the study makes useful recommendations for current and prospective female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. The presumed universality allows the research to suggest ways that would benefit the majority of the female entrepreneurs. For example, the research could suggest some cooperative activities in terms of networking events or mentorship programs where these women can, together, overcome these barriers by understanding similar social and financial challenges. Moreover, since the respondents could be assumed to be neutral-the female entrepreneurs of Kuwait thus acknowledge recommendations derived from this study as unbiased and constructive, hence a fostering and learning platform for the women in business. Assumptions lay the ground for practical implications which can be applied to imply drastic changes in the female entrepreneurial sector of Kuwait.

#### 1.10. Definition of terms

- 1) **Entrepreneur-** a person who starts a business and provides products or services for financial gains (Hayes, 2021).
- 2) **Ventures-** businesses that are established and operated for profit-making purposes.
- 3) **Trade secrets-** competitive edge that makes a business succeed over its peers in the same industry.
- 4) **Economic hub-** a region where businesses thrive due to a high inflow of capital.
- 5) **Islamic culture-** traditions and behaviors aligned to the Koran and Sharia laws, mostly practiced in Arabic countries.
- 6) **SMEs-** small and medium-sized businesses operated as sole proprietorships or joint ventures whose capital is relatively affordable to most people.

Entrepreneurs are the ones opening businesses to sell goods or services to make an income. By the opening of lucrative businesses, it means that entrepreneurs have a substantive role in the

growth of an economy (Thai & Turkina, 2014). Successful entrepreneurs make use of trade secrets to give them outstanding competitive advantage among their rivals operating similar businesses anything unique about them like strategies, formula or techniques will be considered a trade secret. Economic hubs are more attractive to entrepreneurs, especially, because they attract large sums of capital and create an enabling environment for the establishment, survival, and success of businesses. They provide a platform that includes various resources for starting up and developing enterprises, such as potential investors and business networks.

Islamic culture, based on principles and ideals in the Koran and Sharia law, provides an overarching influence on the Arabic business environment (Makisimov et al., 2017). This cultural framework allows for the confluence of one's business operations with religious belief systems, among other variables, regarding ethics and financial transactions. Small and medium-sized enterprises, also known as SMEs, account for a significant portion of the majority of global economies as they provide affordable business entry points for associates and entrepreneurs. SMEs are especially accessible because companies require less capital as compared to large corporations, thus allowing more people to venture into business (Thai & Turkina, 2014). These may be joint ventures or even sole proprietorships that are very key in creating employment, innovating, and diversifying the economy. They mostly have supportive environments in economic hubs. They ensure economic progress through establishing businesses that enable the market with goods and services as well as earning income. Through it, new employment and opportunities could be innovated and established, and general economic dynamism and growth could be developed in many regions of operation where people operate in. Besides creating jobs, entrepreneurs contribute to economic development through coming up with new ways of production as well as the introduction of new products and services adapted to the new situations that change the consumer demand for products. Their ventures often attract foreign investment and create a bit of competition in the market, resulting in the better production of whatever may be produced. This again brings into focus the creation of an enabling environment for the entrepreneurial activities to thrive as a major driver of economic resilience and growth.

The concept of trade secrets is central to entrepreneurial success because it encompasses unique strategies, formulas, or techniques that provide a competitive edge. Trade secrets provide the business with a competitive advantage over their competitors and help them build a tenable market position. Normally, business people would use intellectual property protection and

strategic confidentiality to ensure these advantages remain intact. Trade secrets will enable the firms to maintain strong brand identities, customer loyalty, and long-term profitability. However, effective trade secret practice implies knowledge of both the legal framework and ethical practices, in order not to fall into illegality while seeking maximum competitive benefit.

The economic hubs are the magnets for entrepreneurs because of their favorable conditions for setting up and growing a business. These hubs are characterized by access to financial resources, a skilled workforce, advanced infrastructure, and networks of potential collaborators or investors. This would imply that entrepreneurs face lower operational risks and enjoy more scaling-up opportunities in such an environment. Economic hubs also stir up interaction and innovation, putting different stakeholders together who can contribute to knowledge exchange and the expansion of markets. For this reason, the development of such hubs features among the most important strategies for governments interested in enhancing their country's entrepreneurial landscape and attracting foreign direct investment. In this regard, Islamic culture often refers business to the guidance provided by the Quran and Sharia law. It is these cultural and religious values that influence the attitude of an entrepreneur toward financial operations, relations with employees, and clients. The ban on interest rates, for example, gave birth to the Islamic finance system that promotes equity investment models. Such frameworks encourage business ethics that are in line with religious beliefs, thus fostering stakeholders' trust and accountability. The integration of cultural values into entrepreneurial activities could enable businesses operating in Islamic economies to appeal to a wider audience while remaining true to their cultural identity.

SMEs are a significant driver of economic growth, especially in developing countries. These businesses provide relatively easy points of entry for budding entrepreneurs since they generally need less capital compared to large enterprises. SMEs are usually important contributors to employment, technology, and economic diversification, hence a characteristic of any national economy. For example, Thai and Turkina explain that their flexibility will enable them to respond promptly to changes in market and consumer demands, hence making them viable in most competitive milieus.

The support to the SME sector usually remains at the top of the agenda of any government or policy makers in terms of grants, tax incentives, and capacity-building programs so that their successful and continuous contribution may be ensured in the economy. Supportive

environments in economic hubs help SMEs in crucial ways, including mentorship, training programs, and access to markets. Such environments encourage collaboration between startups and established businesses. More often, incubators and accelerators within economic hubs also help entrepreneurs to surmount birth and scaling challenges arising from their businesses. Thus, while enhancing survival rates of the SMEs, such supporting mechanisms enable these enterprises to become more dynamic actors in employment generation and economic transformation. This thereby interlinks the role of entrepreneurs, SMEs, and economic hubs in achieving economic prosperity.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides reviews from different work of literature written in the areas of women entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship, SMEs, and social, cultural, economic, and personal factors influencing women in entrepreneurship venture (Makisimov et al., 2017). This chapter provides sheds light on the intricate subject of women entrepreneurs and provides sustainable knowledge essential for the empirical part of this study. The chapter starts by providing literature on women entrepreneur. The purpose of this chapter is to review existing literature on women entrepreneurs and explore various dimensions of their journeys in terms of challenges, achievements, and their role in economic development. In recent times, women entrepreneurs have become vital for international economies as they facilitate job creation, foster innovation, and enrich economic diversity. According to Maksimov et al. (2017), women entrepreneurs play a very important role in any economy. However, their journey is often marred by unique challenges related to cultural norms, limited access to financial resources, and issues with work-life balance. Different studies also emphasize that despite the presence of obstacles, women entrepreneurs show resistance and resourcefulness; they seek to make maximum use of networks and try to surmount most problems. This review thus provides the platform for attempting to understand both the nuances about women entrepreneurs and their many contributions to socioeconomic development.

The chapter also explores the interplay of social, cultural, economic, and personal factors affecting women's entrepreneurial ventures. Social norms and cultural expectations can be both an obstacle to and supportive of women's entrepreneurship. For instance, patriarchal societies may restrict women's mobility or their decision-making capabilities, hence limiting their business opportunities. Economically, women entrepreneurs often face financial barriers to entry, such as difficulty in securing loans or investments due to gender biases in traditional lending systems. Other personal factors like education, skill, and family support also emerge as strong influencers of women's entrepreneurial success. An analysis of these factors, therefore, leads to an understanding of various dimensions of the dynamics that shape women entrepreneurs.

### 2.2. Women Entrepreneurship

According to Dewitt et al. (2023), entrepreneurship allows women to achieve their ambitions to start or own a business while balancing family and work. For years, men have been dominating

the world of business, but today women are sitting aside, establishing their own businesses. Byrne et al. (2019) define women entrepreneurs as females who initiate, organize, and manage enterprises, assuming significant financial risk, with the main goal of achieving social impact or generating profit. These women also are business-oriented, ready to take higher risks, with an incredible vision and great diligence, and believe in owning a business to grab opportunities (Makisimov et al., 2017). Literature shows that treating men and women equally significantly accelerates economic growth and reduces poverty, as society moves from underdeveloped to developed creating market opportunities, and increasing purchasing power, resulting in more conducive social and economic environments for the expansion and growth of entrepreneurship (Cesaroni et al., 2018). As governments increasingly consider entrepreneurship as one foundation tool for a competitive national economy, they are making serious efforts to support entrepreneurship in their countries (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

Over the last few decades, global interest in women's entrepreneurship has grown (Box & Larsson, 2018). Women-owned entrepreneurs are also considered a crucial tool for entrepreneurial diversity. However, in developing countries like Kuwait, women's potential and talents are often unexploited due to socio-cultural and economic complexities (Al-Hameli et al., 2023). This study emphasizes the paucity of research on the women's entrepreneurial environment, yet regardless of background, attempts to analyze it in isolation provide very little understanding. Various steps have been taken to foster the success of women in entrepreneurship (Makisimov et al., 2017). However, success as an intrinsic situation to increase financial yield, controlling one's own future, self-governing, capital gains, and being own boss is a problem for women entrepreneurs (Li et al, 2020). According to Mehtap et al. (2017), women entrepreneurs focus more on strengthening relationships at the customer level, power in controlling their businesses, and developing something valuable.

Women's participation in entrepreneurship, which indicates improvement and growth of women's entrepreneurship, has significantly contributed to economic growth across the globe (Makisimov et al., 2017). However, in some countries especially developing countries, women find it hard to participate in businesses due to economic and socio-cultural freedom. Women in these countries have fewer opportunities caused of innate gender discrimination (Charness et al., 2023). Besides, lack of financial resources, poor education and training programs, and personality traits also

discourage women in entrepreneurship ventures. The current study measured the hypothetical relationship between factors contributing to the success of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

While entrepreneurship among women is identified to act more and more as one of the drivers of change in society and economy, its development still faces numerous obstacles. From these significant barriers, a restriction to access to finance has widely been recognized; in fact, women entrepreneurs may be faced with discriminatory behavior in their request for financing, or fewer possibilities may be granted to them than to men. This gap not only limits their entrepreneurial activities of starting or expanding businesses but also dampens their confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial activities. Such a situation calls for customized financial policies, nondiscriminatory lending practices, and the establishment of women-focused support systems to provide a level playing field for aspiring women entrepreneurs.

Another important determinant of female entrepreneurship is the lack of role models and professional networks. The literature has it that women are usually at a disadvantage in terms of prior exposure to established entrepreneurs or even industry-specific knowledge. This lack of mentorship creates a void in guidance and support, making it harder for women to navigate challenges and seize opportunities. Programs that would link women entrepreneurs with experienced mentors will enhance their skills, confidence, and thus strategic decision-making capabilities that will go a long way in ensuring the sustainability and growth of their ventures.

Socio-cultural expectations and conventional gender roles, however, play a vital role in affecting women's entrepreneurship journeys, particularly in developing countries. Most women have to bear the double burden of house management and businesses, which time-wise leaves very little for developing their enterprises; Charness et al. 2023 add that cultural disincentives against the leadership role in women further contribute to this state of affairs. Raising awareness about the value of women entrepreneurs and fostering supportive ecosystems within communities can help break these barriers, enabling more women to actively participate in and benefit from entrepreneurship.

### **2.3. Women Entrepreneurs' Performance**

Success in entrepreneurship is essential making the factors influencing entrepreneur performance a relevant topic in the field of research. This study considers entrepreneur performance as an increase in profitability, production line, increase in the number of employees, and sales

turnovers (Makisimov et al., 2017). Studies indicate that the performance of women-owned businesses is lower compared to their male counterparts. Generally, there are many women-owned businesses, especially in the SME sector created every year but their size in terms of profits, sales, and capitalization remains stagnant. Besides, many women enterprises fail, while those that survive remain small with poor performance. Most existing studies on women entrepreneurs focused on challenges that hinder women from starting their own businesses with few focusing on factors influencing their performance (Thai & Turkina, 2014).

Many women in developing countries face almost similar challenges such as poverty and land (Alene, 2020). Socio-cultural factors such as lack of collateral, customs, and laws prevent women from owning property and land, which means a place to live and start a business. According to Azam (2003), women have been subjected to discrimination despite carrying large responsibilities. Besides, when it comes to resource ownership, women in developing countries like Kuwait have little control over property, financial, and information resources. Since property is utilized as collateral for business credit, women entrepreneurs must have access to property rights. Despite, women's right to own property and have full and independent use of their property, income, land, and assets in Kuwait, Islamic Sharia men are entitled to double share to that of women. Mishra and Sam (2016) found that the lingering cultural and legal discrimination that hinders women's access to employment opportunities and property ownership has resulted in a lack of empowerment and low status. This highlights the need to integrate gender issues into strategies to improve entrepreneurship (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

The legal provision granting women equal rights to engage in business activities and access education, institutional barriers, and societal norms present challenges that hinder women entrepreneurs' performance compared to their male counterparts (Bui et al., 2018). While women in Kuwait are legally empowered to enter into business contracts and pursue entrepreneurial ventures, without the need for male consent, disparities in education opportunities persist. Discriminatory practices, such as differential GPA requirements, have limited many women's access to key sectors like engineering and medicine, potentially hampering their business performance. Cultural expectations and societal pressures also influence women's career choices, limiting their freedom to pursue professions outside traditional roles (Al-Mughni, 2005). Restrictions on women's participation in sectors like the police, army, and judiciary further constrain their opportunities for professional advancement and entrepreneurial success.



Kuwaiti women, particularly divorced and low-income individuals, face challenges in accessing housing due to discriminatory policies, and limited economic opportunities, including child support benefits allocated to their husbands in divorce cases, which can hinder their ability to invest in entrepreneurial ventures (Al-Mughni, 2005). Women's representation in politics, such as voting or running for office, is also limited, contributing to a broader societal environment where women face challenges in breaking into various sectors, including entrepreneurship. Gender stereotypes in media can discourage women from pursuing entrepreneurship, particularly in traditionally male-dominated sectors (Makisimov et al., 2017). Despite government subsidies, women's rights groups in Kuwait may not adequately address the economic and social challenges faced by divorced and widowed women or female migrant workers. Government co-optation of women's groups may limit their effectiveness as independent advocates for women's rights, potentially leaving women without strong advocates for addressing specific barriers (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

According to Bianco et al. (2017), the absence of legislation addressing gender inequality and sexual harassment in the workplace poses a significant challenge for women entrepreneurs and employees and creates hostile work environments that impede their ability to thrive in business. Gender inequality not only manifests itself in the form of access to resources but also opportunities. Various studies highlight that gender inequality leads to a lowering of the economic growth rate and vice versa (Azmat, 2013; Nazer et al., 2012). In places, gender disparity has been attributed to a number of factors social attitudes toward women, lack of gender sensitive programs and policies, inadequate in term of skills and knowledge, and segregation in the labor market.

While women represent half of the world's population, gender inequality and discrimination mean preventing half of the world's population from reaching its full potential. This not only hurts them but also hinders growth in the rest of society (Rosca et al., 2020). On the other hand, promoting women's economic rights including the right to education, voice, mobility, ownership, and life free from violence and sexual harassment, and reproductive rights can significantly contribute to women's engagement in entrepreneurship (Thai & Turkina, 2014).

Gender Empowerment Measure indicates that there is low participation of women in politics, evidenced by low representation in various political positions and the economy. Kuwaiti

women's political participation and freedom of expression are hindered by several factors including exclusion from voting and running for office, leading to feelings of marginalization and disempowerment (Al-Mughni, 2005). Besides, work-family conflict, discrimination against women the “glass ceiling”, few opportunities for women, and women choosing not to pursue leadership positions, limit them from engaging in leadership development, and leadership development (Al Mutairi and Fayez, 2015). They also face restrictions on freedom of expression, such as strict press laws that criminalize criticism of the ruling authority and publishing materials deemed offensive to Islam. This fear of legal repercussions and societal backlash discourages women from voicing their opinions or advocating for their rights (Makisimov et al., 2017). Additionally, government licensing requirements and censorship laws restrict women's ability to establish and manage their organizations, further hindering their ability to advocate for policy changes conducive to entrepreneurship (Al-Mughni, 2005). Furthermore, limited access to information and networking opportunities may impede women's ability to innovate, develop business strategies, and navigate regulatory frameworks effectively.

Although women in Kuwait have statutory citizenship rights, most men have unrestricted rights to access and control their wives’ properties. Undervaluing economic rights by men having control over them results in divisive conflict and poverty. In Kuwait, women have rights to own property, with married women granted rights to own property and inheritance through Sharia law. According to Al-Mughni (2005), women in Kuwait have the right to own property, income, assets, financial transactions, inheritance, business, and property. Unfortunately, the position women hold in a family and community limits them from various economic, social, and political activities, the reason why rural-based development activities remain low. Women can start a business and manage development activities, but they do not have full control of their productive assets (Gerguri and Rotabi, 2021). This limits women's authority to control and make decisions such as starting a business. Besides, if the assets are registered in the male’s name, women cannot access credit facilities as they lack security (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

Education continues to be the main factor affecting people’s lives including women. Women in Kuwait have equal rights to access the education system from primary to university level and study abroad but they must seek permission from their male authority figure to accept or not. In the study on the impact of education on individuals’ lives, Mutairi and Fayez (2015) found that quality education empowers people to perceive opportunities in their environment. Education

helps entrepreneurs to successfully navigate environmental balance and build their firms without being influenced by the natural world (Thai & Turkina, 2014). Insufficient knowledge on the other hand prevents people from overcoming life's complicated challenges in a way that is most beneficial to generating wealth. Investing in women's education, human capital and health is a crucial tool to move forward (Assefa and Cheru, 2015). The study indicates that educated women engage in productive activities, earn higher incomes, find formal sector employment, and enjoy greater returns than uneducated women (Farhat & Mijid, 2018).

In developing countries where Kuwait is not an exception, women entrepreneurs lack quality training and advisory services that would help them upgrade their technical and managerial skills to take risks and make decisions for productivity and profitable businesses (Bagawa & Aljuwaisri, 2019). According to Panda (2018), entrepreneurial training is required to enable women to develop their desires for achievement. More so, lack of adequate experience significantly impacts the efficiency of women entrepreneurs and also hinders potential women from opening new lines of business. Chinomona and Maziriri (2015) investigated the challenges facing women entrepreneurs and discovered that most countries are investing in women's education to increase their productivity and earning potential. However, women continue to be discriminated against as most countries lack coherent strategies to empower women and help them improve their futures. Adom (2015) revealed that many women entrepreneurs lack exposure in the world of business and networks making them feel they lack skills, expertise, and abilities in certain business matters. They hardly acquire the essential abilities and experiences due to their community, family, and work responsibilities (Deborah et al., 2015). According to Adom et al. (2016), the growth and success of women entrepreneurs are hindered by problems like a lack of business knowledge about record keeping and accounting which significantly affect their operations.

While women represent half of the world's population, countries that do not capitalize on their full potential lag behind in their competitive potential (Hussain et al., 2019). Women in developing countries unlike in developed countries continue to suffer a high level of illiteracy compared to men. With considerable evidence supporting the significant impact of education on industrialization, enhancing women's training and development will not only help them but also help society to grow. Stromquist (2015) contended that merely providing microcredits to women without accompanying structural investment in education and healthcare for the impoverished

would exacerbate the exploitation of women. Deborah et al. (2015) recognize the necessity of entrepreneurial training to instill a sense of ambition among the young generation, especially girls. Their study proposed profiling and emulating successful female entrepreneurs as a means to achieve this goal (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). More so, their study identified that insufficient and inadequate training, disadvantaged social backgrounds, and socioeconomic discrimination are the significant challenges facing the performance of women entrepreneurs. Education and training are considered as rights of everyone and measures aimed at eradicating illiteracy among women and improving their accessibility to vocational training should be enhanced (Brixiova et al., 2020). Bullough et al. (2015) also recognized the importance of education and training programs for women entrepreneurs. The study provided a framework including core factors including contextual framework, human factors, and the elements of the program, that need to be considered to effectively achieve the program goals.

#### **2.4. Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Performance of Women Entrepreneurs**

Socio-cultural factors are the social and cultural influences that shape entrepreneurial behavior, opportunities, and outcomes within a society or community. According to Khan et al. (2021), socio-cultural factors can significantly impact the prevalence, nature, and success of entrepreneurial activities (Thai & Turkina, 2014). Cultural norms and values can vary significantly between societies, with some cultures valuing risk-taking, innovation, and entrepreneurship highly, while others may discourage it. In this study, social factors are characterized as the total resources, both existing and potential, that are inherent in, accessible through, and obtained from an individual's network of relationships. Entrepreneurship and social factors are intricately connected, as the decision to initiate a business is shaped by guidance and assistance from family, friends, neighbors, relatives, or colleagues.

According to De Vita et al. (2014), social and cultural factors impacting entrepreneurship encompass belief systems, customs, behavior, tradition, and practices within a specific country, as well as prevailing fashion trends and market dynamics that shape actions and decisions. The sociocultural viewpoint is a crucial element that impacts an entrepreneur's actions and the strategic goals of businesses expanding into new international markets (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). It is noteworthy to understand that legal variables that impact businesses are acknowledged as important socio-cultural elements that might have an impact on enterprises. Naser et al. (2012) described social factors as the total actual and prospective resources that are a

part of, accessible via, and generated by a person's network of relationships. Since starting a business is influenced by advice and aid from neighbors, friends, family, coworkers, and relatives, entrepreneurship and social variables are strongly intertwined.

Social factors can have a positive or negative influence on the performance of women entrepreneurs. A social setting is where individuals shape their norms, values, and beliefs, therefore can constrain their business activities as most societal norms control their decisions (Chinomona & Maziriri, 2015). Mandal (2014) found that sociocultural aspects influence women entrepreneurs in society, it can be argued that the social environment of women confines their societal position. Demssie (2020) identified social issues that significantly impact women entrepreneurs' ability to start and expand their businesses, including limited social networks, social acceptance and class biases, gender inequality and restricted gender roles, negative attitudes towards women entrepreneurs, cultural influences, and household responsibilities. Debora et al. (2015) also found that limited access to social capital, discriminatory attitudes, and societal pressure to conform to traditional roles impede women entrepreneurs' ability to access opportunities and resources.

According to Alzuabi (2016), Kuwait's socio-cultural landscape presents a complex framework that empowers and constrains women entrepreneurs. Despite significant advancements in women's participation in education, workforce participation, and leadership roles, significant barriers persist, hindering their full integration into socio-political and economic processes. The patriarchal societal structure, reinforced by conservative religious interpretations and cultural norms, perpetuates gender stereotypes and limits women's opportunities in the public sphere. Bugawa and Aljuwaisri (2019) argued that Kuwait's low representation in political institutions reflects the enduring impact of these socio-cultural barriers. More so, women continue to face obstacles in accessing leadership positions and economic empowerment, with discriminatory practices and limited access to resources exacerbated by the concentration of women in certain sectors (Naser et al., 2012).

#### 2.4.1. *Social networks*

Khan et al. (2021) revealed that social factors significantly contribute to better performance of women entrepreneurs. Their study indicated that social networks provide entrepreneurs access to crucial resources such as mentorship, business connections, and funding (Ladge Eddleston &

Sugiyama 2019). However, women in some regions have inaccessibility to leadership positions and equal opportunities and therefore social networks can help them gain access to capital, potential business, and guidance from experienced entrepreneurs. Besides, social networks help entrepreneurs to facilitate knowledge and information exchange. According to De Vita et al. (2014), women have limited participation in private sectors and slower progress in public sectors in developing countries, practices that hinder them from starting their enterprises. Through social networks, these women can share insights, market intelligence, and best practices where they can learn from each other's experiences and stay updated on industry trends (Thai & Turkina, 2014).

In a study to investigate factors affecting the performance of women entrepreneurs, Raheem (2013) found that socio-cultural factors are the most essential variable, followed by economic factors and political factors respectively. Her study indicated that social factors specifically social networks can significantly improve the visibility and recognition of women entrepreneurs in the face of gender disparities and higher female unemployment rates (Thai & Turkina, 2014). Social networks provide women with a platform to showcase their businesses, share achievements, and gain recognition within their communities and industries. This platform also helps women entrepreneurs gain emotional support and peer mentoring, enabling them to connect with like-minded individuals who understand their experiences and challenges, helping them navigate obstacles and build resilience in their entrepreneurial endeavors. Likewise, Goetz and Jenkins (2018), supported that social networks serve as channels for advocacy and support, advocating for policy changes and addressing discriminatory practices in the regulatory environment.

Social Networks and Women Entrepreneurs: A Resource Leveraging Perspective; Social networks are important to women entrepreneurs' success, as they avail them of some crucial resources that include mentors, funds, and business networks. According to Khan et al. (2021), it can be revealed through their research that social factors have more significance in explaining better performance on the part of women entrepreneurs. Mentorship through social networks causes professional development due to experience regarding business strategy, management, and leadership. Business connections also afford women access to customers, collaborators, and suppliers, all of which go a long way in scaling up ventures. For instance, networks connect women to investors and other financial institutions in funding opportunities, which are very limited to them.

**Social Networks to Overcome the Barriers** Social networks bridge the gaps between such divides, which are in the form of a lack of leadership opportunities and gender inequality, present in the society. According to Ladge, Eddleston and Sugiyama, 2019, such networks grant women access to resources and opportunities that may be otherwise inaccessible. For example, positions of leadership that might otherwise be denied to them come within reach through the help of social circles via advocacy and mentorship. Furthermore, the experienced entrepreneurs in such networks can mentor budding women entrepreneurs in better ways to deal with complex business landscapes, hence fostering inclusivity and equality in entrepreneurial ecosystems.

**Knowledge Exchange and Market Intelligence;** Social networks increase the knowledge and information flow for female entrepreneurs. As De Vita et al. 2014, stated, in developing countries, women face very slow improvement in the public sector and low participation in the private one, which hinders the growth of their entrepreneurial spirits. With the help of social networks, women entrepreneurs share valuable insights into the market and best practices that can help them in informed decision-making and retaining their competitive advantage. These interactions also keep them abreast of the latest happenings in the industry, any change in regulations, and the emergence of new opportunities, all of which are important for sustaining and growing their businesses.

**Socioeconomic Cultural Factors** Raheem, 2013, has placed more importance on socio-cultural factors as compared to economic and political factors in regard to women entrepreneurs' performance drive. Social networks act as fora that raise visibility and reputation of women entrepreneurs in countries characterised by wide gaps on gender issues with high unemployment rates amongst females. This is evidenced by the fact that through the displays of their enterprises and performance, the women are accorded credence and a good reputation among the community and all other stakeholders operating within their operation lines. This recognition not only gives them more confidence but also opens up opportunities for collaborations and partnerships that could further their business.

**Emotional Support and Peer Mentoring;** Perhaps one of the most understated yet valuable benefits is emotional support, given through social networks to women entrepreneurs. According to Thai and Turkina (2014), this comes through associating with similar people in such networks and hence can handle the challenges and make them more resilient. In a peer-mentoring

environment, women share experiences and learn from each other to devise ways of surmounting challenges. This is invaluable emotional and psychological support, especially in societies where women often face other societal pressures and biases that may work against their entrepreneurial efforts.

**Advocacy and Policy Change;** The social networks are now evolved as high platforms for advocacy where women entrepreneurs can unite with a single motto against discriminatory practices for demanding policy changes. According to Goetz and Jenkins in 2018, such network amplifies the voice for fair regulation as well as for equal opportunities quotation mark. There will be unified women under similar goals who may influence the thinking of policymakers as well as other parties for the creation of an environment conducive to female entrepreneurs. Empowering individual entrepreneurs, it is an advocacy that also stirs systemic changes that uplift the whole community of women entrepreneurs.

**Addressing Gender Disparities;** In this regard, gender empowerments remain a serious challenge for females in entrepreneurship across the world. Social networks cushion the effects of these challenges through the provision of avenues by which women can prove their capabilities and achievements. Recognition gained in these social networks will help dismantle stereotypes and further empower women to challenge the existing repressive social norms that have suffocated the role of women in business. Besides highlighting their successes, social networks also aspire to push other people into empowerments through entrepreneurial activities, thus spreading the ripples that empower more women to break barriers and succeed. **Building Resilience through Community** Social networks nurture a sense of community helpful for female entrepreneurs in building resilience. The challenges that face many women entrepreneurs, such as limited access to capital, restrictive cultural norms, and gender bias, are overcome through encouragement and motivation from peers within such networks. A sense of belonging, therefore, assists women entrepreneurs in remaining focused on their quest and not giving in, even when things do not go as anticipated. Additionally, community support is usually accompanied by the sharing of innovative solutions and strategies that help women in dealing with problems effectively and remaining competitive in their respective industries.

**Improved Market Opportunities;** The use of social networks thus offers access to new market opportunities through the chance to find both potential customers and collaborators. In fact, the



development of social networks has facilitated a number of the relationships necessary to penetrate a new market (Thai and Turkina 2014). Through such contacts, female entrepreneurs can tap knowledge of consumers' tastes and preferences and, likewise, can gain information about up-and-coming trends and hitherto-unserved markets. These connections will not only enhance business growth but also make the women entrepreneurs adaptable and responsive to the changing dynamics of the market for long-term sustainability. Driving Systemic Change Beyond the individual benefits, social networks are playing a very critical role in the systemic change of entrepreneurial ecosystems. It nurtures collaboration, resource sharing, and the fight for fair policy conditions to ultimately create an enabling environment for women entrepreneurs. According to De Vita et al. (2014), this is the kind of systemic change needed to resolve root causes of gender disparities in entrepreneurship. With more women being part of such networks and availing themselves of the resources, the impact collectively contributes toward a more inclusive and supportive entrepreneurial landscape for the benefit of all.

#### 2.4.2. *Social Acceptance and Class Biases*

Women entrepreneurs face challenges in their participation in the business world and societal development due to social acceptance and class biases. Alzuabi (2016) highlighted that patriarchy, conservative religious interpretations, and cultural stereotyping create a psychological barrier to women's roles in the public sphere. His study found that despite improvements in education and leadership roles, Kuwait still lags behind global standards in women's representation in parliament and ministerial positions. Similarly, Gerguri-Rashiti et al. (2021) found that social acceptance of gender roles and biases may limit women's access to entrepreneurship opportunities and career advancement, perpetuating economic inequalities. Besides, traditional gender norms and cultural expectations may restrict women's mobility and autonomy, affecting their entrepreneurial activities (Thai & Turkina, 2014). Despite legal reforms granting women political rights, societal attitudes and class biases may hinder women's political participation and representation.

Panda (2018) argued that gender inequality in entrepreneurship is exacerbated by legal and regulatory barriers that discriminate against women entrepreneurs. These barriers include labor laws restricting women from working night shifts or in hazardous conditions, and laws governing access to funding, property rights, and business ownership that disproportionately favor men. Likewise, Welsh et al. (2017) found that women entrepreneurs especially in developing countries

like Kuwait face challenges in accessing finance and resources, such as discriminatory lending practices and limited networks in male-dominated industries. More so, gender roles that place a disproportionate burden on women for caregiving and household responsibilities create work-life balance challenges, leading to stress, burnout, and difficulty in sustaining their businesses over the long term (Thai & Turkina, 2014).

Hence, female entrepreneurship usually meets major obstacles related to social acceptance and deep-seated class biases that limit their full potential for contributing to economic and social life. These are based on the more patriarchal nature of society, conservative religious interpretations, and entrenched cultural norms that have marginalized women's contributions outside of the domestic sphere. For instance, Alzuabi, 2016 noted the psychosocial barriers linked with such stereotypes that have belittled the confidence and expectations of women even in entrepreneurship or leadership roles. While there have been advances in education and employment, women continue to encounter entrenched gender-based inequalities. It finds reflection in Kuwait, too, where women in parliament and ministerial representation is at a low level as compared to global standards. Their overall cumulative effect is yet a vicious cycle in which women have limited opportunity to challenge the status quo by reinforcing the same cultural stereotypes, inhibiting the road to women's entrepreneurial growth and economic independence.

Besides, the cultural expectations with regard to the gender roles further worsen the challenges faced by women in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures. Thai and Turkina urge that the traditional norms in most societies commonly confine women to their domestic roles, which limits their autonomy and mobility in public and professional spheres. In societies with rigid gender expectations, women's entrepreneurial activities are often prejudicially valued as supplementary to their household obligations. These binding norms have brought additional barriers such as lack of access to mentorship, professional networks, and market opportunities critical to success in entrepreneurship. These norms also have consequences for the way women can establish social capital, which is often important in gaining access to finance or business partnerships. Overcoming these challenges requires cultural change, recognizing and valuing women's economic contributions while dismantling outdated notions of gender roles.

These biases are further compounded by class biases, since socioeconomic status very often intersects with gender to create unique disadvantages for women entrepreneurs. Most women from the low-income category still lack access to quality education, professional training, and initial capital to enter their ventures. Gerguri-Rashiti et al. (2021) noted that economic inequalities arising from class biases impede women's ability to enter competitive industries and most male-dominated businesses. A lack of financial resources and institutional arrangements has disproportionately impacted the growth of women entrepreneurs in competing for an already biased system. Moreover, women coming from the low socio-economic sections are discriminated against even in gaining access to scaling-up networks and opportunities. This is an intersection of class and gender disadvantages that is an often-ignored barrier and demands targeted policy interventions to create a level playing field.

One of the challenges facing female entrepreneurs, mainly in developing nations, is inability to access financial sources or outlets. For instance, Welsh et al. (2017) note that women face discriminatory lending practices in favor of men, even when their business proposals show equal or superior viability to those proposed by men. The financial institutions often perceive women entrepreneurs as riskier clients due to stereotyping regarding competence and reliability in managing a business. The consequence is that women are being denied loans quite often or end up getting lousier options, and also the use of personal savings. Therefore, some informal lending resource options could show a certain drop in the graph of one's expectations if such is experienced. Financial barriers ultimately make women refrain from increasing the scaling possibilities of female-owned businesses with greater efficiency, although economic inequality disfavors or puts women economically under disadvantages too. These are issues that raise concerns and call for the need for gender-sensitive policies and practice from financial institutions, which ensure the fair provision of finance to women entrepreneurs.

Other highly influential causes of this increasing gender gap in entrepreneurship involve some legal and regulatory barriers. Panda (2018) showed that rigid labor laws, such as night shifts and prohibition from work in hazardous environments, primarily restrict the entry of females in those industries where women could receive more lucrative opportunities. Further, discriminatory property rights and business ownership laws generally support men, making it even harder for women to fulfill their entrepreneurial potentials. Many of the women have to go through complicated bureaucratic processes just to establish businesses, which may not be required of

their male counterparts. In some regions, there is also a lack of awareness and enforcement regarding women's rights, hence women have very little avenue on which to anchor claims against discriminatory conduct. These barriers require far-reaching legal reforms, which can level the playing field for all in their entrepreneurial pursuits.

Assigning of caregiving and household responsibilities to women by the roles of gender further limit the ability of female entrepreneurs to sustain long-term businesses. In fact, Thai and Turkina 2014 said that women entrepreneurs face an immense pressure to balance work and family obligations, which may further result in stress and burnout. This, besides men, is expected to undertake caregiving roles as well as manage entrepreneurial ventures. This has a dual effect of not only reducing the time and energy that a woman can invest in her business but also affects her mental health and overall productivity. Many such factors lead women to give up on entrepreneurship altogether, which results in lost economic opportunities and innovation. For that to happen, a number of policies addressing work-life balance, including but not limited to the facilitation of more affordable childcare service delivery and flexible working hours, should be put in place to alleviate the burden off women entrepreneurs.

Socially, women are viewed as leaders and entrepreneurs, and this compromises their credibility and authority in the business world. More often than not, women entrepreneurs face skepticism and bias from clients, investors, and even employees, which may hamper the ability to engender trust and foster professional relationships. This is often due to cultural biases that create a lack of trust in the capabilities and competence of women in leadership roles. Therefore, women have to work twice as hard to prove their worth, often at the expense of their time and energy. These attitudes not only affect women's professional growth but also discourage aspiring women entrepreneurs from entering the field. Changing the societal perceptions of women in business requires advocacy, public education campaigns, and visibility of successful women entrepreneurs to serve as examples.

These barriers have consequences that go beyond individual women entrepreneurs and extend to overall societal and economic development. If women are excluded from entrepreneurial opportunities, societies forfeit the innovation and creativity that come with diverse perspectives in the business world

Gerguri-Rashiti et al. (2021)., contend that women in entrepreneurship will result in a shift toward less inequity across the economy by fostering sustainable growth and development. Empowering women entrepreneurs offers a means whereby societies can bridge the gap in underutilized talents and unlock their overall economic potential towards more equitable systemic outcomes. Such shall be achieved from a multidimensionality of prospective interventions that extend beyond structural/legislative barriers to some deeply ingrained cultural and socio-attitudinal issues that favor gender-based asymmetry. Despite all these challenges, yet there has been some encouraging development in terms of legal reforms and initiatives which have been placed for the facilitation of women entrepreneurs. Most the countries have carried out policies through which women got better access to education, political rights, as well as financial resources. According to Alzuabi, 2016, these legal reforms do not often translate into substantive betterment since the deep-seated biases at the level of society and culture continue to remain strong. Because women's empowerment will not be a social and economic issue but rather an effective reform, it is crucial that governments and organizations invest resources to bring about such change at all levels. This includes everything from mentorship programs and entrepreneurship training to public awareness campaigns challenging the status quo of gender-based expectations. Such efforts can help create an enabling environment for women entrepreneurs to thrive and contribute meaningfully to development. International organizations and global efforts at advocacy can simply not be overemphasized in their importance for female entrepreneurs. Agencies like the United Nations and the World Bank have, therefore, been developed through programs on financing, training, and guidance on policy for reducing the gap in entrepreneurship. These go a long way in raising awareness of the many challenges women continue to face while driving gender-inclusive practices across borders. Yet, sustained progress does indeed call for collaboration between government agencies, private players, and even civil society. By working together, stakeholders can dismantle the systemic barriers that hinder women's entrepreneurial growth and create a more inclusive and equitable global economy.

#### 2.4.3. *Family responsibility and gender role*

Socio-cultural actors, such as advocacy groups and women's rights organizations, can promote gender equality by opposing laws and practices that discriminate against women and prevent them from participating in the economy (Al-Hamli, 2013). They can advocate for changes to the law spread the word about gender disparities in the workforce, and encourage women to pursue

higher education by giving them more access to both vocational and higher education programs. According to Naser et al. (2012), offering skill-building courses, mentorship programs, and support networks, may assist women to network and dispel outdated gender norms by encouraging accurate representations of women in business and leadership (Thai & Turkina, 2014).

Abebe (2014) investigated factors affecting women entrepreneurs and found that social factors have a significant influence on women's entrepreneurial performance. Social factors like conflicting gender roles, social acceptability, and networking with other entrepreneurs impact women entrepreneurs' performance. Gender inequality in education, employment, and leadership positions can hinder women's access to opportunities for entrepreneurship. Barriers to accessing education and training programs can limit their skills and knowledge, while underrepresentation in leadership positions can limit their role models and mentors. Social stigma and cultural norms, which restrict gender roles and encourage homemaking, can also discourage women from pursuing entrepreneurship. These factors can hinder women's ability to grow successful businesses and contribute to societal inequality.

According to Rehman and Azam (2012), women entrepreneurs are affected by the problem of balancing family responsibility and business. Female entrepreneurs experience stress while managing both tasks at the same time, which is indicative of their worries about successfully juggling work and home responsibilities (Thai & Turkina, 2014). Women bear a disproportionate weight of providing care for their families, which continues even as they pursue business. Consequently, women are forced to balance work and home obligations, which limits their chances of becoming successful entrepreneurs and moving up the professional ladder. Women frequently face "time poverty," which increases stress and difficulties as they attempt to balance their domestic and business responsibilities. Eddleston and Powell (2012) the impact of work-family balance on maturing women entrepreneurs, the study found that women's well-being and the success and expansion of their enterprises may be severely impacted by this daunting circumstance. They noted that women bear a double burden not only a problem in developing countries but also developed countries. Besides, women are considered as children's caregivers and also responsible for household management. When added to another role as businesswomen and entrepreneurs, they are unable to balance, therefore, failing as entrepreneurs (Byrne et al., 2019).

The growth and performance of a business depend on owners' ability to balance between work and home. If one concentrates much on family, their businesses are likely to fail or remain stagnant (By. Therefore, women's businesses tend to remain small as the owners continue to take full responsibility for their household labor and paid work. McGowan et al. (2012) employed qualitative and contextual case study data to get an understanding of the aspects and mechanisms of the inter-spouse relationship, a significance of familial dynamics in comprehending the dynamics of business-home ties (Thai & Turkina, 2014). A different subset of family women's business literature concentrates on co-entrepreneurial spouses who jointly own and run small firms. This study draws attention to the challenges in precisely characterizing women's engagement in enterprise and distinguishing gender-based management styles and procedures because family ownership is prevalent in the SME sector.

Work-family conflict may cause conflicting or incompatible pressure from work-family interference, job-family role strain, and conflict between work and non-work causing inter-role conflict (Byrne et al., 2019). In most cases, women have interrupted careers and primary domestic responsibilities that when seeking balance between them may significantly affect women's decision to start a business. However, Cerato and Cifre (2018) found that men who manage family and work lives tend to experience greater conflict compared to women. Women are limited to taking business training advantage, as most of the time are held while taking care of their families (The Common Wealth Secretariat, 2002). Comparatively, Zororo (2011) found that women are more likely to start a business at an older age compared to men, after getting married or after their children are grown up, which is a significant problem for women entrepreneurs.

Additionally, women do not differentiate between personal finances and resources earned from the business, hence using the money for business to settle family obligations. This tends to drain the income and savings from their businesses, that could otherwise be used for growth and expansion (Wube, 2010). Powell and Eddleston (2013) added that women entrepreneurs are not necessarily driven by profit but to provide for their families. They perceive their business as an opportunity to be free from begging for financial support to meet their family's needs. profit earned from women-owned businesses are seen as benefits for the whole family leading to other factors like social and cultural factors.

#### 2.4.4. *Gender biases and stereotyping*

Culturally, women are subordinate to men, lack the opportunity to access resources, and possess less power (Bonvillain, 2020). They are considered as weaker gender than men both emotionally and physically making it hard for women to start a business even though they have an idea and courage to implement it. According to Yang et al. (2019), women have posed constraints from family, society, and themselves that pose a challenge to women entrepreneurs. Their study indicated that in most societies women are not accepted as influential and powerful business leaders, but possess less power, are subordinate to men, and limited opportunities to access resources. Relationships and attitudes toward women and men in the family and workplace are obstacles in themselves, as women lack independence and are not task-oriented. Naser et al. (2012) found that women feel discriminated against the society does not accept them seriously as entrepreneurs. This represents socio-cultural gender-based biases and inequality, weighing heavily against women entrepreneurs.

Cabrera and Mauricio (2017) posit that resources and knowledge are culturally rooted and have an impact on the availability of resources and the utilization of women's entrepreneurial potential. Women entrepreneurs in Kuwait put up with an unwillingness to take risks, lack of individual involvement, and lack of confidence. Besides, their weak position in society is made worse by a lack of role models in the business world, illiteracy, and poverty, all of which make women entrepreneurs invisible and more marginalized (Setini et al., 2020). Roomi (2013) added that biased cultural practices within society hinder women's goals and aspirations and economic and social satisfaction.

Different theories including Max Weber theory have been used to study the influence of socio-cultural environment on entrepreneurship. This theory explains that society plays a crucial in developing entrepreneurs as individuals raw their values from social values, institution framework, and morals within which they live (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Culture has shaped the attitude and behavior of a person, and whether the person will or not become an entrepreneur, would be determined by value orientation. Kuwait lacks an entrepreneurial culture, especially for operating and potential women entrepreneurs. According to Roomi (2013), women entrepreneurs receive significant family support while starting a business, but the support is withdrawn, restricted, or limited due to patriarchal social authority structures.



Based on the reviews on the sociocultural aspects influencing women entrepreneurs in society, it can be clearly argued that the social environment of women confines their societal position. However, Kuwait has undergone significant transformations in the latter half of the twentieth century, driven by the discovery and development of oil resources (Thai & Turkina, 2014). Initially a domestic country, Kuwait became an independent international country, leading to a significant increase in population, primarily due to immigration. This led to a shift in women's roles, with men occupying a greater proportion of the workforce. As Kuwait transitioned into a modern, industrialized nation, the number of women in the workforce increased dramatically. This shift was facilitated by the spread of education, with both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti women experiencing significant increases in educational attainment. This has led to a rise in women's participation in various fields, including the economy, and Kuwait has committed to international development goals related to gender equality and education. Based on this literature works; the study proposed the first hypothesis as below:

*H1: Socio-cultural aspects do not significantly determine women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait*

## **2.5. Self-Confidence and Its Influence on the Performance of Women Entrepreneurs**

Self-confidence, a personal trait has gained the attention of scholars on entrepreneurship.

According to Branden (2021), self-confidence is individuals' attitudes about their abilities and skills. This means that they either accept and trust themselves or have a sense of controlling their lives. A person with self-confidence knows his/her strengths and weaknesses and has a positive view of themselves. Entrepreneurship is one of many fields that require a unique set of qualities and skills. Studies have indicated that self-confidence is a common and crucial attribute among entrepreneurs. It forms the foundation for all other entrepreneurial qualities (Abebe, 2014).

Rathore et al. (2015) found that self-confidence empowers individuals to believe in their potential for success, their abilities, and also themselves. even in the face of challenges and drawbacks, self-confidence will serve as the driving force that propels entrepreneurs forward. In other words. It will be hard to pursue entrepreneurial goals by a person without self-confidence as they are characterized by insecurities, doubt, and arduous.

Self-confidence is connected to a positive attitude that embraces possibilities and believes in favorable outcomes. This encourages problem-solving, innovation, resilience, and inspiration for new opportunities. However persistent action is required for self-confidence to be effective

among entrepreneurs. By adopting an optimistic outlook, entrepreneurs cultivate a mindset that embraces possibilities and anticipates favorable outcomes (Pidduck et al., 2023). This fosters resilience during setbacks and fuels creative and innovative problem-solving. Entrepreneurs are also likely to explore alternative solutions and find opportunities amidst adversity when they approach challenges (Kuratko et al., 2021). Empirical findings indicated that self-confidence triggers positive thinking that inspires people and creates a supportive and conducive environment for entrepreneurs' endeavors. Besides, it plays a significant role in shaping the behavioral disposition of entrepreneurs. While some researcher argues against a direct connection between self-confidence and entrepreneurial behavior, others emphasize the importance of self-confidence in driving entrepreneurial success.

Charness et al. (2018) argued that self-confidence must be complemented by persistent action to yield tangible results. Entrepreneurs who exhibit persistent action demonstrate a willingness and commitment to take proactive steps toward achieving their goals. Self-confidence allows an entrepreneur to remain steadfast in their pursuit, seek new growth opportunities, and continuously adapt their strategies regardless of obstacles or setbacks encountered along the way. These enable an entrepreneur to transform obstacles into learning experiences, and build momentum. leverage setbacks as improvement catalysts, establish credibility, and position themselves for long-term success in their businesses (Federick et al., 2016).

Hassan and Yusof (2015) found that the self-confidence level among entrepreneurs is a crucial tool for their ventures and the interest to face new obstacles in the future. Abd Rani and Hashim (2017) investigate factors influencing women's entrepreneurial success and use data collected from women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. The study found that women with high levels of self-confidence are more competitive in the market and always have a better policy to face different barriers and reach business goals. More so, women entrepreneurs with high self-confidence, low anxiety levels, and high levels of motivation are more competitive in a turbulent market (Khan et al., 2021).

Twibell et al. (2008) involved 375 entrepreneurs to investigate the perception of self-confidence and its related benefits and risks. The study found that individuals with a high level of self-confidence perceive greater benefits with fewer risks. However, the study indicated that self-confidence among entrepreneurs is determined by their entrepreneurial certifications,

professional networks, and emergency management experience. Asoni (2011) investigated the relationship between self-confidence and entrepreneurship using the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. The study found a significant correlation between self-confidence and higher intelligence, which tends to gravitate towards entrepreneurship. The study highlighted that self-confidence encourages business initiation, while intelligence enhances business longevity.

Garaika et al. (2019) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between self-confidence and entrepreneurship using the entrepreneurial intention model. They surveyed 200 young entrepreneurs aged between 20-30 years in developing nations. With the help of two-step structured modeling to analyze the data collected, the study revealed that self-confidence has a significant influence on entrepreneurial intention and performance. The study also found that education plays a crucial role in shaping self-confidence.

Rathore et al. (2015) investigated the mediating influence of self-confidence level on the relationship between entrepreneurial intention and perceived formal support. The study collected the data from 250 final-year undergraduate students and analyzed it using multiple regression analysis. The study revealed that self-confidence is a significant mediator of the relationship between entrepreneurial intention and perceived formal support. In other words, individuals with strong entrepreneurial intentions seek and perceive these resources as valuable for achieving their goals. Besides, the study found that there is a significant difference between males and females in the perceived formal support. Male participants recorded higher levels of self-confidence, and thus are more proactive in seeking and using support systems, while females recorded lower self-confidence, implying hesitant or overlooking these resources. This is a great problem with women entrepreneurs. Besides, the study indicated no significant difference between males' and females' entrepreneurial intentions. However, supported that self-confidence indirectly influences entrepreneurial intention by shaping individuals' perceptions and behaviors regarding the utilization of support mechanisms.

According to Bird (2019), women with self-confidence do not give up easily and have fewer excuses such as family responsibilities when pursuing their objectives. The study indicates that women with low levels of self-confidence possess a weak sense of perseverance and tenacity, succumbing to challenges or setbacks. On the other hand, women with high levels of self-confidence assert their autonomy and agency to let external obligations or constraints hinder their pursuit of success and fulfillment. Rieger (2012) asserts that self-confident women embody

a mindset of determination, agency, and refusal to be deterred by social expectations and other cultural challenges. They embrace their self-confidence to empower themselves to overcome obstacles and achieve their aspirations regardless of contrails and external pressures.

Boldureanu et al. (2020) claimed that entrepreneurs should believe that they can achieve their set objectives and have confidence in themselves to be successful. They should also have high self-esteem and be competent in their businesses. Khan et al. (2021), revealed that self-confidence is one of the internal factors that affects the success of women entrepreneurs. Self-confidence is a critical factor for women entrepreneurs especially in developing countries like Kuwait due to unique challenges and regulations. The study suggested that self-confident decision-making positively impacts SMEs' performance and success in Islamic contexts

Self-confidence is the entrepreneurs' belief in their businesses. According to Amatucci and Crawley (2011), self-confidence works as a motivation toward establishing and willingness to face unexpected failure and challenges in the future. It empowers women entrepreneurs to believe in their abilities and competencies, enabling them to make good decisions, overcome challenges, and achieve goals. This mindset is crucial to women entrepreneurs especially where the risk and uncertainties are inherent. Women entrepreneurs with high self-confidence can comfortably pursue their ambitious ventures, and shape their interactions with stakeholders and the business environment, attracting partners, investors, and customers (Moloi & Rapita, 2014). They are more accessible to networking, advocating for their business interests, and negotiating deals. Tupe (2018) reviewed a blended learning model for enhancing entrepreneur skills among women. The study indicated that education helps women entrepreneurs to gain self-confidence. This fuels creativity and innovation and enables them to think outside the box, pursue unconventional opportunities, and experiment with new strategies. Asoni (2011) found that women with low levels of education tend to have low levels of self-confidence, and are likely to encounter failures, setbacks, and unexpected obstacles, but self-confident women are better equipped to bounce back from setbacks, learn from failures, and pivot their strategies as needed. Mehtap et al. (2017) evaluated the entrepreneurial intentions of young women in the Arab world. The study found that entrepreneurial intentions and the ability to compete in turbulent markets are influenced by self-confidence. The study also indicated that the decision-making for women entrepreneurs is influenced by their low self-confidence, thus men tend to show higher intention

toward entrepreneurial activities. Diaz and Moreno (2010) supported that women's low self-confidence is contributed by socio-cultural and religious practices in Islamic countries where most women have to get permission from their male spouses, or male figures for starting up a business. Likewise, Alzuabi (2016) highlighted that patriarchy, conservative religious interpretations, and cultural stereotyping create a psychological barrier to women's roles in the public sphere and career advancement, decreasing their self-confidence.

Moreover, Novak et al. (2012) conducted a study to explore the gender differences in entrepreneurial perceived desirability and feasibility, intentions, and entrepreneurship educational needs among university students. The study collected data from 3420 students across the countries and analyzed using the Mann-Whitney non-parametric test. The results showed that female students have less willingness to start their businesses compared to male students. Female students are less self-confident, reluctant, more tense, and concerned about entrepreneurship despite more support from their families. The study found that there is a significant difference in self-confidence despite the existence of family support between the genders, with female students recording less self-confidence. Students supported that the establishment of entrepreneurial mentoring and an appropriate tutoring structure can be the most effective entrepreneurial educational activity that can be used to increase self-confidence.

Maczulskii and Viinikainen (2023) argued that entrepreneurship is a vital driver of the economy, innovation, commercialization of new ideas, and productivity growth. However, the success rate of entrepreneurs is low, with only a small percentage achieving significant growth and success. Entrepreneurs face unique challenges such as requiring diverse skills, bearing substantial risk, and making rapid decisions in uncertain conditions. Therefore, successful entrepreneurs not only require external resources but also personal traits such as self-confidence, risk-tolerance, and need for achievement. Likewise, Eliyana et al. (2019), found that there is a significant relationship between self-confidence and entrepreneur achievement. In the study conducted to investigate the influence of self-confidence among entrepreneurs, Dabo (2019) used a descriptive design with a sample of 400 participants and conducted descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the data. the findings of the study showed that self-confidence among entrepreneurs influences youth attitudes toward entrepreneurship skills acquisition. The study also indicated that the boldness of entrepreneurs, their ability to persist even if they fail, and believing in their

abilities and remaining focused motivate youths to succeed and influence their attitudes toward acquiring entrepreneurial skills (Thai & Turkina, 2014).

Aldas-Manzano et al. (2011) assert that entrepreneurship involves different levels of risk-taking, which is a challenge to women. Studies have revealed that lack of self-confidence, gender stereotyping, and assertiveness are major barriers influencing women entrepreneurs. Lack of confidence subject women to the fear of taking risks. In a patriarchal social structure where women are dependent on males in their lives, either their fathers or husbands limit their self-confidence to start a business. Besides, women's self-confidence to start a business is deterred as close family members often decide for them, which is also against the independent spirit of entrepreneurship.

According to Modarresi et al. (2016), motivation and support positively influence women's self-confidence to start a business and the performance of women-owned businesses. The study also indicated that male entrepreneurs have a high level of self-motivation thus performing better than their female counterparts. In Kuwait, psychological motives such as the search for independence, self-confidence, and supportive environment factors affect women entrepreneurs from intention to the performance of the business. Self-confidence is influenced by resources, particularly the level of education, managerial skills, and experience level in entrepreneurship affecting the performance of SMEs. Highly educated women have shown a high level of self-confidence, and high performance in their businesses (Dalborg, 2015). However, some educated women entrepreneurs face financial constraints that limit their entrepreneurial objectives (Yusoff et al., 2022).

*H2: Self-confidence do not significantly determine women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait*

## **2.6. Economic Factors Influencing Performance of Women Entrepreneurs**

Economic factors are one of the crucial factors to consider while starting a business. According to Alene (2020), economic factors directly influence the performance of women entrepreneurs. Economic factors consist of both internal and external financial funds, access to capital, raw materials, infrastructure, labor, and the market required to start a business (Khan et al., 2021). Cabrera and Mauricio (2017) posit that finance is important in starting and growing a business. However, in most countries especially developing countries including Kuwait, women have a problem in accessing adequate capital at an affordable rate. Similarly, Welsh et al. (2018) found

that women entrepreneurs are unable to start new business ventures or grow their businesses due to lack of access to adequate resources, and finance.

Women lack the collateral needed to borrow money from external sources. Cabrera and Mauricio (2017) indicated that women have substantially fewer intangible and tangible assets compared to men, implying that women need to seek extra resources to pursue a business opportunity.

Women entrepreneurs may be unable to raise start-up capital as the guarantee required to acquire external financial credit is beyond the scope of women's assets. Langworth and Warnecke (2020) confirmed that there is a significant difference in accessibility to finance between male-owned businesses and female-owned businesses. This is because women entrepreneurs are unable to penetrate informal financial networks, which serve as crucial sources of resources and capital for businesses. Besides, women encounter barriers in establishing networks within an entrepreneurial environment caused by traditional gender roles and expectations.

Additionally, female entrepreneurs experience discrimination and stereotyping when interacting with financial institutions including banks. This kind of bias manifests in various forms including the assumption of women's priorities and commitment to their ventures, or their ability to manage finances effectively (Kuwait Bugawa and Aljuwaisri, 2019). Kuwait like any other country offers various financial sources for entrepreneurs including microfinance institutions, banks, and government incentives but a significant number of women entrepreneurs are unable to access these resources. According to Naser et al. (2012), these financial sources require collateral to secure loans and investments, a significant challenge for many female entrepreneurs who lack access to collateral due to cultural norms and property ownership entrepreneurs. Al Mutairi and Fayez (2015) highlight that as financial mechanisms become more formalized, the number of women accessing them tends to decrease. This phenomenon underscores the systemic barriers faced by women entrepreneurs in accessing capital, particularly when traditional financial structures prioritize assets and collateral over other forms of creditworthiness.

Moreover, women are getting the challenge of raising capital to start their business venture, one of the major barriers to entering into self-employment across the globe (Blackburn & Smallbone, 2014). Studies have indicated that lack of capital is one of the greatest barriers to women entrepreneur's growth. Scott (2017) identified the disparity in business size, profitability, and take-home pay between women-owned and men-owned businesses. Women-owned businesses

are usually small attributed to various economic factors including limited access to capital, gender wage gap, limited access to professional networks and resources, societal expectations and discrimination, and work-life balance challenges. Singh and Dash (2021) added to the knowledge of the literature by finding that access to capital is often limited for women-owned businesses, resulting in smaller business sizes and lower profitability. They also found that limited access to professional networks, mentors, and resources significantly hinders women entrepreneurs. Stereotypes about women's capabilities in business, biases in access to funding, and discriminatory practices in industries and sectors can hinder women's ability to succeed (Adom & Anambane, 2020). According to their study, women-owned businesses experience disappointment similar gap to female salaried employees. This was a result of the type of business the women started, the lower fees-for-service they were able to command, and the challenges they faced in obtaining bank financing.

Women entrepreneurs also experience less availability of finance due to the inability to penetrate financial networks. While the business can obtain finances from internal or external sources for start-up and expansion of operation, women entrepreneurs found both sources awkward due to the absence of lending institutions, and lack of sufficient savings (Shastri et al., 2019). Likewise, Nazer et al. (2012) found that a lack of internal credits subjects most women enterprises to financial constraints as they also suffer inadequate savings. Their study also identified that under-resourced enterprises do not make big profits nor do expand. Mhadhbi (2014) found that there is a positive relationship between financial capital and business growth. Both formal and informal financial sources are providing financial aid to SMEs. However, the study found that most SMEs including those owned by women obtain credit from informal savings and credit organizations. Informal saving and credit organizations are a popular choice for SMEs, as they offer flexible terms, allowing SMEs to negotiate repayment schedules, interest rates, and loan amounts based on individual needs.

Langworth and Warnecke (2020) also highlighted that informal financial credits are a popular choice for women-owned SMEs in Kuwait due to their quick approval turnaround times, personal, relationship-based lending model, flexible evaluation criteria, and cultural and social factors. These credits offer quick financing for urgent business needs or opportunities, overcoming barriers or discrimination faced by women entrepreneurs when interacting with formal financial institutions. Informal credit organizations offer limited financial aid, short term



in design, have no grace period, and have high-interest rates. Therefore, women entrepreneurs are likely to have multiple loans to cater to social and business needs. Besides, these credits do not fully settle their business need but only satisfy a fraction of their economic need.

The relationship between women entrepreneurs and financial institutions in Kuwait is significantly affected by sexual discrimination and stereotyping of women in the country. Azmat (2013) found that women entrepreneurs face exclusion from financial business networks, discrimination in seeking business capital, and gender-related obstacles such as difficulty in competing for government contracts, limited access to capital, and lack of information about where they can get help. Women are also reported to suffer from "small business" syndrome, where others diminish the significance of their businesses. Leitch et al. (2018) also found that women are discriminated against by bank officials, ignore them in meetings, and prefer to speak to their male spouses or male business partners, when they approach them for financial support. This gender bias prevents women from approaching formal financial institutions but instead look for help from informal financial institutions.

Credit discrimination is a major problem faced by women entrepreneurs during start-ups, as they are not allowed to open a bank account or own land without their husbands' or fathers' cosignatories (Alecchi, 2020). Despite revisions to inheritance laws, women have rarely inherited land and other property in their own right, leading to a lack of title deeds as a form of security for borrowing money.

Prior studies have indicated that women entrepreneurs in Kuwait have encountered challenges related to economic infrastructure such as access to logistics and transportation to the available telecommunications and utilities. While Kuwait boasts a relatively developed infrastructure than other countries, they need to invest in or improve support for women entrepreneurs' needs. There are mixed findings when it comes to the reliability of economic infrastructure for supporting women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Orser et al. (2006) indicated that the perception of economic infrastructure depends on individual experiences and perspectives. Kuwait generally has maintained a reliable infrastructure backbone, but there are instances of service disruptions or inefficiencies that impact business operations. In the study to investigate challenges faced by female entrepreneurs, Mulaudzi and Schachtebeck (2022) revealed that high operational costs,

lack of opportunities awareness, a male-dominated industry, and lack of trust are the main challenges facing women entrepreneurs.

Economic competition significantly impacts the growth and sustainability of women-owned businesses in Kuwait. Cabrera and Mauricio (2017) indicated that although competition drives innovation, improves quality, and fosters efficiency, it also presents challenges for emerging entrepreneurs, including women. These entrepreneurs face additional hurdles in navigating competitive markets due to factors such as access to resources, market access, and industry biases. Besides, competition can also present opportunities for women entrepreneurs to differentiate themselves, innovate, and carve out niche markets (Octavia & Sriavudha, 2021). Market dynamics and demand also play a crucial role in shaping the success of women entrepreneurs. According to Rosca et al. (2020), women entrepreneurs are sensitive to changes in market trends, consumer preferences, and economic conditions, and their ability to identify and capitalize on market opportunities significantly impacts their business performance. Market dynamics also influence strategic decision-making, product development, and marketing tactics, even if they may not directly decide the success of women-owned businesses (Nazer et al., 2012).

The available market opportunities for women-owned businesses in Kuwait are limited. Al Mutairi and Fayeze (2015), recorded that women's participation in certain sectors or access to resources and networks are limited by cultural norms and gender biases. However, increasing awareness and support for women's entrepreneurship, industry partnerships, government initiatives, and advocacy efforts have contributed to the expansion of market opportunities for women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Based on this literature review, the study proposed the third hypothesis as below:

*H3: Economic factors do not significantly determine the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait*

## **2.7. Education Background and Its Influence on the Performance of Women Entrepreneurs**

Education is a key aspect in advancing knowledge and skills to learners. Statistics show that 95% of self-made millionaires are considered educated and hold relevant academic qualifications. Women with education have the required knowledge of stock taking and planning (Azmi, 2017).

Such knowledge is paramount for making informed decisions on what should be done to spur success in various businesses. Knowledge of how to access funding is part of information that education provides to business owners (Poggesi et al., 2016). Skills such as: critical thinking, communication and teamwork are acquired and strengthened through education. These skills are required are needed in a business as they give an opportunity to business owners to develop a competitive edge in various industries.

Kuwait has a well-established education system, which is free and compulsory up to the secondary level. After completing secondary school, students can pursue higher education in Local Universities or abroad. With the government investing significantly in education to enhance opportunities for advancement, studies have indicated that relevant knowledge is required in launching successful business ventures (Ramandani et al., 2012; Rehman & Azam, 2012). Appropriate education is essential for bringing up the right mindset and goals for entrepreneurship. According to Ramandani et al. (2012), there is a significant difference in the level of education among entrepreneurs in developing and developed countries. In developing countries, there is a high number of entrepreneurs with low education and training levels, while in developed countries education level of the entrepreneurs is relatively high with a small portion of entrepreneurs without tertiary education.

Various prior studies have investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial success and education. Bullough et al. (2015) found that there is a positive relationship between education and the performance of women entrepreneurs. Therefore, understanding this concept is crucial to this study on women entrepreneurs as it provides insight and background. Theoretical frameworks have been utilized by researchers to elucidate the significance of education and training in the expansion and operations of businesses.

Azam et al. (2009) used motivation theory to describe the relationship between entrepreneurship and education. They found that education in this field substantially boosts the learning of students and promotes the acquisition of entrepreneurial behavior, skills, and knowledge, enabling them to reach a high entrepreneurship level. Nabi et al. (2018) assert that entrepreneurs with high levels of education have high intent and entrepreneurship behavior and find it easier when approaching problems, sharing ideas, finding solutions, and implementing solutions based on a spectrum related to enterprise ownership.

A meta-analytic review conducted by Bae et al. (2014) on the relationship between education and entrepreneurial intentions indicated that there is a positive strong correlation between education and entrepreneurial intentions. However, the study indicates that although education has a positive correlation with entrepreneurial intentions, the exact benefit of entrepreneurial performance is still unknown. According to Rehman & Azam (2012), education shapes human needs, and their social and psychological motives, which substantially affect performance behavior. Education equips students including women with the knowledge and skills required to effectively manage and increase performance in their businesses. Westhead and Solesyik (2016) found that education has a positive correlation with the level of formal entrepreneurial activities among women and that most women succeeding in entrepreneurship had gone beyond secondary education. Their study indicated that educated women and those with a strong belief in having skills, experience, and knowledge and their likelihood of owning a business.

Low education among women entrepreneurs puts them at a disadvantage compared to their male counterparts. Although the gender gap in education in Kuwait has decreased over the years, women's literacy level is still lower than men's level (Thai and Turkina, 2014). This shows that there is a lower chance that women will have the knowledge needed to succeed in entrepreneurship. Bae et al. (2014) posit that most communities prefer educating boys, thus increasing the likelihood of most women entrepreneurs with low education levels. Zhang et al. (2014) also noted that women are less educated than men making them less equipped to start and manage a business. Despite most countries including Kuwait having business development services the population of women in entrepreneurship using it is minimal because of necessity, availability, access, and cost.

Nowinski et al. (2019) show that the majority of women in SMEs are not well-equipped in terms of education and skills. Their study indicated that those women well-equipped with education perform well in entrepreneurship, suggesting that for small businesses to do well in any country, people need to be well-informed in terms of management and skills. Bullough et al. (2015) revealed that successful women entrepreneurs are highly likely to have higher education than men. Although there are a high number of women in the entrepreneurial sector, most of them are never successful. A large proportion of successful women entrepreneurs are educated. Besides, there is a high population of successful but low-learned male entrepreneurs, as they can easily

access credit to finance their businesses and access essential infrastructure (Zhang et al., 2014). This suggests that a lack or low entrepreneurship education can fail women-owned businesses.

According to Baller et al. (2016), information technology in the current evolving world is widely related to entrepreneurship. It can be referred to as knowledge and infrastructure through which entrepreneurs access and make information easily. Women entrepreneurs have difficulties accessing technology and economy-related information due to limited skills. According to Omotayo (2015), information is a critical tool for the competitiveness and success of any business. Therefore, when women lack technical know-how and have limited access to appropriate technology which is a main obstacle affecting women entrepreneurs mostly in developing countries. Creating educational tactics to improve women's technical know-how and access to appropriate technology is crucial for women entrepreneur's performance and growth. Chinomona and Maziriri (2015) described education, technology, and training issues as limiting factors that create problems for women entrepreneurs in running and growing their enterprises.

In the study to investigate the influence of business knowledge and experience on entrepreneur success, Staniewski (2016) found that the entrepreneurship process from identifying an opportunity, making a decision, and investing in a business is dependent on the entrepreneur's experience. Panda (2018) found that lack of business knowledge and experience are the major problems facing women in running their businesses. Chinomona and Maziriri (2015) argued that there is a strong relationship between the growth of the business and business experience. Women with more experience have a higher probability of identifying business gaps and identifying the best strategy to fill the gap. However, in some cases, a substantial value in the business opportunity is required to establish a new venture and taking when taking the initiative and establish a new venture. Therefore, individuals with vast knowledge and skills may not be inclined to pursue entrepreneurial ventures. Although skilled and educated women have the potential to pursue various opportunities, other factors like limited access to infrastructure, and financial problems, may limit them from starting or growing their businesses.

Prior studies have indicated that women entrepreneurs are impacted by a lack of business know-how. In contrast to males, women typically have little to no professional experience in the field they establish their businesses (Hisrich & Brush, 1984). This has a detrimental effect on women entrepreneurs. Hassan and Almubarak (2016) noted that women entrepreneurs lack skills in

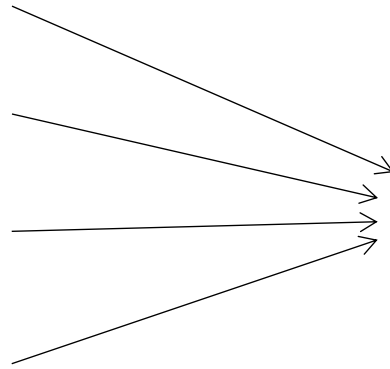
managing their employees. Finding and retaining productive employees is crucial to the performance and success of any business, something most women entrepreneurs are unable to do. Women are unable to retain employees or provide job security considering their businesses are small.

Women entrepreneurs lack market participation knowledge and experience, a serious problem when marketing their products and services. Women-owned businesses are thus finding both production and marketing challenges (Piacentini, 2013). More so, women entrepreneurs lack knowledge about international acceptability due to a lack of exposure to the international market. Seelos and Mair (2005) assert that the cost of establishing a new business in the international market is a big obstacle for many businesses especially those owned by women. Moreover, Orser and Elliott (2015) noted that relational characteristics such as teamwork, empathy, knowledge sharing, empowerment, and nurturing are the best ways to describe the management styles of female entrepreneurs. The study indicated that these characteristics have a significant influence on women entrepreneur's success. Women with high education levels have high negotiation and are more advantageous for long-term business success. This is because, these women can better communicate with the workers, suppliers, and other stakeholders. Based on this literature the current study proposes the following hypothesis:

*H4: Women's education does not play a significant role in the success of women entrepreneurs*

## 2.8. Conceptual Framework

### Independent Variables Figure



## Independent Variables

In this study, the independent variables are those factors that affect the performance of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. These variables include sociocultural, economic, educational, and emotional factors, each hypothesized to affect the entrepreneurial performance of women differently. Sociocultural factors involve societal norms, gender roles, and cultural expectations that may either enable or restrict women's access to business opportunities and resources. On one side, economic factors include access to capital and finance and the general state of the economy that dictates the levels of opportunities available for female entrepreneurs to start their businesses and thrive. Educational factors involve formal education and entrepreneurial training, which serve as knowledge and skill sets necessary for successfully navigating business situations. Last but not least, emotional factors denote self-confidence, resilience, and emotional intelligence, important in determining the capabilities of female entrepreneurs to overcome problems and advance their business ventures with determination and effectiveness.

All of these independent variables are considered vital in shaping the entrepreneurial journey of women in Kuwait, and therefore, determining their interrelationship will yield insight into challenges and opportunities. This conceptual framework, therefore, suggests that these will not be an isolated factor but two intertwined factors-they create an ecology within which the achievements or failures will be determined for female entrepreneurs by the dynamism of their interacting variables: for example, it could that sociocultural expectations affect one's emotional robustness, where economic conditions could impinge on possibly accessing education or professional training. By investigating these independent variables in depth, the research study will be looking to identify which variable drivers will bring the most relevance to female entrepreneurship in Kuwait, including some evidence-based recommendations for support in the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.

The conceptual framework provides an important guide to the research study, explaining a clear and systematic way of exploring the relationship between the key variables involved. The conceptual framework of this study will analyze different factors that influence female entrepreneurship in Kuwait by focusing on sociocultural, economic, educational, and emotional



perspectives that can facilitate or hinder entrepreneurial effectiveness. In seeking to comprehend how such variables interact in concert to support or hamper women entrepreneurs, this framework searches for important insights from the dynamics occurring within the business environment in Kuwait.

This study is informed by the assumption that entrepreneurship is a complex phenomenon influenced both internally and externally. Precisely, it is these elements that tend to persistently restrain or promote the growth and success of female entrepreneurs in a competitive environment. Since entrepreneurship encompasses not only the mere act of setting up a business but also the process of running and sustaining it, the success of female entrepreneurs depends on a range of factors that include personal confidence and resilience, right through to external societal norms, economic conditions, and educational opportunities.

It thus designs the conceptual framework in a way that integrates such influences and their combinations in shaping women's entrepreneurial effectiveness. The sociocultural factors are the core component of the conceptual framework, as they are inextricably linked with societal perceptions, values, and norms that either support or hinder female entrepreneurship. In countries like Kuwait, where traditional gender roles have set expectations for both men and women, sociocultural norms take on an especially critical role in shaping the experience of women in entrepreneurship. The perceived roles of women in society have a great impact on their confidence levels, resource accessibility, and networking opportunities that could link them to potential business partners, customers, and investors. Biases in society may make it hard for women entrepreneurs to be taken seriously; these biases can range from lack of access to capital to skepticism over their leadership capabilities, to exclusion from professional networks dominated by males.

On the other hand, social expectations could also influence women's entrepreneurship drive. For example, both in the Middle East and many parts of the world, the call for greater support in women's empowerment, as well as greater recognition towards the important role women entrepreneurs have played as the driving wheels in economic development. In Kuwait, the government policies and social changes may be increasingly supportive so that women feel empowered to take part in their entrepreneurial aspirations. Thus, sociocultural factors have a

dual role to play, positive and negative, and must be considered with care within the conceptual framework to appreciate their full impact on the entrepreneurial effectiveness of women.

Another conceptual framework lies in the economic conditions, which form an important basis, given their direct bearing on the ability of women entrepreneurs both to enter and to thrive in the marketplace. By economic factors, they include access to capital and financial resources and the wider business environment that will facilitate or constrict entrepreneurial activity. The economic conditions in Kuwait depend on so many factors: whether government support programs are there, how good the investment situation is in the private sector, and overall performance of the national economy.

A further important problem the great part of the female entrepreneurs confronts refers to difficulties of access to capital. Banks or any traditional source of finances remain particularly wary toward extending credits to females in their effort at being considered potential less financial risks compared with men or potential ability for payment of these men. This may consequently reduce their growth potential and inhibit them from scaling up, innovating, or competing in the marketplace. In addition, fluctuating economic conditions-especially for oil-based economies like Kuwait-create uncertainty and risk for entrepreneurs. Economic instability can affect changes in consumer demand, market opportunities, and general economic performance that may make the survival or prosperity of new businesses very difficult.

On the contrary, favorable economic conditions may afford women entrepreneurs new opportunities. For example, one could argue that Kuwait's policy of diversifying its economy away from dependency on oil resources and encouraging a private sector allows women new opportunities in emerging business sectors. Government support for Small and Medium Enterprises would go a long way in providing a level playing field for women entrepreneurs, enabling them to be better equipped with resources and support for success. Hence, economic factors are of essence in determining the success or failure of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait and must be considered against the broader economic context.

**Educational Factors** Education is one of the most important factors that can affect the entrepreneurial capability of women in any context, and it is also true in Kuwait. Educational attainment and training programs help equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary skills, knowledge, and confidence to start and run a business.

While the last couple of decades have seen great strides in improving access to education for women in Kuwait, an increasing number of females have shown interest in higher education and business entrepreneurship courses. Yet, even as such progress is realized, challenges still linger on the question of the type of education provided to the woman entrepreneur and the preparation given to her for the entrepreneurial journey. Entrepreneurial education programs in business administration, finance, and marketing will provide the women with relevant expertise to manage or handle the complexities arising in establishing and managing the venture. However, the capacity to undergo specific entrepreneurship training that targets women's needs and concerns remains out of reach for many women. Further, the cultural attitudes towards gender roles and expectations can be an additional discouragement for women from pursuing entrepreneurship as a career, even if they have the necessary educational qualifications to pursue such careers. The conceptual framework should represent both formal and informal education, as well as how societal attitudes towards female entrepreneurship shape choices about educational and career decisions.

Furthermore, institutions of learning create opportunities for networking, mentorship, and exposure to successful role models, which is very crucial in developing entrepreneurial skills. Women exposed to networks of successful female entrepreneurs or a mentorship program may have a better chance of performing well in entrepreneurship. On the other hand, their absence might raise a huge barrier in the access of women to learning from others and developing their professional networks. Thus, educational factors-both formal and informal-must be considered as a central element in the conceptual framework for realizing the factors that influence female entrepreneurship in Kuwait.

Besides sociocultural, economic, and educational factors, emotional and psychological factors too have a very significant role to play in shaping the entrepreneurial effectiveness of women. While important for any entrepreneur, self-confidence, resilience, and the ability to manage stress and setbacks are perhaps particularly so for women in societies where gender-related challenges are common. In this way, women may feel less confident because of social pressures, forms of gender discrimination, or internalized conceptions, which would create obstacles to effectively taking risks, making decisions, and leading. The emotional and psychological factors that influence entrepreneurial effectiveness are often less tangible and more difficult to quantify than economic or educational factors, but they are no less important. A woman's belief in her

ability to succeed as an entrepreneur will likely have a big impact on her performance, since it influences her decision-making, willingness to take risks, and perseverance in the face of adversity. In addition, the psychological challenges of entrepreneurship, such as stress, uncertainty, and burnout, may fall more heavily on women-particularly when they have to juggle business responsibilities with family or other societal expectations. The conceptual framework of this study must therefore incorporate these emotional and psychological factors that shape women's entrepreneurial effectiveness. By investigating these internal factors, the study can shed light on how women entrepreneurs in Kuwait address the challenges of entrepreneurship and how their personal resilience and confidence levels contribute to their overall success.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter is a critical component of any research paper as it outlines the framework within which the study is conducted. This chapter details the research philosophy, approach, design, methods, sampling, data collection, operationalization, measurement of variables, research quality, data analysis, and ethical considerations involved in studying the factors influencing women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. This structured methodology ensures that the research is systematic, replicable, and reliable, providing a clear path for future researchers interested in similar areas of study.

This chapter provides the research method used in the collection and the analysis of the data. The first part provides the research philosophy, then the research approach. The approach used in collecting and analyzing data pertinent to the study is also outlined in this chapter (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). It starts with a discussion on the research philosophy that outlines the theoretical assumption employed in the study to gain insights on the causes of female entrepreneurship in Kuwait. First, it foregrounds important philosophical assumptions including positivism and realism to elucidate the foundation on which empirical data is analysed (Al-Mughni, 2005). This initial view always guides the overall research paradigm and, hence, directs strategies for data gathering and analysis. The chapter then describes the selected research methodology as well as explaining if inductive or deductive analysis is appropriate for exploring the research objectives of the study (Asad et al., 2019). Hence the choice of the deductive which is intended in this case to examine hypotheses regarding sociocultural, economic and educational emotional impact on female entrepreneurship and effectiveness. The approach, using a structured also enables to deduce the findings from laid down theories and other literature in the field (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Such selection makes it possible for the research to systematically study co variations among the variables and arrive at evidence based conclusions.

This section, therefore, outlines the research philosophy since it forms an integral part of any research approach for data collection and analysis. The underpinning philosophical assumptions guiding this study include positivism and realism. Positivism assumes the objectivity and measurability of reality; hence, observable data are important, usually necessitating the quantitative method of research. It will, therefore, enable analyzing external factors affecting

female entrepreneurship in Kuwait without subjective interpretations. Realism, on the other hand, realizes that reality may be complicated, observable but not necessarily instantly visible or interpretable. Together, these philosophies present an all-rounded platform on which data will be collected and analyzed in order to determine the critical drivers of female entrepreneurship in the country. These two philosophical approaches ensure that the research will be focused on establishing findings that are objective, measurable, and replicable-things that any serious research needs to arrive at if it's going to make any valid conclusion

The research approach adopted for the study is deductive, and it is helpful in testing hypotheses that are based on existing theories and literature. Deductive reasoning starts with a general theory or hypothesis and then seeks to test its validity through empirical data collection and analysis (Asad et al., 2019). The researcher will test the hypothesized sociocultural, economic, and emotional factors that influence female entrepreneurship in Kuwait within this study. It provides the research with a focal point in explaining the relationships existing between the variables under study and systematically accounting for how such factors combine to realize entrepreneurial effectiveness. The deductive approach is also helpful as it allows the study to be guided with the help of already developed theories and knowledge within the context, hence guaranteeing that research is based on a sound theoretical footing.

Also, the deductive approach is highly suitable for meeting the research objectives of the current study since, in this process, a researcher will be able to examine certain variables and their contribution towards female entrepreneurship in a structural way. As it moves from established theory and hypothesis, a study can be designed by a researcher wherein, for instance, factors like the expectations of society, self-confidence, and economic condition interact directly with each other. This structure will, therefore, enable the study to give evidence-based results on the parameters that affect the effectiveness of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. In this approach, through well-planned gathering and analyses of data, the researcher is able to pinpoint patterns and relationships that give insights into the challenges and opportunities for the growth of female entrepreneurship, thereby bringing a nuanced perspective to the nature of entrepreneurial space in Kuwait.

### 3.1. Research Philosophy

Research philosophy refers to the underlying set of beliefs and assumptions that guide the research process. It influences how data is collected, analyzed, and interpreted. In the context of this study on women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, the research philosophy is rooted in

**interpretivism**. Interpretivism aligns with the study's goal of understanding the unique social and cultural factors influencing women's entrepreneurial decisions and challenges in Kuwait.

Interpretivism emphasizes understanding the subjective meanings that individuals attach to their experiences and social realities. Since entrepreneurship is highly contextual and influenced by socio-cultural, economic, and political factors, adopting an interpretivist stance enables the researcher to explore how these factors shape the entrepreneurial landscape for women in Kuwait. Interpretivism allows for a deeper exploration of the lived experiences of women entrepreneurs, including their motivations, challenges, and coping strategies.

Furthermore, the interpretivist philosophy supports the use of qualitative data collection methods such as interviews and focus groups, which allow for an in-depth exploration of the complexities of women's entrepreneurship. The subjective nature of the research aligns with the interpretivist view that knowledge is socially constructed rather than objectively measured.

An alternative research philosophy such as **positivism** would focus on numerical data and statistical analysis, which may not fully capture the nuanced experiences of women entrepreneurs in a culturally unique setting like Kuwait. Therefore, interpretivism is better suited for this study as it emphasizes the subjective and socially constructed nature of entrepreneurial behavior among women.

Research Philosophy is a foundation framework that guides researchers in data collection and analysis related to the topic under study (Harrison et al., 2017). It provides a structured approach that ensures coherence throughout the research. Different studies have given different research philosophies including ontology and epistemology. According to Burrell and Morgan (1979), ontology is a type of research philosophy that deals with the nature of reality questioning whether a phenomenon is a product of human imagination or independently. Ontology research philosophy includes realism perspective and nominalism, where the prior posits an objective reality existing independently of human perspectives. At the same time, the latter suggests reality is a construct of the human mind (Peprah, 2023).

Additionally, epistemology research philosophy relates to how knowledge is understood and acquired (Al-Ababneh, 2020). This research philosophy provides positivism and interpretivism perspectives where the prior aligns with an objective approach indicating that knowledge can be obtained through empirical methods and observation. From the latter perspective, subjective interpretation from individuals acting within social contexts is required to understand reality. In the context of studying entrepreneurship and its influencing factors among women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, realistic and positivist perspectives were used. These perspectives emphasize verifiable facts and empirical evidence rather than subjective beliefs.

Epistemology plays an important role in the formulation of a research design, as it shapes the representation of knowledge and ways of obtaining such knowledge in a given study. Al-Ababneh 2020 views epistemology as a branch of study that evaluates both the nature and extent of knowledge; thus, helping researchers make informed decisions on the reliability of the sources of information and the mechanisms of acquiring such information (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Epistemology informs and shapes research judgments about the most appropriate way to gain information, whether through social interaction and personal experience or observation and measurement. For that reason, this conceptual underpinning identifies what information is reliable and what evidence is valid; it shapes how data is collected, analyzed, and judged. In relation to female entrepreneurs, an epistemological perspective aids in identifying whether objective or subjective aspects are best suited to grasping the influencing variables.

By positivism-herein understood as an epistemological position which lays great stress on objectivity and empirical evidence-knowledge is to be based upon observable and measurable facts (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). The point of gravity in the positivist perspective is on quantifiable aspects of reality, and it is said to be independent of subjective assessments and intelligible through the methods of natural science. The positivism sets an ideal platform for testing variables such as sociocultural norms, attainment of education, and economic status to a valid data in a factual statistical test in the research on female entrepreneurship in Kuwait. Based on this, the researcher can try to make objective judgments of the relationships of variables, such as the performance of companies as dictated by economic stability (Asad et al., 2019). The validity and generalization of this study are improved by adhering to positivism, as any findings the latter bases on facts are verifiable and not founded on subjective opinion.



Another relevant perspective in this study is realism associated with positivism. Though realism assumes that reality is objective, it recognizes that our experience of such a reality is nevertheless subject to modification by events outside ourselves (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Realism within entrepreneurship research therefore lends credence to the idea that objective variables such as financial resources and educational opportunities are key shapers of entrepreneurial success, yet that such factors are perceived differently across different cultural and social contexts (Asad et al., 2019). From this perspective, the realist approach in studying Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs takes into consideration observable objective measures and allows for the fact that subjective experiences and perceptions may be influenced by surrounding contingencies. Realism thus opens up an even more subtle approach, fully accounting for the fact that the environment of this study is as relevant to actual corporate success as the objective facts themselves.

In contrast, interpretivism focuses on the understanding of information through social context and subjective experiences, which are normally qualitatively approached, such as observations or interviews. Generally speaking, interpretivism is less applicable in studies of this nature, which tend to generalize findings based on quantitative data, even though it may be able to lend valuable information, particularly related to individual perspectives. An interpretivist approach would go deep into the individual motivations, goals, and experiences of female entrepreneurs within an entrepreneurship setting; in such an approach, thick data are developed, which may not always be generalized (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Realism and positivism are more relevant frameworks, since they support the objective of the study by way of drawing data-driven inferences rather than delving deep into specific narratives-meaning testing hypotheses and examining objective factors.

This will be achieved by marrying positivism with realism; hence, striking a balance and depicting empirical facts without necessarily sidelining contextual elements (Asad et al., 2019). The dual technique recognizes that sociocultural norms and economic forces operate within a certain cultural and economic framework while permitting the researcher to study these components objectively. While, for instance, sociocultural norms can be quantified, the peculiar social dynamics of Kuwait slides and shapes perceptions and pursuits by females of business. The contextual relevance and rigor of objective data analysis are therefore provided by a positivist-realistic paradigm towards a complete interpretation of female entrepreneurship against the sociocultural backdrop of Kuwait.

Realism, together with positivism, provides a clear basis upon which the study of entrepreneurship among Kuwaiti women can be analyzed, incorporating objective realities along with contextual elements. Objectivist reality considers that such variables as access to finance, education, and the legal framework indeed exist in an environment that is observable and measurable; however, they do not remain in a vacuum. These factors are deeply influenced by sociocultural norms, economic policies, and gendered expectations that define and shape the perception and interaction of women with entrepreneurial opportunities. Asad et al. (2019) note that this dual approach allows the researchers to base their findings on empirical evidence while giving due consideration to the subtle and dynamic interaction that occurs between individuals and their environment. By adopting such a balanced paradigm, the research into Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs will avoid simplification pitfalls and provide a more holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities they face.

The incorporation of realism into the study of women entrepreneurs allows for an analysis of both tangible and intangible factors influencing their success. For example, while there may be financial resources that one can objectively quantify, the cultural setting may view women's economic activities as less valuable compared to those of men. Similarly, while educational qualifications are quantifiable, they may not guarantee equal opportunities in the job market for women as it does for men because of workplace biases or because society limits women's mobility. According to Fuerlinger et al. (2015), realism accounts for such contingencies because it perceives the interrelationship between objective measures and subjective perception. In fact, such a perspective significantly pertains to the Kuwaiti context, as the patriarchal way of looking at things, along with conservative cultural values, often poses a barrier in the path of Kuwaiti female citizens' participation in public spheres. In this way, the realist approach provides an interesting framing in researching how those social factors can mediate the objective variable that influences women in pursuing entrepreneurship.

On the other hand, positivism highlights the reliance on empirical evidence and data-driven inferences to understand entrepreneurial dynamics. This framework relies on the priority of hypothesis testing, statistical analysis, and the establishment of cause-and-effect relationships between variables. In the context of Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs, such an approach might involve studying the correlation between access to finance and entrepreneurial success or the impact that educational attainment may have on entrepreneurial growth. By relying on

quantifiable data, positivism allows researchers to draw objective conclusions about those factors that act for or against women's entrepreneurship. However, as Azam Roomi, Harrison, and Beaumont-Kerridge (2009) indicate, positivism on its own may fail to capture the complex social and cultural dimensions that impinge on these variables.

This limitation calls for the supplementation of positivist methodologies with realist perspectives in order to capture the full spectrum of factors shaping women's entrepreneurial experiences. Such integration of realism and positivism in entrepreneurship research enjoys a singular advantage of bridging the gap between quantitative and qualitative approaches. While positivism provides the tools to measure and analyze objective variables, realism embeds such findings within the greater social and cultural landscape. For example, a positivist analysis might find that women who have higher qualifications tend to achieve entrepreneurial success.

The realist perspective would examine this question for reasons, including societal attitudes towards educated women, access to professional networks, and the presence of mentors. An integrated approach guarantees that the findings from the research will be empirically valid, contextually appropriate, and with useful implications for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders who might have an interest in promoting women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Among the core strengths of the positivist-realist framework is how it accounts for sociocultural norms' impact on entrepreneurship outcomes. In the case of Kuwait, traditional gender roles more often than not place domestic responsibilities above professional ambitions as the designated roles of women. These can be inhibitive to the participation of females in entrepreneurship at levels such as reduced mobility to reduced access to professional networks. A positivist-realist approach will, therefore, enable researchers to quantify the effects of such norms on women's entrepreneurial success and explore, at the same time, subjective experiences of women navigating these challenges. This framework will provide an all-rounded understanding of how sociocultural factors shape women's opportunities and constraints in the entrepreneurial ecosystem by marrying objective data with contextual analysis. Moreover, the positivist-realist paradigm is well suited to an analysis of the role that economic policies and legal frameworks play in determining women's experiences of entrepreneurship. For instance, researchers might employ positivist methods to measure the effectiveness of different government initiatives aimed at supporting women entrepreneurs through grants, loans, and training.

Meanwhile, the realist perspective would consider the way in which these programs are perceived and utilized by women within the sociocultural context of Kuwait. Asad et al. (2019) note that such a dual approach enables the researcher to determine gaps between what the policy is intended to achieve and what is actually happening so that actionable recommendations can be made for improving the inclusiveness and effectiveness of such initiatives. This balanced approach of methodology keeps research findings evidence-based yet sensitive to lived realities as pertaining to the concerns of women entrepreneurs.

By bringing the emphasis down to empirical analyses within a largely positivist-realist analytic framework, ground becomes more fertile to extend such exercises in comparative investigations. By standardized measures of operative variables, results compared against the relative experiences of entrepreneurial women in various other countries can be made directly. This comparative approach might reveal unique challenges faced by Kuwaiti women but at the same time highlight best practices that could be adapted to the local context. For example, studying the success of women entrepreneurs in countries with similar cultural and economic contexts may provide important lessons from which one can draw to devise strategies for overcoming gender-specific barriers. It is such comparative studies that enrich the global understanding of women's entrepreneurship while offering targeted solutions for specific contexts. The realism that recognizes dynamic interaction between the individual and his or her environment also befits an exploration of psychological dimensions of entrepreneurship. For example, psychological impediments arising from societal stereotypes and self-doubt constitute serious problems for Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs. A realist approach recognizes such impediments as not purely individual but influenced by factors like cultural expectations, family dynamics, and community support. This analysis coupled with these psychological dimensions enables the researcher to get a holistic view of the challenges the women face; it also identifies the interventions that can be made to boost their confidence and resilience. This, therefore, makes the psychological dimension of entrepreneurship research complementary to objective analysis based on financial and educational variables. In that respect, further adding elements of interpretivism into the positivist-realist framework would enhance that depth and richness in such analysis even further. While both positivism and realism are rooted in quantifiable data and observable phenomena, interpretivism accounts for the subjective experiences of the women entrepreneurs themselves.

For example, qualitative interview methods and discussion groups go a long way to explain the motives, aspirations, and challenges experienced by Kuwaiti women venturing into businesses.

Although these may not be generalizable insights, they provide an insight into nuanced individual and collective experiences that shape women's journeys of entrepreneurship.

Combining these interpretivist elements with positivist-realist methodologies ensures that research findings are both empirically rigorous and deeply human, capturing the full complexity of women's entrepreneurship. The effective integration of positivism and realism in entrepreneurial studies therefore serves as a radical means that may help expedite the use of gender equity in business surroundings. This framework couples objective data analysis with contextual understanding to derive actionable insights that address the structural and cultural impediments to women's entrepreneurial success. A positivist-realist approach will be particularly useful in the Kuwaiti context, where sociocultural norms meet economic policies, shaping the opportunities available to women. It will, for one, enable the researchers to identify the root causes of gender disparities and proffer evidence-based solutions sensitive to the local context. The findings from such research can be used by stakeholders in the formulation of specific interventions that could help empower Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs and make the entrepreneurial ecosystem more inclusive and dynamic.

### 3.2. Research Approach

The research approach refers to the overall strategy that defines how the research is conducted and how data is interpreted. This study adopts an **inductive research approach**, which is appropriate for exploring new areas where existing theories may not fully explain the phenomenon being studied. An inductive approach is suitable for understanding women's entrepreneurial experiences in Kuwait, as it allows the researcher to generate insights and patterns from the data rather than testing pre-existing theories. The inductive process begins with data collection and analysis, followed by the development of themes and patterns, which ultimately lead to the formulation of new theoretical insights about the factors influencing women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

For instance, through interviews and observations, the researcher can identify common challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, such as societal expectations, legal barriers, and

access to funding. These insights will then help to construct a broader understanding of how these factors interact and shape women's entrepreneurial experiences in Kuwait.

In contrast, a **deductive approach** would have involved starting with an existing theory and testing it within the context of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. However, since the goal is to explore and generate new insights, the inductive approach is more appropriate.

According to Hennink et al. (2020), the research approach refers to a specific technique that includes various aspects of information gathering, analysis, and interpretation. The research approach can be divided into deductive and inductive, where the prior is applied to test and verify hypotheses through data collection and analysis (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). This approach ensures the legitimacy of the conclusions via hypothesis since they are built based on other research studies. Through this approach, the research can test and verify or falsify the hypotheses and build new theories or applications based on results other than those in existing literature.

The inductive research approach is evidence-based and used to develop ideas to explore a certain occurrence. In this approach data collection and analysis serves as a foundation for the researcher to conduct a conceptual framework, providing an idea that has never been proven before (Woo et al., 2020). The researcher through this approach can also develop general ideas from specific and use when the researcher wants to analyze the origin of a particular occurrence (Azungah, 2018). The study used a deductive research approach as it allows the use of a large data sample that is quantitative to form generalizations. Besides, this approach allows the researcher to conduct causal relationship tests among the variables (Asad et al., 2019).

A deductive research method can test the correlations between the variables since it is organized around pre-existing ideas or hypotheses and moves from a general principle to specific conclusions. Contrasting with the inductive strategy, which aims at the generation of new ideas, the deductive approach relies on quantitative data analysis for confirmation or refutation of theories that have already been suggested (Al-Mughni, 2005). This approach is particularly fitted to research projects that aim at evaluating the existing ideas or investigating hypotheses within a particular context (Asad et al., 2019). This type of approach allows one the time to research the influential variables on the outcome in great detail; detailed investigation of the cause-effect relation of the variables is possible by critically analyzing them. In this regard, the present study

examined perceptions of the impact that sociocultural elements, women's education, economic issues, and self-confidence have upon the success of female entrepreneurs (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

The statistical analysis will also be more serving because the deductive method necessitates quantitative data in nature. It allows the researcher to draw 'bottom-line' conclusions applicable to larger populations by application tools like questionnaires, which provide numerical data (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). The deductive approach framework works well if the research design requires comprehensive and repeatable variable testing, and the validity and reliability of this study are heightened through the use of quantitative instruments. In addition, the nature of data provided was quantitative in nature and, as such, encompasses statistical analysis, making it easier to understand the strength and direction of interactions that exist between variables to produce insights that may well be put into practice. The quantitative data from Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs has been utilized in this research to find out the impact of each component separately and together on entrepreneurial performance.

Another fundamental benefit of the deductive method is that it focuses on an analysis of already forwarded concepts, and it proves to be highly useful in those disciplines in which hypotheses that have been formulated from previous studies are present (Asad et al., 2019). This approach may lead to findings that confirm or deny the established thought; hence, it consolidates or expands theoretical boundaries in that field. For example, if the results of this study provide evidence that sociocultural determinants do not influence entrepreneurial success, whereas economic factors do, then these findings may well inform future studies on women's entrepreneurship, particularly those occurring in and around similar cultural and economic environments (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). In those regions where general statements need the support of empirical evidence, the deductive approach underlines the theoretical framework of research through the ability to test hypotheses on the chance of evidence (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

On an addition, the deductive approach would then typically follow strict statistical data analysis methods in studying the nature and extent of relationship variables, such as regression and correlation analyses (Asad et al., 2019). With such a structured style of procedures, one can critically analyze each factor's contribution and cause to the outcome. The researcher of this

study used casual testing between sociocultural traits, self-confidence, economic circumstances, and education to identify and evaluate specific influences of each variable in female entrepreneurship (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). This would perhaps allow the researcher to analyze large datasets with statistical tools such as SPSS, thus assuring accuracy and reliability in the conclusions. These few quantitative approaches give a direct path toward statistically significant results and thus make available the necessary framework upon which one is bound to get relevant, data-driven insights into what factors really make or break the success of female entrepreneurs.

In the same vein, the chapter presents the methodology that was used in the present research in line with the research strategy (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). A conclusive research design was deemed appropriate because of its compatibility with quantitative data and testing of relationships among variables. This design plays the role of responding to certain questions and hypotheses with the hope of providing insightful returns to the research questions by providing a glimpse of what it means to be an entrepreneur for women in Kuwait. It is an advantage of the research design that it is systematic and structured, for it enables generalization of the data so collected, thus, the validity and reliability of the outcomes are boosted.

Furthermore, this chapter presents steps taken to gather data whereby the major tool employed are structured questionnaires administered through online tools to capture the female entrepreneurs in Kuwait (Asad et al., 2019). Quantitative data were collected through self-completed questionnaires, which provided a convenient and inexpensive means of the study. This method ensures that the participants respond at their most suitable time, it also increases the overall response rate in coverage of women entrepreneurs across various industries in Kuwait (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). With the help of the chosen type of distribution, the study involved a larger circle of viewers, which has increased the coverage of data.

The last section of this chapter explains data analysis in the context of this study, where coding was done, and the usage of statistical programs in handling the data collected (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Analytical and inferential approaches were used to determine the patterns between the variables that would allow the research to measure impacts of sociocultural, economic and educational factors on entrepreneurial performance (Al-Mughni,



2005). Using quantitative research method, the study is able to pinpoint relationships and trends in order to gain a deeper insight on the problems affecting female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Here some background is given to introduce the elaborated results in the subsequent sections of the chapter.

In choosing this design, the methodology of the present research is appropriately aligned with the positivist and realist approach through which answers to the research questions have been pursued through empirical evidence and structured analysis. The conclusive type of research design could well be applied for this study because it allows the collection of quantitative data, hence testing the association between the variables. Such design particularly contributes to the exploration of such barriers facing women entrepreneurs in Kuwait because through this design it could be systematically tracked how socio-cultural, economic, and educational factors affect entrepreneurial performance outcomes. Since data is measurable and quantifiable through reliable statistics, the credibility and authenticity of the findings, using this approach, can be guaranteed, which eventually allows the current research to generalize across a greater women entrepreneurs' sample pool Asad et al. (2019). The nature of the research design being systematic will aid in drawing clear patterns and relationships that are important to making profound insights into the entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in Kuwait.

One of the strengths of this research design is the fact that it focuses on structured data collection methods; this would allow for accuracy and comprehensiveness in the results. A structured questionnaire administered online to a response group of diverse female entrepreneurs in Kuwait was the major tool of data collection. This will be cost-effective and allow a wide reach because respondents can fill out the questionnaire at their convenience, reducing potential barriers to participation.

This fact finds its support in the works of Azam Roomi, Harrison, and Beaumont-Kerridge in the year 2009: application of an online questionnaire raises the overall rate of response among all types of questioned subjects and definitely meets the objectives while considering the huge coverage area which will have several diversified group subjects participating. It aimed at getting such primary data which represented essential aspects like demographics, entrepreneurial experiences, or perception regarding obstacles linked with sociocultural or economic hurdles in the paths to Kuwait's women in entrepreneurship. Finally, online surveys could also assure that

the process is both efficient and flexible in data collection among participants from different industries and sectors in Kuwait's entrepreneurial space. This is important, as Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs come from different backgrounds; each faces unique challenges depending on their industry and the socio-economic context in which they find themselves operating. This means that the online distribution would help reach a wide sample of women from across various regions and sectors, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the research. Reaching more people in less time provided a snapshot of the current experiences of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait that was truer to life. Increased coverage also improved data quality overall, providing a fuller dataset to analyze.

The data was collected in a structured and systematic manner, so the analysis would have its basis on comparable and reliable responses that are of essence for valid inferences regarding factors retaliating against female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009. Data analysis involved response coding and the use of statistical methods to bring out the relationship between different variables. Coding is the process that needs to take place if the raw data collected is to be transformed into analyzable format, as suggested by Al-Mughni. In this case, coding means assigning responses to certain categories according to predefined themes, such as assessment of sociocultural norms' impact, availability of financial means, educational background, etc. Once coding was performed, all data were statistically analyzed with the help of specific programs using descriptive and inferential analysis. Descriptive statistics described the demographics and key characteristics of the respondents, whereas inferential statistics tested hypotheses and relationships among variables. This rigour in data analysis ensures that the results are statistically valid and meaningful.

For instance, it looked into business performance in relation to the level of education and access to finance, or how sociocultural attitude and gender norms influence female entrepreneurial performance. These quantitative measures, therefore, allowed the research to have a quantification of the extent to which different variables affected entrepreneurial performances, hence giving valuable insights into barriers and opportunities for female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. These methods have also enabled the identification of trends and patterns of women entrepreneurs emanating from different groupings of the respondents, based on age, industry type, and education level, in placing the findings within the socio-economic environment of Kuwait.

Inferential statistics also played a very important role in testing the hypotheses proposed at the beginning of the study. This is viewed as a core component of the positivist approach, whereby such hypothesis testing allows researchers to make conclusions concerning the relationships between variables based upon empirical evidence. Testing the hypotheses will show whether such factors as sociocultural norms, access to education, and financial resources relate significantly to the success of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. These test results gave an in-depth understanding of the particular problems women entrepreneurs face, hence enabling the researcher to give evidence-based recommendations for policy and practice. According to Fuerlinger et al. (2015), hypothesis testing is a strong tool within the positivist paradigm since it allows the researcher to reach objective, data-driven conclusions about the relationships among variables. Besides the quantitative assessment, the study also integrated a contextual analysis of the sociocultural and economic environment within which female entrepreneurs in Kuwait pursue their businesses. This is quite important in a society where gender roles and cultural expectations might have a great bearing on women's abilities to access resources and opportunities.

Al-Mughni (2005) emphasizes the need to embed enterprise research within a larger social context, especially when studying non-Western contexts where culture faces great prominence. In this respect, the study concerns also focused on the attitude of society towards women engaging themselves in business and other ventures, economic policies, and the legal framework influencing the entrepreneurial experience of women in Kuwait. With the integration of this contextual analysis, this study was therefore able to expand knowledge on what affects women's entrepreneurship, beyond data in a wholly quantitative manner into consideration of broadened sociocultural forces. In a nutshell, this chapter presents the methodology of the study, therefore giving a systematic and structured approach toward data collection and analysis. For precise, detailed answers to each of the stated questions, a conclusive research design needed to be selected. Online surveying and data analysis by statistic tools allowed reliable findings, which could have been generalized into a larger female entrepreneur in Kuwait population. Besides, the sociocultural and economic aspects complementing the study contributed to a fuller understanding of issues women entrepreneurs go through. An organization or integration of quantitative and qualitative methods thus took place for the examination of the complex dynamics of women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait and provided relevant insights into scholars

and policymakers. It was also influenced by the works of Asad et al. (2019); Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009; Al-Mughni, 2005.

### **3.3. Research Design**

The research design provides a structured plan for how the study will be conducted. This study employs an exploratory research design, which is suitable for investigating complex social phenomena where limited prior research exists. Exploratory research allows for flexibility and adaptability in data collection and analysis, which is essential when studying the personal and social experiences of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

An exploratory design enables the researcher to explore the 'how' and 'why' questions surrounding women's entrepreneurship. It allows the study to focus on emerging themes and patterns, providing a richer understanding of the challenges, motivations, and strategies of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. The research design combines qualitative and quantitative elements to capture a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. While qualitative data provides depth and context, quantitative data allows for pattern recognition and generalizability.

According to Dannels (2018), research design is a procedure used by the researcher to collect and analyze the data for the study. Research design connects the conceptual research problems to the empirical research by planning the most appropriate method required to collect, process, and analyze the data, and how to answer the research questions (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). The most common research designs used in research include explanatory research design and conclusive research design. The former design aims to provide insights and understanding of the proposed research problems to identify the causes and solutions to a specific problem (Asad et al., 2019). The later research design is mostly applied to generating findings that are useful for reaching conclusions or decision-making. Tracy (2019) asserts that conclusive research design is sometimes used for decision-making and researching conclusions through findings generation. It is mostly used in research studies that are based on statistical tests, with large sample sizes, and advanced analytical techniques. The objective of this study is to test the hypotheses on sociocultural, self-confidence, economic factors, and women's education about the women entrepreneurs' performance in Kuwait. Therefore, this study used a conclusive research design.

Generally, a research design is important because it provides the structural framework that guides every phase of a study, from data collection to analysis and interpretation (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). According to Dannels, 2018, the research design ensures that the methodology of data collection is consistent with the objectives of the research through connecting theoretical research issues with practical investigation. This systematic process helps the researcher outline each step that would be needed to analyze the variables efficiently and soundly. A proper choice of research design enhances the focus and reliability of the study in that it details how information will be collected, analyzed, and examined to provide a meaningful answer to research questions. An effective research design thus provides consistency throughout the entire research process and serves as a good fit.

In more cases, the objectives of the study could be the ground on which an explanatory and conclusive research strategy shall be chosen. According to Asad et al. (2019), an explanatory research design is necessary "when a researcher wants to look at the root causes or reasons of certain challenges of the study." These are usually qualitative in nature and attempt to get preliminary insight into complex subjects that could later inform further research (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). Explanatory research finds solutions by studying the relationships among variables. It usually involves less rigor compared to descriptive research, and sometimes provides solutions that are not immediately useful, even though it allows an in-depth understanding of the topics of study. Explanatory design is suitable for those areas where the exploratory studies pave the way for more definite research through a theoretical framework.

A conclusive research design would, in general, apply quantitative techniques with a higher sample number to come to an actual conclusion based on statistical analyses. Conclusive research, as it generally applies hypothesis testing in the approach and generalization of results, is quite common in investigations that require real practical insight for decision-making purposes. According to Tracy (2019), conclusive designs are core in any research that requires consistent, repeatable results because such designs precisely ensure statically significant findings, allowing for data-driven judgments. Conclusive design permits the researcher to comprehensively analyze hypotheses by employing systematic approaches and reliable data collection, which is usually performed by surveys or experimentation. This approach is of especial help when the researchers want definite evidence to guide strategic choices, policy-making, or corporate decisions.

This is so because the nature of the study warranted a definitive research design, with the study set to test hypotheses on the influence of sociocultural characteristics, self-efficacy factors, economic motives, and women's education on the entrepreneurial performance of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Through the use of statistical tests for investigating the respective relationships among these characteristics, the researcher would objectively evaluate the implications of the characteristics under study upon the entrepreneurial performance of the entrepreneurs (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). This structured approach, based on hypotheses, gave the researcher the chance to draw reliable findings relevant to Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs. High sample sizes and emphasis on statistical analysis make the final design ideal for this investigation since it required sound evidence to support or refute each hypothesis (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). Besides, by applying this kind of approach, the researcher was sure that the findings would apply to the wider population and hence more result-oriented.

The ending design has practical benefits in the administration of data and the interpretation of results (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). Upon careful analysis and interpretation of quantitative data through SPSS software, the researcher was able to organize large data sets and conduct complex studies such as regression and correlation tests. The ability of the researcher to provide findings that were accurate and statistically supported about each of the variables increased the breadth of coverage and reliability of this study (Al-Mughni, 2005). The design structure further facilitated adherence to the research objectives outlined in the study and ensured that each stage was consistent with the purpose of determining the salient features affecting the success of women entrepreneurs. The last design immediately served the objectives of the study by providing a sound framework for testing hypotheses and yielded data.

### **3.4. Research Method**

This study adopts a **mixed-method research method** that combines both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. The mixed-method approach enhances the robustness of the study by triangulating data from different sources, thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the findings. The qualitative component includes in-depth interviews with women entrepre-

neurs to explore their personal experiences, motivations, and challenges. Focus group discussions will further provide insights into shared experiences and collective challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

The quantitative component involves administering structured surveys to a larger sample of women entrepreneurs to measure the prevalence of specific challenges, motivations, and success factors. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods allows the researcher to cross-validate findings and build a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. In general cases, research studies are conducted through qualitative, quantitative methods, or mixed methods using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative research uses numeric data collected through close-ended questions which are normally quantified using different scales (Ahmad, et al., 2019). Quantitative research involves testing for the relationships between the variables through statistical methods such as correlations and regression to test hypotheses to answer the research questions. On the other hand, qualitative research explores the assigned meaning given to a social thin and may consist of open-ended questions and information collected through interviews and from documents from different sources (Tracy, 2019). Since the current study aims to determine factors influencing female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in Kuwait in the current competitive business arena, the researcher believed that the quantitative research method could well-suit the study (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Through this method, the researcher was able to randomly select participants from the sample frame in an unbiased manner, collect data, and analyze it using statistical methods to answer the research questions.

The quantitative approaches were beneficial in this study because they can provide some quantifiable objective findings of the variables that affect or influence the performance of female entrepreneurs in this Middle Eastern kingdom (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). In this respect, close-ended questions were used, and data collection was controlled so that data are analyzable systematically through statistical techniques. Quantitative means are particularly useful for indicating a trend, pattern, and relationships prevailing among variables, as their results are often clear and reproducible. (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009) Hence, the researcher was able to analyze their impact on entrepreneurial performance objectively because the variables such as societal influences, self-confidence, and economic conditions were

measured. The well-organized and quantifiable data in this study provided much more depth and accuracy for the understanding of challenges and opportunities that face female entrepreneurs in a cutthroat business climate (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

Quantitative analysis did not lead to participant selection bias, and the results were generalizable. Quantitative studies can accommodate larger samples because data collection is faster, using tools like questionnaires, which are analyzed statistically. The researcher performed statistical procedures-regression and correlation tests-to examine in detail the associations of independent factors with the dependent variable: female entrepreneurial effectiveness. Because this analytical technique relies more on quantitative data rather than subjective insights, it supported the present study's objective in pointing out key elements which either support or hinder achievement. These have conferred findings from statistical tests to support results with conclusions based on empirical data, thus being more valid and established for generalization to a similar population.

Moreover, quantitative analysis allowed him to collect and analyze data on time by analyzing the great variety of responses within the limited time frame. With the use of statistical tools like SPSS, the researcher may have more conveniently organized and analyzed data he had collected, understanding best the correlations between the variables (Al-Mughni, 2005). Quantitative analysis also allowed the researcher to explore possible cause-and-effect associations and gave a far richer insight into ways in which such factors as state of economy or self-confidence most influence female entrepreneurship success (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). This approach was appropriate, reliable, and effective in carrying out the research in a way that generated valid and clear findings while meeting research criteria; thus, systematic and objective addressing of research objectives.

The research methods form the basis of any study, influencing the design, data collection, and analysis. In general, research studies are conducted using three major methods: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Of these, the quantitative research method is oriented toward numeric data and is especially helpful when the relationships between variables are to be measured and findings quantified. This study has adopted a quantitative research design since the effectiveness of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait was to be analyzed; it normally produces objective and replicable results. Quantitative methods of research enable the researcher to collect data using structured techniques, such as close-ended questions, and then analyze the same data



for possible associations and trends using statistical tools. This ensures that the findings from the study can be generalized on a wider population and provide statistically significant results.

In this case, quantitative research is best utilized in those conditions where clear and measurable outcomes are intended or required, or when the purpose of the investigation requires statistical analysis necessary in explaining the relationship which may exist between different variables. As Azam Roomi, Harrison, and Beaumont-Kerridge (2009) present, quantitative research could give findings that are objective in nature to help clarify the patterns and the relationships among such variables so that it could be easier to determine the specific factors that could affect an outcome. This approach allowed the researcher to narrow down the influences of the influences of societal influences, economic conditions, and self-confidence on entrepreneurial effectiveness among female entrepreneurs in Kuwait to their measurable aspects. Measurement of the variables will therefore be able to bring out patterns and relationships that not only explain the current challenges but also indicate where improvements are possible.

Quantitative research allows the researcher to have statistically reliable and generalizable results. As the study has collected data on structured tools like close-ended questions and statistical tests such as correlation and regression, the findings can be generalized to a broader population. It follows that the findings will not be limited to the sample of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait but can be generalized to other women entrepreneurs who find themselves within similar environments. Such generalization is one of the key strengths in this study, given that it allows for wider applicability and makes the findings more pertinent to the broader pool of research concerning female entrepreneurship.

Other main strengths of quantitative research include the possibility of large sample sizes and swift data collection. The structured questionnaires used allowed the researcher to gather information from a great number of people, thus guaranteeing sample variation. Larger samples diminish the threat of selection bias common in qualitative studies and enhance the reliability and representativeness of the data. With the use of statistical tools like SPSS, the researcher could have managed and analyzed the data more effectively, hence coming to more accurate conclusions supported by facts. This also provided an avenue for the capture of a wide range of responses that helped in ensuring that the study captured a holistic view of the factors influencing female entrepreneurship in Kuwait.

For instance, the present study applied the statistical methods of regression and correlation in order to test the various relationships between independent variables, including but not limited to societal influences, economic conditions, and self-confidence, and the dependent variable: the effectiveness of female entrepreneurship. In so doing, these analytical approaches allowed the researcher to analyze each factor not just for its own merits but also for its integrated interactions with other factors in question. For example, how does self-confidence affect the success of a female entrepreneur, and how do economic conditions or societal expectations strengthen or weaken these effects? Through regression analysis, the strength and direction of these relationships could be determined, giving weight to such conclusions in trying to answer the research questions.

In addition, quantitative analysis precludes the bias that would arise with qualitative methods, either by the researcher or by participants themselves. Quantitative data are objective and numeric in nature; thus, standardized statistical methods can be applied to analyze the data. The results of these statistical tests are empirical in nature—that is, the results reflect the real pattern in the population, not subjective interpretation of the data. This means that quantitative research can offer a sounder basis for drawing conclusions and making generalizations, thereby increasing the validity and credibility of the research findings. Such an objective approach is very necessary in attempting to reveal what factors affect the effectiveness of female entrepreneurs within the competitive market.

The quantitative analysis has allowed the researcher to present a clear, systematic framework of the relationship between the various independent variables and female entrepreneurship. It allows data to be organized into structured categories and utilizes statistical techniques that allowed the researcher to identify patterns and relationships clearly. The clarity also gave the researcher the chance to draw more precise conclusions as to what the impact was that each variable alone, such as the role of education, self-confidence, and financial resources available, had on the success or otherwise of entrepreneurial drive. For example, it could be found that only the most highly educated women who feel strong self-confidence succeed, whereas the others often encounter too strong societal barriers for either their education or self-belief to matter.

Other strengths of quantitative research include testing for possible cause-and-effect relationships. The researcher was able to test how one variable might influence another through

the use of statistical tools like regression analysis. For instance, the study may have investigated whether a positive self-image and availability of financial resources produce a higher degree of entrepreneurial success, or if societal constraints make it hard for a woman to be successful as an entrepreneur. In such cause-and-effect exploration, one is in a better position to give recommendations on addressing the barriers and enhancing opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

Quantitative approach is, thus, appropriate and effective in this study for answering the research questions. Statistical analysis of the data using the statistical methods would, therefore, enable the researcher to draw objective and reliable conclusions on the factors affecting the effectiveness of female entrepreneurs. These findings also feature prominently for better understanding today's business in the State of Kuwait, as it pertains to the development of actionable propositions about how entrepreneurship can play its role in the empowerment of women. Results stem from evidence rather than ad hoc assumptions, having obtained a wide cross-section with representative data points, ensuring that the conclusions cannot but be cogently based to feed future studies into policy at length for making proper support provisions towards female entrepreneurship.

### 3.5. Sampling and Sample

The study will use a **non-probability sampling method**, specifically **purposive sampling**. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to select participants who meet specific criteria relevant to the research objectives.

The sample will consist of:

- Women entrepreneurs currently operating in Kuwait.
- Business owners from diverse industries, including retail, technology, services, and manufacturing.
- Entrepreneurs with a minimum of one year of business operation experience.

A target sample size of **30-50 participants** is considered sufficient for qualitative insights and statistical analysis. This sample size ensures diversity while maintaining manageability in terms of data analysis. The sampling method is crucial in research, especially in answering the research questions. The sampling method determines the sample to be selected and the data collected for

the study (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Two types of sampling methods; probability and non-probability sampling methods are used in research study. The probability sampling method is a sampling method that gives all the participants in the sampling frame equal chances of participating in the study (Tintle et al., 2020). This is crucial as it reduces the chances of being biased although it is time and energy-consuming. Non-probability sampling method does not use mathematical randomization to select the sample for the study. This method is cost-effectiveness and time-effectiveness (Vehovar et al., 2016).

The nature of this study, the target group of participants for this study is women entrepreneurs in Kuwait (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). The study used convenience sampling techniques which are designed to select participants based on their readiness and availability. The researcher used snowball to target a small sample of the participants and select those who were available for the study. The method was considered suitable for the study in terms of approaching Women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

The sampling strategy utilized in studies is important in knowing how well the findings portray the population. A sampling strategy affects the quality and reliability of the findings in making a decision on the target group that will be studied. Researchers can have one of two alternatives based on the requirements for their documenting of findings, probability sampling or non-probability sampling. It is the most used probability sampling by academics to attain a statistically representative sample because it guarantees equal opportunity for every member of the population to be selected (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). Hence, it is, therefore, quite suitable for studies requiring results that can be generalized across large populations due to reduced selection biases which characterize this method. However, it is very time-consuming and expensive due to its stringent processes.

Convenience and snowball sampling are examples of non-probability sampling techniques that could well be applied when there is a constraint of time, budget, or inaccessibility of the population. Because in non-probability sampling the selection process is not randomized, not every member of the population gets an equal probability of being selected (Al-Mughni, 2005). This clearly presents advantages in terms of efficiency and conservation of resources, with a possible risk of bias, however. These are especially handy techniques when one is carrying out exploratory research or researching populations that are particularly hard to reach (Fuerlinger et

al., 2015). With the focus on accessible and willing participants, non-probability sampling can be very rich and relevant in data, when appropriately applied, offering valuable insights into a specific population subset.

This research will primarily adopt convenience sampling since it focuses on a rather specific demographic: Kuwaiti female entrepreneurs. Convenience sampling is a very effective strategy for demographics that are hard to get in contact with or that have few participants, because it selects people who are willing and able to participate. Convenience sampling, as a strategy for recruiting the female entrepreneurs in Kuwait for this study, proved practical and cost-effective. It is rather easy for the researcher to find people quickly and simply (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Without the delays common with random sample processes, this methodology assures that the research will be able to gather pertinent insights from the selected population.

The snowball sampling that the researcher has used is ideal for contacting people through already established social or professional networks, fitting when one intends to narrow down the sample group and extend its reach. Snowball sampling provides one with a chain of volunteers meeting the study parameters by using the initial participants to promote others. This method benefited the researcher since the networks and professional societies made it easier to identify and contact the female entrepreneurs. Through the networks, the study could capture women entrepreneurs who are normally difficult to find by incorporating a wide variety of women entrepreneurs within the study (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). The research could achieve the constraints of finances and logistics at the same time creating higher sample size through snowballing sampling.

The convenience-snowball sampling methods' combination has come up with an approach that is strategic as well as has reached a large number of FEs in a sustainable manner. In the case of Kuwait, where the entrepreneurs are extremely close-knit, snowball sampling expanded the reach through referrals, while convenience sampling allowed for the engaging of participants immediately (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).. This was particularly useful in a localized location like Kuwait. Although these are non-probability methodologies, they will be crucial to understand the specific characteristics and standpoints of female Kuwaiti entrepreneurs, even though not fully representative samples would be obtained (Al-Mughni, 2005). The chosen

sampling strategies supported the intentions of this research with regard to making relevant trade-offs between accessibility and the selection of targeted participants

### **3.6. Data Collection**

The study generally used primary data collected from 105 women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. This data was collected through survey questionnaires carried out through a monkey survey.

According to Fife-Schaw (2020), questionnaires are used to collect data through filling in the questions by the respondents. It is widely used for most research studies due to a vast number of advantages such as providing anonymity and achieving good response rates. (Al-Mughni, 2005). Based on the nature of this study, a quantitative study, the questionnaires provided the researcher with the tool to collect measurable data from the participants and able to gather data from the considerably large population through different social media platforms like WhatsApp (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

The questionnaire was divided into two main parts, where the first part aimed at collecting demographic information of the participants, while the second part aimed at collecting information on the factors influencing female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in Kuwait in the current competitive business arena. The researcher first sent a message to ask each participant if she was willing to participate in the study and permission to complete the questions in the questionnaire, followed by directly sending a survey link to the willing participants.

The study also used secondary data; a type of information collected by other people for another primary purpose (Martin-Sanchez et al., 2017). The secondary data helped the researcher gain a deeper meaning of the research topic and develop research questions. The study's literature review and the backbone of the methodology chapter were based on the database from Google Scholar to provide insight into the understanding and foundation of the study (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Using secondary data in this study was significant in contributing to the depth and width of the study. Secondary data involved organized and outside information, which were collected for use in purposes other than this study, provided a vaster perspective of various theories, trends and findings of female entrepreneurship (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). From such sources the researcher was able to corroborate primary analysis and ascertain patterns within the topic. The adoption of secondary data is beneficial in the research since it offers a

ready-made way of looking at phenomena which the research seeks to address placing it within a more extensive body of knowledge.

**Female entrepreneurship in Kuwait** The study employed mainly secondary data in the literature review section to examine and develop the basic aspects of Kuwait. Google Scholar was applied as the primary source because it connects to the most recent and reliable articles, research and industry analyses. In the current literature, the researcher sought to pinpoint critical factors defining women's entrepreneurship such as sociocultural as well as economic factors (Al-Mughni, 2005). These formed the background on which hypothesis was developed and were used in developing the research objectives and questions.

Moreover, the secondary data helped to form the basis of establishing immediate, directed research questions. As shown in previous research, the researcher was able to realize the lack of literature regarding the certain context of female entrepreneurship in Kuwait (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).. Such knowledge allowed for the development of specific questions that regard the specifics of female construction in Kuwait's commerce environment. Since secondary data served as a compass, the study received direction as to where to focus and which method to use with regard to the issues regarding its collection and analysis.

Secondary data was also used in the methodology chapter of the study to justify the choice of the research design and methods. Since the research approach used in the current research was similar to previous studies, it assisted the researcher in identifying appropriate procedures, for instance, a structured questionnaire for collecting primary data. Furthermore, examples from other works were useful in understanding how the limitations were managed or how data reliability was increased. This second data-supported approach also made sure that the research methods employed are appropriate in addition to being in line with the standards in the subject area.

Secondary data complemented the study and added external validation since the researcher was able to compare the study results with other related research (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). This approach was important in supporting the outcome of the research and also provided a wider angle of the study. When considering the primary data analysis findings with theory the study could corroborate or refute its results thus adding value in the understanding of factors that

influence female Kuwaiti entrepreneurs. The use of secondary data in the study was done systematically throughout so as to give balance and more realistic result.

In this respect, the design of the data collection for the study has taken into consideration the holistic view of factors that affect female entrepreneurship in Kuwait. The questionnaire consists of primary data, collected from a structured questionnaire from 105 women entrepreneurs. As stated by Fife-Schaw, 2020, a questionnaire is considered an efficient method of data gathering since it is based on the ability of respondents to answer questions in their own convenient time, where most of the information given out would be accurate and well thought of. The research tool is specially helpful in any study that requires large samples since it gives assurance that the data gathered from respondents would have been uniform in nature. The structured nature of the questionnaire was thus helpful in the elicitation of data in a form that was measurable, hence providing scope for analysis in establishing patterns and relationships of key variables. Among these variables were sociocultural and economic factors influencing entrepreneurial success.

This questionnaire consisted of two parts, the first part for demographic details: age, education, and industry of operation among respondents. This is important demographic data that helps to establish the contextual understanding within which female entrepreneurs operate in Kuwait and allows the discerning of other variables that may influence different entrepreneurial outcomes. Section two addressed issues that affect the effectiveness of female entrepreneurs within the modern competitive business context.

These questions will help to identify some of the challenges that women face in the Kuwaiti entrepreneurial ecosystem, such as access to capital, the attitude of society towards a businesswoman, and educational opportunities. Furthermore, the usage of this tool, the survey, has been quite important for gathering information that was needed with high efficiency, since it may also be used to depict the number of participants, something highly regarded especially when studying the Kuwait context. The survey has been administered on an online platform, which served as easy access to the targeted group. According to Azmat and Fujimoto (2016), the use of online tools to disseminate questionnaires expands the scope in terms of increased variety of subjects one is studying. In this research, the researcher forwarded the link across different social media platforms-one of them happens to be WhatsApp-to cater to a proper representation



of Female Entrepreneurs from different vocations and fields in Kuwait city. The effectiveness of online-mode surveys also allowed the respondents to get the questionnaire wrapped up at their suitable time, ensuring an increased likelihood of response. The latter approach was cheaper, and for that matter, allowed more freedom of time and place, which is important for making the sample of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait more representative.

Secondary data, according to Martin-Sanchez et al. (2017), are information that has previously been collected for a purpose different from informing and improving the research at hand.

Secondary data were used, largely from Google Scholar, providing the researcher with an enormous amount of varied literature, which includes academic articles, industry reports, and past research studies. This secondary data was useful in developing a preliminary understanding of the factors that affect female entrepreneurship, especially within the Kuwaiti context.

Secondary data allowed the researcher to leverage that knowledge and extracted from the patterns and trends perceived in similar studies conducted in other regions to inform the research questions and hypotheses of this study accordingly.

Secondary data proved useful in developing the research questions and hypotheses as well. In the course of the literature review, the researcher found areas in which the research on female entrepreneurship in Kuwait was incomplete, which helped the researcher to narrow down the research questions to become more specific. The fact that only a limited number of extensive studies have been conducted on the issue of female entrepreneurship in Kuwait, as stated by Ladge, Eddleston, and Sugiyama (2019), offered an excellent opportunity to research this topic further. Therefore, the secondary data have not only widened the theoretical setting within which the research has taken place but also allow this research to take a focus that is little tackled in current literature. In that, through the determination of this gap, it was possible to bring the subjectivity of the research into those themes that best could answer what factors make or prevent female Kuwaiti entrepreneurs businesses succeed regarding sociocultural norms and economic policies. In addition, secondary data played an important role in justifying the research design and methodology to be used in this research. As highlighted above, the use of secondary data helped the researcher in using examples from already conducted studies that helped in ensuring the appropriateness of the research design to the objectives of the study. For instance, the choice of a structured questionnaire as the key data collection method was guided by previous research work that found this tool effective in collecting quantitative data. Some of the

expected limitations, such as biases in the sample or issues on the reliability of the data, were also highlighted in secondary data indicating how other studies have overcome such challenges. In turn, the review of the challenges experienced while executing such studies enabled the researcher to refine the methodology that was adopted and improved the quality of the best practices in the research.

The secondary data were also very useful in the validation of the findings of this study. By comparing the primary data analysis to existing research, the researcher was able to determine whether the results of this study were consistent or inconsistent with findings from similar studies. Fuerlinger et al. (2015) suggest that the use of secondary data is considered an external validation method in which researchers can support or veto their data. In this study, the secondary data set the findings of the research within a wider body of knowledge about female entrepreneurship and provided full insight into those factors that impeded or helped enhance women's entrepreneurial success in Kuwait. This process of validation is important in ensuring that the conclusions from the primary data are supported by existing evidence and that the research is contributing something meaningful within the academic realm. The combination of both primary and secondary data collection methods in the study provides great scope for this research to form a sound basis of understanding the factors that affect female entrepreneurship in Kuwait. Primary data, as collected through online surveying, allowed the researcher to capture a considerable and diverse amount of women entrepreneurs, while secondary data provided the theoretical context which informed the research design and the analysis. The integration of both data types enabled the researcher to develop a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by female entrepreneurs in Kuwait and to provide evidence-based recommendations for supporting women's entrepreneurial ventures in the region. This is in agreement with Azmat & Fujimoto, (2016); Al-Mughni, (2005); Fuerlinger et al., (2015).

### ***3.6.1. Data Collection Instrument***

The data collection instruments for this study include:

- **Semi-structured interviews** – To explore the personal experiences and challenges of women entrepreneurs.
- **Focus group discussions** – To gather collective insights and identify common patterns.

- **Surveys** – To measure the frequency and impact of specific challenges and motivations.

The interview guide and survey will be pilot-tested to ensure clarity, relevance, and consistency. The interview questions will cover themes such as access to funding, societal expectations, legal barriers, and personal motivations

From the way of data distribution, the study used an array of methods composing an email to women entrepreneurs with an introductory letter with a URL hyperlink to a web-based survey (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Self-completion questionnaires were used which helped in reaching a large quantity of respondents, saved time, and was more convenient. The researcher also used a questionnaire as it is easy with low costs of preparation and administration. According to Fife-Schaw (2020), questionnaires typically allow the participants to give their opinions on the asked questions anonymously, increasing the unbiased feature of the data. By distributing the link for the questionnaires through different social media platforms, the researcher was able to reach out to 105 women entrepreneurs ensuring a reasonably good database for further analysis (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

This study adopts several strategies of data distribution to reach a larger number of participants and ensure convenience to the respondents. Initially, an introductory letter explaining the aims of the study and giving a URL link to an online survey was sent to the women entrepreneurs by email (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). This method allowed participants to quickly access the survey irrespective of their location and avoided the logistical complications related to in-person distribution. E-mail invitations, especially for the busy professionals, gave the survey some credibility and induced participants to join at their own pace. This method, therefore, provided a very cost-effective and efficient way to reach thousands through the survey.

Data collection was done through self-completion surveys that proved to have several advantages in terms of reach and scalability of respondents (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). This study reduced a lot of time wastage; therefore, increasing the overall efficiency for the respondents and researcher since participants could complete the questionnaires through self-completion. This self-completion method minimized direct supervision and participation because it allowed respondents to complete the survey at any time it would be convenient for them. Therefore, this\

1 also allowed for flexibility in terms of time to complete it, which was preferred by those busy or whose time availability was changing from time to time. In the structured format, it was easy to quantify responses and, therefore, assess them, thus allowing for more effective processing and analysis of the answers.

The questionnaires, according to Fife-Schaw, (2020), make it possible for the respondents to give their idea anonymously. This therefore enhances the data obtained to be objective and valid. Sex and anonymity increase honesty in response. This is because the respondents are not mixed up or intimidated by criticisms hence giving an actual response (Al-Mughni, 2005). Henceforth, this is important in exposing sensitive or private themes that might have been reserved if participants were to be observed. Since respondents in this research were free to express their views and experiences regarding entrepreneurship, anonymity most likely resulted in unbiased findings. Additionally, questionnaires are relatively inexpensive, hence appropriate for studies on a lean budget because they minimize the costs of development and administration.

By simply posting the URL to the questionnaire on several social media platforms, the researcher increased the accessibility of the survey (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). For instance, this could reach a significant sample of 105 female entrepreneurs and, therefore, yield a really massive database for research. Apart from users of email, distribution through social media allowed the survey to capture a wider audience of potential respondents who could not have been reached using more traditional methods (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). The researcher increased the chances of participation by engaging subjects in social media venues where they tended to congregate. A large sample size enhanced the data's representativeness, and as such, made the data trustworthy for more solid and widely generalizable results.

It is through questionnaires that one of the great advantages in research studies is realized, which are to be applied to a huge group of respondents. According to Fife-Schaw, this is elaborated by the fact that the questionnaires are effective since the participants can always respond with anonymity. It is the anonymity factor that helps in strengthening the reliability and validity of data since participants become honest while responding to the items. In this regard, assurance of confidentiality increases the likelihood of giving frank and honest answers to the questions posed, especially sensitive issues. This becomes an important factor in entrepreneurship where

female entrepreneurs in Kuwait may face pressure from society or biases that could affect responses in a more traditional, face-to-face interview setting.

Data collection should be anonymous to ensure that frankness in communication is fostered, hence making it easy for respondents to share personal experiences without fear of judgment or criticism. This is particularly important in a culture where discussing gender and entrepreneurship can be sensitive. For example, women entrepreneurs in Kuwait might not talk openly about the challenges they face due to certain cultural norms and expectations. The use of anonymous questionnaires alleviates this concern and can enable the participants to provide more correct and reflective responses. By minimizing the possibility of bias or fear of reprisal, anonymity enhances the prospect of obtaining honest, unfiltered data that strengthens the credibility of the findings of a study.

Besides, questionnaires are also considered as one of the most cost-effective research instruments, especially in studies with a limited budget. Unlike other techniques of data collection, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, questionnaires are relatively cheaper to design and execute. Fife-Schaw (2020) observes that a questionnaire is also cost-effective due to the consumption of less time in its distribution and collection. This is rather important in studies involving a considerable sample size since costs of data collection rise with an increase in the complexity of the method applied. The online platform used in this study made it easier for the researcher to get respondents efficiently, economizing on the research budget and hence making it practical for this study on female entrepreneurship in Kuwait.

One of the main strengths of the online questionnaire is that it can reach a wide audience. According to Azmat and Fujimoto (2016), social networking sites are an excellent channel for survey questionnaires to penetrate hard-to-reach participants who cannot be contacted through conventional channels of contact. Using the posting link on social media websites like WhatsApp, it was possible for the researcher to capture more significant numbers in a sample of female entrepreneurs based in Kuwait. This online approach increased the reach for the survey but also made sure that participants belonged to different industries, age groups, and educational backgrounds-a prerequisite for gaining a comprehensive insight into the challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

The ease of access through social media allowed participants to answer the survey questions at their convenience, hence increasing the chances of participation. It also differs from the traditional survey that requires respondents to spend their precious time with the researcher personally. The online survey could be answered anytime and anywhere, which is the most important thing, especially in the study that seeks to capture the voice of busy entrepreneurs. As Azmat and Fujimoto (2016) indicate, convenience in participation can stimulate response rates. By using social media, the researcher gained access to potential participants in spaces in which they were already participating, and thus increased the likelihood of involvement while also supporting a diverse and representative sample. Usage in regard to social media hereby helped the researcher target specific groupings of females-owning enterprises likely to be more involved in such a study. Many social media sites allow their users to join groups or communities of similar interests or professions. Here, the groups could include those whose focus is mainly around entrepreneurship, business, and women's empowerment. Through this approach, the researcher can interact directly with people who have a very high likelihood of possessing relevant experiences and insights, thus increasing the relevance of the data collected.

By focusing on online platforms, the research was able to reach participants that may not have responded otherwise, either to an email invitation or to the telephone survey. Another significant value addition that social media distribution brought to the study was the large sample size. The sample of 105 female entrepreneurs provided a good basis on which meaningful conclusions could be drawn regarding the factors influencing women's effectiveness in entrepreneurship in Kuwait.

Generally, the larger the sample size, the more representative data of those entities whose participation lies at the epicenter of their research and develops greater reliability over research findings," indicates Azam Roomi, Harrison, and Beaumont-Kerridge (2009). These premises present a large volume and variation for the sample through the wide capture that the study portrayed over numerous expressions linked to the perspectives of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. It has enhanced not only generalizability by increasing sample size but also, as a consequence of increased sample size, it made the test of interest substantially more powerful statistically. In the quantitative studies, the sample was larger and offered a close approximation to population parameters which further resulted in reduced a margin of error. This is especially important when researching a population as diverse as female entrepreneurs in Kuwait, where

different experiences might vary significantly in accord with age, industry, education, and socioeconomic background, among other influencing factors. In this respect, a robust sample size ensures that findings from the research are more apt to reflect a wide variety of experiences in general, rather than skewed findings from a minimal or unrepresentative sample. Social media further allowed the researcher to overcome the problem of geographical limitations and reach female entrepreneurs in different regions of Kuwait. In relation to this, conventional surveys may allow for only those participants reached within a specific geographic area, which results in biases since the sample would become unrepresentative of the population. Also, through the assistance of online survey tools and utilizing social media sites to participate in surveys, the respondents had been representative from different parts of Kuwait regions, which help researcher develop wide thinking of the challenge's faced. Therefore, allowing greater coverage of variance across the range of entrepreneurial perspectives will create findings that would apply widely within the country, the State of Kuwait. Online surveys allowed for more efficiency in the data collection process. Conventional processes involve face-to-face interviews and the use of paper questionnaires, where much of the researchers' time is consumed arranging the response in neat order. This will save them much time from writing information into databases because online survey responses can compile automatically into databases with reduced risk of human error. Because of this efficiency, the researcher could focus more on the analysis of data and meaningful insights rather than get bogged down with the logistical challenges of data collection. Despite the several advantages that exist for a web survey over other methodologies used in data collection, some disadvantages have been enumerated. For example, this may include non-entrepreneurs or people who do not fit the active criterion of business. This is a risk that the researcher minimized by cautiously developing the invitation to survey and the message of introduction so as to ensure that only relevant participants were included in this study. The researcher could also have used demographic filters or screening questions to further prune the sample and ensure that responses were coming from women who were actively engaged in entrepreneurial activities.

Although the online survey method allowed for the coverage of a very wide sample, it might have excluded some who are less comfortable with technology or social media. With increased access to smartphones and internet usage among females in Kuwait, though, this exclusion did not significantly affect the sample. Besides, since the survey focused on the usage of those social

media that women entrepreneurs predominantly use, one could make sure that the researcher's survey reached the relevant and interested target. Despite these possible limitations, the online survey and social media proved to be a very effective and efficient means of collecting data for this study. Therefore, questionnaires used for this study were an excellent practical, reasonably inexpensive, and efficient methods of data collection, especially as online surveys disseminated via social media. Because questionnaires allow anonymity, the information obtained was guaranteed to be frank and objective, which itself is a major component of comprehension-understanding the problems faced by female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. A large sample will enlarge the representativeness of the data and increase the generalizability of the findings. The power of social media and online survey tools has enabled the researcher to overcome many of the limitations associated with traditional survey methods and ensured that the study was comprehensive and reliable. Azmat & Fujimoto, 2016; Al-Mughni, 2005; Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009.

### 3.6.2. *Operationalization and measurement of Variables*

The measurement of the variables used in the study was done using the Likert Scale. This helped the participants in having a better view of the questions asked in the questionnaire and the way to answer them (Ivanov et al., 2018). Variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. The researcher used Arabic language to draft the questions for easy understanding and interpretation of the questions by the respondents. The data was then transferred and coded in SPSS for analysis. The independent variables were sociocultural aspects, self-confidence, economic factors, and women's education, while the dependent variable was female entrepreneurs' effectiveness (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

.1. The key variables in this study include:

Variable	Definition	Measurement
<b>Access to Funding</b>	Availability of financial resources	Likert Scale (1–5)
<b>Societal Expectations</b>	Influence of cultural norms and gender roles	Open-ended interview responses and thematic coding
<b>Legal Barriers</b>	Regulatory restrictions specific to women entrepreneurs	Structured survey questions



<b>Motivations</b>	Personal and economic drivers for entrepreneurship	Likert Scale and interview responses
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Since the study has used the Likert Scale for measuring characteristics, participants could understand the questions and gave more natural responses. "To give the participants a clear structured frame to give their opinions, in this study a 5-point Likert scale was used to quantify the response level from strong disagreement to strong agreement"(Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). This allowed the respondents to reflect on the complexities of the questions with the least perplexity. The questionnaire was prepared in Arabic because responders were likely to be native speakers, lest the language impediment would affect their responses. This deliberate use of an already-known language was for the purpose of minimizing misunderstandings and maximizing relevance and accuracy of response (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

Data was loaded into SPSS, which is a standard tool for statistical analysis, once the responses were collected (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Subjective emotions are turned into quantifiable data points as a result of arranging and quantifying the respective responses through participant response coding in SPSS. The reason this is an important procedure in research is because it allows the study to explore and examine the underpinning patterns and correlations within the data. Moreover, coding made the aggregation of data possible; therefore, it was easier for the researcher to identify the pattern in which responses occurred. Systematic treatment of data in SPSS increased the dependability of these variables; hence, scientifically sound results were considered for the study. All influences of each variable on the effectiveness of woman entrepreneur are examined and assessed in full with the help of coding (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

The independent variables tested were women's education, economic conditions, self-confidence, and sociocultural traits. They were chosen because they can affect the dependent variable, which is the efficiency of women entrepreneurs. The characteristics were measured as means of understanding how different factors hinder or help women in their efforts to become entrepreneurs (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Though self-confidence might be one of the important personal factors in resilience and decision-making, the sociocultural factors-for example-could influence whether or not society accepts or supports female entrepreneurship. Additionally, economic factors like financial availability and educational achievement might influence the ability and opportunity to engage in entrepreneurship for women (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama

2019). Aggregated together, all these provide an integrated understanding of those influencing the entrepreneurial performance of women.

These operationalized variables of the study used a 5-point Likert scale, an effective tool used throughout social science research in the measurement of attitude, perception, and opinions. It allowed the participants to clearly indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement with each particular statement. As Ivanov et al. (2018) pointed out, Likert scales ensure that the task of responding is not burdensome; thus, this instrument is unlikely to confuse the participants in their responses, provided the questions are well phrased and comply with the stated purpose of the study. The scale runs from strongly disagree to strongly agree; thus, the spectrum of respondents' sentiments can be clearly mapped out and qualitatively enriched.

The 5-point Likert scale proved to be quite efficient here in measuring the opinions, since test takers were given an opportunity to respond with a great degree of subtlety. As stated by Azmat and Fujimoto, a structured format for responses allows respondents to answer thoughtfully and clearly. This is further reiterated by the fact that the five options on the scale allowed the researcher to quantify subjective feelings that otherwise would be difficult to measure, thus making it easier to analyze patterns and correlations across different variables. The systematic nature of this approach has added rigor to the research design and enhanced the reliability of the responses.

Another important consideration for this research was the language used. Since the respondents were expected to be native Arabic speakers, the questionnaire was prepared in Arabic to ensure that the meaning was fully conveyed. According to Fuerlinger et al. (2015), the native language of the respondents should be used in order to avoid any misunderstanding and to ensure that the answers given will be appropriate and representative of the participants' opinions. Translation of questions into the local language eliminates any possible language barriers that could affect the data, hence giving a clearer picture of the variables under study and a higher degree of participant engagement.

Moreover, the use of Arabic allowed for cultural sensitivity in designing the survey. Different cultural contexts may shape how individuals understand and respond to certain questions, especially in a study that deals with sensitive topics like female entrepreneurship. The researcher, by using a language that speaks to the respondents, made sure cultural nuances were respected

for more meaningful and relevant responses. This was not only pragmatic but also a very ethical choice because it took into consideration the participants' language preferences and needs.

The data, though collected, needed to be transcribed into the SPSS analysis tool, the most common device used for data analysis. The SPSS aids in the fast handling of a large set of data points, thereby converting raw information into useful statistics. According to Fuerlinger et al. (2015), the employment of SPSS allows for systematic organization and quantification of subjective information, which has the effect of making patterns or trends within that dataset more perceivable. This is a very important step, as it has allowed for a proper investigation into how the independent variables-women's education, economic factors, sociocultural aspects, self-confidence-relate or influence the dependent variable in this case: the effectiveness of female entrepreneurs.

SPSS coding was very essential in changing the responses of the participants into quantifiable data to make the analysis feasible and accurate. Responses were given numerical codes representing points on the Likert scale to enable the researcher to proceed with the use of statistical techniques, such as regression analysis and correlation studies. The coding of responses was an important process in transforming subjective emotions and opinions into objective data that could then be analyzed systematically to arrive at meaningful conclusions. In essence, this quantification of data was a key component of the methodology of the study and helped bring about consistency throughout the analysis.

SPSS usage has not only allowed the aggregation of data but has also provided a chance for deeper analysis of the interaction between the different variables. The researcher was thus able to spot patterns, correlations, and possible causes that may not have been obvious through running statistical tests on the coded data. As would be expected, such analysis could show how either sociocultural variables or economic factors influence performance. This level of analysis is necessary to comprehend complicated dynamics that one witnesses and facilitates the process by which recommendations and strategies may be developed in favor of female entrepreneurship.

Among these independent variables tested in the experiment, women's education, economic conditions, self-confidence, and sociocultural characteristics were all selected for their perceived potentials in affecting the performance of female entrepreneurship. As suggested by Fuerlinger et al. (2015), the listed variables will help to explain diverse barriers and opportunities which

women face in pursuing entrepreneurship. For example, women's education would provide them with more knowledge and skills to engage in business ventures. Economic factors include access to capital and other forms of financial resources that will either make or break women from starting a venture and maintaining it. Self-confidence contributes to decision-making and resilience, while sociocultural factors include societal attitudes about female entrepreneurship, which can also empower or impede women in developing business opportunities.

The values of each independent variable were measured to show its contribution toward the dependent variable-female entrepreneurs' effectiveness. Conjoint analysis provided an insight into how education, economic conditions, self-confidence and socio-cultural factors contribute towards and influence challenges or supports for female entrepreneurs. In fact, argued by Ladge, Eddleston and Sugiyama, 2019, full understanding of such variables is helpful to identify strategies meant to effectively promote women entrepreneurs. The results of this study could therefore give practical advice on how to overcome obstacles and better promote women's entrepreneurship across a wide range of contexts.

In all, the operationalization and measurement of variables using a 5-point Likert scale in this study allowed clear, structured, and culturally sensitive data gathering. The use of SPSS during data analysis would enable the researcher to turn subjective responses into quantitative information, enabling the digging deep into variables leading to female entrepreneurship. The results of such analysis may provide a meaningful insight into how to support women entrepreneurs, thus contributing to their success and effectiveness in the business world.

Variable	Definition	Item	Item Question
Effectiveness	The effectiveness of female entrepreneurs was used to indicate the ability of women who own and manage businesses to achieve their desired business outcomes.	EFF1	How will you evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing and advertising campaigns in contributing to the growth of your business project?
		EFF2	How many times do you meet with a social network or group related to the same field as your business project?

		EFF3	Have you found that your professional network provides sufficient support and opportunities for your entrepreneurial endeavors?
Socio-cultural factors	The study the used social-cultural factor variable to indicate the influence of societal norms, traditions, cultural biases, family responsibilities, and gender stereotypes on one's decision to enter and persist in the entrepreneurial field, as well as the general social acceptance of women in leadership and business roles.	SOCUL1	Have societal norms, traditions, and cultural biases influenced your decision to enter and continue in the field of entrepreneurship?
		SOCUL2	How do you view the general social acceptance of women in leadership positions and entrepreneurship in Kuwait?
		SOCUL3	Family responsibility and your role as a woman. To what extent do you believe family responsibilities have affected your ability to focus on and grow your business?
		SOCUL4	Have you faced challenges or rejection from family members due to the conflict between your business project (entrepreneurial) and the socially accepted gender roles?
		SOCUL5	Gender biases and the stereotype of the businesswoman (mark each one). Have you faced gender-based bias or discrimination while running your business?
		SOCUL6	Do gender-related stereotypes about women's abilities affect how others view your business?

Self-Confidence	Self-confidence was used to proxy the belief in the women's abilities to successfully manage and grow their businesses, make informed decisions, overcome challenges, and continuously seek improvement and personal development.	CONF1	How do you assess your level of self-confidence in your entrepreneurial abilities?
		CONF2	Impact of self-confidence on entrepreneurial pursuit. Self-confidence affects my desire to continue as an entrepreneur with a business project.
		CONF3	Self-confidence affects the decision-making process in entrepreneurship
		CONF4	Overcoming challenges. I am confident in my ability to overcome challenges and obstacles in my entrepreneurial journey
		CONF5	Continuous improvement. How does your level of self-confidence affect your willingness to seek feedback and pursue personal development in your entrepreneurial endeavors?
Economic Factors	In the context of this study on the women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, economic factors encompass access to funding and resources, availability of financial credit, government initiatives and incentives, market dynamics and opportunities, economic	CARE1	Women entrepreneurs in Kuwait have access to funding opportunities and resources
		CARE2	Women entrepreneurs in Kuwait have easy access to financial credit to start businesses
		CARE3	The government has effective initiatives such as incentives and grants that encourage women to start and grow their businesses
		MAOPP1	To what extent do you believe market dynamics and demand affect the

	infrastructure support, and the impact of		success of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait?
	economic competition on business growth and sustainability.	MAOPP2	How do you assess the availability of market opportunities for women-owned businesses in Kuwait?
		ECOINF 1	I face challenges related to economic infrastructure while running my business.
		ECOINF 2	The economic infrastructure to support women entrepreneurs in Kuwait is reliable and helpful.
		ECOINF 3	I believe that economic competition affects the growth and sustainability of women-owned businesses in Kuwait.
Women Education	It represented the education level and how it influenced women's ability to participate in entrepreneurship in Kuwait market	EDL1	Educational level (academic qualification) of women. What is the highest academic qualification you have obtained?
		EDL2	my academic qualification and studies contributed to qualifying me to become a business woman and entrepreneur
		EDL3	Education affected my ability to recognize and seize economic growth
		EDL4	My skills and experiences in entrepreneurship and running my project were part of my academic studies
		EDL5	My academic qualification and certificates have an impact on

			investors and customer in considering my project as a trustworthy project
		EDL6	My educational qualification affects my self-confidence in making decision related to my business projects
		EDL7	Women with higher academic qualifications are more successful as entrepreneurs

### 3.7. Research Quality

The research study's findings can be affected by unexpected occurrences such as mistakes from the researcher or the respondents, which can negatively influence data analysis and the quality of the findings (Nardi, 2018). Uninterest to participate in the study, personal preferences, bias, experiences, and other external factors can limit the participants from freely participating in the data collection process of the study. The researcher can also make mistakes during the processing of the data collected from the respondents giving unreliable results. Therefore, reliability can be interpreted as the ability to interpret the research findings similarly or maintain consistency if the research's nature such as the research sample and timeframe are replicated (Saunders et al., 2009).

To ensure reliability, the researcher first asked the respondents the permission to participate in the study and used Arabic language to prevent the issues of language barriers and technical terms. This also helped the women entrepreneurs to answer questions in the questionnaires without confusion and misunderstandings. The researcher also ensured the respondents had enough time to answer and complete the survey (Al-Mughni, 2005). Using the monkey survey methods, it was easier for the respondents to save and submit the final and fully answered questionnaires. The results were downloaded in Excel form and transported to SPSS for analysis, then rechecked for any errors that might have occurred. All invalid answers were excluded before processing with the data analysis. The validity and reliability of the data collected were also tested using Cronbach's alpha test.



As a result, it would be highly advantageous to further dissect the concept of reliability in research studies by introducing some critical points on data collection and analysis. The authenticity of a study comes from its capability to give the same outcomes at different times and in comparable conditions (Al-Mughni, 2005). Compromised integrity of the findings can emerge due to researcher mistakes, or lack of understanding among the respondents in contexts that are unpredicted. These interferences may be as minor as an error of a key punch or as catastrophic as a methodological one which brings an extra dimension of noise into the study's results (Bryman & Bell 2011). For instance, if a researcher makes an input error or if the respondents misunderstand questions, it could lead to a number of inaccuracies and therefore, hitherto, have an impact on the validity of the research findings and can also define the areas in which research can then be applied (Nardi, 2018). As experts note such risks, there is understanding the ways of preventing and the need to be more careful, particular while series' collection.

A relative degree participation interest among respondents also influences data reliability. Making certain that people are paying attention and that they're interested can help reduce situations in which people don't answer fully or incorrectly (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Such situations may be due to their lack of interest in the issues being studied, irrelevance of those issues to the respondents' lives, or inadequate rewards for their participation. On the other hand, participants who are actively involved will give careful and candid answers and that makes the data to be more accurate (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). Nevertheless, the decision and motivation of the participants affect their responses meaning that external factors could distort the outcome of the study. To overcome this, the researcher may want to build some kind of fellowship with the respondents or choose those who feel a real-life concern with the issue under consideration, so that they are likely to provide genuine and truthful reactions.

Other aspects affecting reliability of research study include biasness of both the researchers and participants. There might be bias in form of hypothesis confirmation bias in which a researcher is likely to be selective in the data collected and analyzed the data that was closer to what he or she had hypothesized (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). Similarly, participants can come with their own thinking which can affect their answers and responses. As an example, a respondent's attitude, previous exposure or culture may influence how he or she answers chosen survey questions (Bryman & Bell 2011). Such biases are usually quite unconscious and can largely be prevented, although not always completely, by having a very conscious approach to the research

process such as the use of blinding or objective rating instruments. Consequently, the primary approach to mitigate the effects of both the researcher and the respondent mistakes is to ensure the latter are completely impartial.

Few researchers pay attention to data processing, another area that poses a risk for reliability in any study (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Dealing with data requires researchers to document the data, make pertinent annotations and arrange the data in a manner that preserves the data's authenticity. There are still tendencies to make errors in results in this phase because of improper software interpretation and mistakes connected with data handling. For instance, placing a particular instance in the wrong bin can cause misleading conclusions to be made, which makes the study inefficient. In response to this, most scholars employ double-checking systems or else they use sophisticated software with features that incorporate validation. Computation also decreases the probability of human mistakes, and makes the strategies and consequent observations more objective, thus supports the credibility of the study.

The reliability in research refers to the degree of homogeneity attained for any research parameters like sample size and period of study, in terms of study outcomes. Saunders et al (2009) notes that reliability is clear once data is collected in a manner that it can be repeated under similar circumstances testifying to the dependability of the method. This reproducibility is important in research since it means that what has been found is not just due to some random chance but is anchored on what ought to be a reliable, dependable method (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Such consistency is not easy to accomplish and needs Efficiency, Neutrality and Uncompromising Methods of Data & Information assessment and analysis. Thereby, when these criteria are accomplished, these findings can be well and truly interpreted and applied by the researchers, as they are qualitative and credible. In this sense it is seen as a fundamental part of good research practice, a value in maintaining constant technique and alertness to the responsibility in dealing with the data.

### 3.8. Data Analysis

- Qualitative data will be analyzed using **thematic analysis** to identify patterns and themes. Coding will be performed using software such as NVivo.

- Quantitative data will be analyzed using **descriptive statistics** (mean, standard deviation) and **inferential statistics** (correlation, regression analysis) to identify relationships between variables.

The purpose of this study was to determine factors influencing female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in Kuwait in the current competitive business arena (Al-Mughni, 2005). To serve the purpose of the study, the study used self-confidence, social-cultural factors, economic factors, and women's education level as independent variables, while effectiveness was used as dependent variable (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Based on the nature of the study, quantitative, the study used quantitative research methods including descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses. Descriptive analysis was used to give a general description of the data collected for the study where means, range, minimum, and maximum were used (Bryman & Bell 2011).. Correlation analysis was used to find the direction and strength of the relationship between variables, while regression analysis was used to test or causal relationship between the independent variables and dependent variables (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

While designing this study, the choice of self-confidence, sociocultural factors, economic factors, and women education as the independent variables offered a broad perspective of all the factors' impacts on women entrepreneurs. When categorising these factors, the study will be able to look at each area as it affects female entrepreneurs distinctly in Kuwait to get a better picture of effectiveness in a competitive business environment Bryman and Bell (2011). This approach had the merit of ruling out certain variables so as to understand in greater detail what factors most impact entrepreneurial success and, therefore, which aspects are most helpful or detrimental to the entrepreneurship of women in Kuwait.

In this study the quantitative research methods used were chosen for their effectiveness in measuring and using objective data (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Descriptive analysis was instrumental by giving an initial preview of the data collected, which was critical in understanding the sample and capturing directions in the respective participant demographics and trends. Mean, range, minimum and maximum values gave information on data distribution creating a good ground for other analytical procedures. Characterization statistics allowed the detection of first tendencies, which were then subjected to correlation and regression investigations.

Correlation analysis enabled the study to determine relationship coefficients that would indicate the level of intimacy between the independent variables and the level of success of the female entrepreneurs in Kuwait (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). With this analysis, it was possible to determine which of the following had a stronger correlation with entrepreneurial effectiveness: self-confidence, sociocultural factors, economic factors, or education background. For this reason, the study could give direction into which factors could be considered for amplification with regards to support of female entrepreneurs and presumably, areas that could be targeted with a desire to boost business results.

This article also advanced the research through the use of regression analysis to examine causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This technique enabled the researcher to move a notch above simple correlation and determined if the identified independent variables could serve as predictors of the outcomes of female entrepreneurs (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Regression analysis was especially useful in demonstrating an interaction between self-confidence, economic environment, culture and education on business outcomes, allowing for a comparative and proactive analysis of the aspects influencing the efficiency of an entrepreneurial venture.

Combined, these methods gave the study the kind of analysis system that was capable of supporting its conclusions. Using descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses provided a qualitative as well as a quantitative paradigm that provided insight into the study of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait (Bryman & Bell 2011). The logical and sequential investigation of associations and causation enabled elaborate findings that will be pertinent for shaping policies, intercessions, and approaches to encourage female entrepreneurship in the region.

### **3.9. Research Ethics**

The importance of ethical research practices is that the rights and principles of the participants are well obliged. Bryman and Bell (2011) posit that upholding ethical research practices prevents malignity to harm others and the benevolence of the research. This ensures that participants of the research are fully aware of the purpose of the study, the handling of the data they provide, and the analysis attributed to the data (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Besides, they are assured of no leakage of personal information and false usage purposes. Therefore, the researcher sent the link

for survey to the only to the willing individuals along with a brief introduction to understand the general idea of the study.

Additionally, the researcher requested prior consent and protected the respondent's privacy after data collection, and no personal information that would disclose the identity of the participant was asked in the survey. These ensured that the personal information of the participants is used for academic purposes only and kept confidential, are provided with the anonymity right, provided participants with the anonymity right.

The consent of participants before the collection of data on individual levels, which has been considered a very important procedure in conducting ethics in research, showcased the concerns for ethicality by the researcher. In this consent process, procedures are taken to make sure that participants are aware of the goals, their rights, and the nature of involvement that would be entailed in the study (Bryman & Bell 2011). The researcher took care to enable openness and respect for participant autonomy by clearly outlining the aims and boundaries of the study, hence allowing them to make an informed decision about their involvement (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). Besides following ethical approval, this approach serves to instill confidence in participants and researchers alike, boosting the quality and validity of data gathered.

One of the ethical considerations in this research was ensuring the protection of participants' privacy during the actual process of research (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). No information regarding identification was requested, which diminished the possibility of some hacking into any personal data or misuse by the researcher. Such protection of privacy is highly needed in research dealing with sensitive topics or vulnerable groups so as to ensure that personal information of the respondents will never be put at risk (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). While an emphasis on secrecy strengthens the credibility and ethical standing of a study, it also recognizes the respect that its participants set for boundaries-a researcher equally places emphasis on ethical data management.

Moreover, the anonymization principle ensured that the participants' identities were unknown, even to the researcher (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). This means that no identifying data about the participant was gathered except as it pertained to demographic and other data relevant to the purpose of the study. In this way, respondents are protected from potential stigma or biases and are ensured that responses given are forthcoming, unvarnished by fears of being identified

(Ramandani et al., 2012). Anonymity would provide the sense that people are going to be more apt to speak their minds, knowing their privacy isn't being invaded. In other words, anonymity actually would encourage honest participation and produce data that's both representative and valid.

Ethical research practices ensure that the rights, dignity, and privacy of the respondents are put first and form a basis for trust and mutual respect. As Bryman and Bell (2011) assert, observing ethical guidelines while conducting research not only avoids harm but also maintains the principle of beneficence of the research. This is especially the case since the participants should be informed about the purpose of the study, data handling procedures, and the contribution they make with regard to its usage. By informing the subjects of such knowledge, the researchers ensure a comfortable environment to the participants for contribution without feeling their private data is manipulated or confidentiality is breached.

Another important ethical consideration at the start of the research, participants were asked for informed consent before the actual collection. He sent links to surveys only to those that showed interest in participating in his study; thus, this shows respect for autonomy. A short introduction of the study, together with a link to the survey, was attached for familiarization purposes. This informed approach allowed participants to make a deliberated and conscious choice to engage in the study, reflecting ethical standards and respect for individual autonomy highlighted by Fuerlinger et al. (2015). He also shielded the participants' privacy by not collecting personal identifiers. Such a guarantee of anonymity created in the respondents the feeling of security, knowing that their identity could not be disclosed or used for other purposes. Protection of privacy is important in sensitive research topics and among vulnerable populations, since this minimizes risks of exploitation or harm. The research did not contain any trace of identification, hence steering away from those situations that lead to breaches of confidentiality, harming participants from some unforeseen outcomes, hence promoting a trustful and open environment.

Ethical considerations also went beyond issues of anonymity to include transparency and clarity about the purpose and processes of the study. Informed consent was ensured, with participants clearly explained about the aims of the research and their entitlements, making sure they understand the nature of their participation. Such openness in communication, as noted by Bryman and Bell (2011), creates respect for participant autonomy and hence promotes

participant self-determination. This practice also signals respect by the researcher for ethical standards that enhance the study's credibility and legitimacy.

Anonymity gives participants the most important motivation to be as honest and unbiased as possible. Fuerlinger et al. (2015) remark that ensuring participants that their identity is unknown even to the researcher increases the likeliness that answers will be candid and truthful. This guarantee removes fears of judgment, stigma, or repercussions that could otherwise distort the data. In this case, the research guaranteed anonymity to ensure participants' protection and thus achieved validity and reliability in the data collected.

Another ethical consideration was the protection of participants' data during and after the research process. Following the principles of secure data management, the researcher minimized the risk of hacking or unauthorized access. Such measures are particularly important in research with sensitive information, as they prevent harm to participants and maintain the integrity of the study. In this respect, Azam Roomi, Harrison, and Beaumont-Kerridge (2009) argue that such practices indicate the ethical responsibility of a researcher to protect the wellbeing of the participants and ensure that the trust of the latter is upheld during the research process.

Anonymization of data further enhanced the ethical standing of the research. The researcher collected only demographic data and information that was not identifiable, hence maintaining the privacy of the respondents. Such a method shields the respondents from any potential biases, stigma, or other consequences if their identities were to be revealed. Furthermore, this method of anonymization promotes the expression of opinions among the participants with freedom, hence making the data more authentic and representative, as highlighted by Ramandani et al. (2012).

Informed consent is not only a procedural step, but it's a cornerstone in the ethics of research. The effort on the part of the researcher to get prior consent showed respect for the rights and autonomy of the participants. He clearly outlined the objectives of the study, practices regarding data handling, and the requirements for participation, thus setting up a relationship with the participants based on transparency and respect. It also reassured the participants that their contributions would be valued and managed in an ethical manner, thus boosting their confidence in the research process.

The protection of ethical considerations is important, not only to protect participants but also to ensure the credibility and validity of the research study itself. A study may be compromised in

integrity and its findings through an ethical breach-such as through the misuse of data or lack of transparency. Conversely, if researchers emphasize ethical principles, they provide a sound foundation of trust, which is so important to get honest, reliable data. This trust is even more necessary when the researcher conducts studies which require sensitive or personal themes and where a person may become in a 'delicate' position.

Therefore, these ethical practices taken up in the research demonstrate profound commitment to participants' rights, privacy, and wellbeing. From informed consent to anonymity, to data security, the researcher went to exhaustive extents to protect the participants and the integrity of the research. Besides establishing an atmosphere of confidence and candor, such practices promote validity and credibility in research results. As Bryman and Bell (2011) pointed out, ethical research practice is an important part of producing meaningful and impactful results while respecting the dignity and autonomy of all participants.



## 4. DATA ANALYSIS

### 4.1. Demographic Statistics

This part provides a general description of the participants who participated in this study. After data cleaning and coding, only 100 questionnaires were fully answered.

Figure 1Age

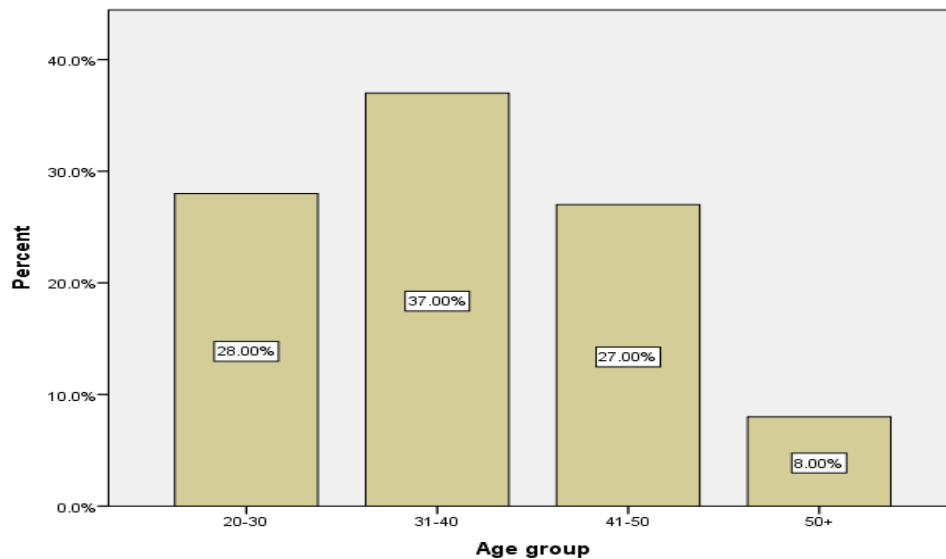


Figure 1 indicates that most of the respondents in this study were between 31 and 40 years old (37%), 28% were 20 to 30 years old, 27% of the respondents were 41-50, and 8% were above 50 years old.

The distribution of respondents by age is as follows: most of the respondents are aged 31-40 years as indicated in Figure 1; this may indicate that a large number of women are mainly involved in business during their mid-career prime (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). This maybe so because, for instance, experience, financial capacity and professional connections that are important ingredients in enterprise formation normally improve with time. The age range of 20–30, the largest in this sampling, with 28%, shows that Generation Y and young people with experience in their occupation aspire to create their businesses in search of freedom, income, and improvement. The last group of respondents is the 27% of the participants aged between 41 and 50 years old; these individuals are most likely to have gained wealthy experience through their career to bring it into managing businesses. 8% over 50 validates that it is not too late to be an entrepreneur and compete for big contracts that young starters lack sufficient experience to compete for (Bryman & Bell 2011). In-interval gender-

breaking agglutinant reveals the range of the motives, problems, and strategies in the story of individual entrepreneurship of women of Kuwait.

Figure 1 illustrates the age distribution of respondents and forms a very important insight into the entrepreneurial landscape among women in Kuwait. The 31-40 age bracket includes the highest number of respondents at 37% of the total. This indicates that most of the women start their entrepreneurial journey during the middle of their career, when they have gathered ample experience, have financial stability, and professional networks. This is usually the age bracket in which women are at a stage in life when they have the means and confidence to take calculated risks that enable them to establish and grow their businesses. This trend illustrates the importance of mid-career stages in fostering entrepreneurial activity.

The second-largest group is that of the female age category from 20 to 30 years, which takes 28%. This younger demographic represents the rising wave of Generation Y entrepreneurs who are driven by aspirations for independence, innovation, and financial freedom. A good number of these women must have gained initial industry experience and would now be willing to channel their energy and creativity into entrepreneurial pursuits. Their involvement also underlines a need for the development of young entrepreneurs through mentorship, funding opportunities, and training programs, since this group holds the key to innovation and economic growth.

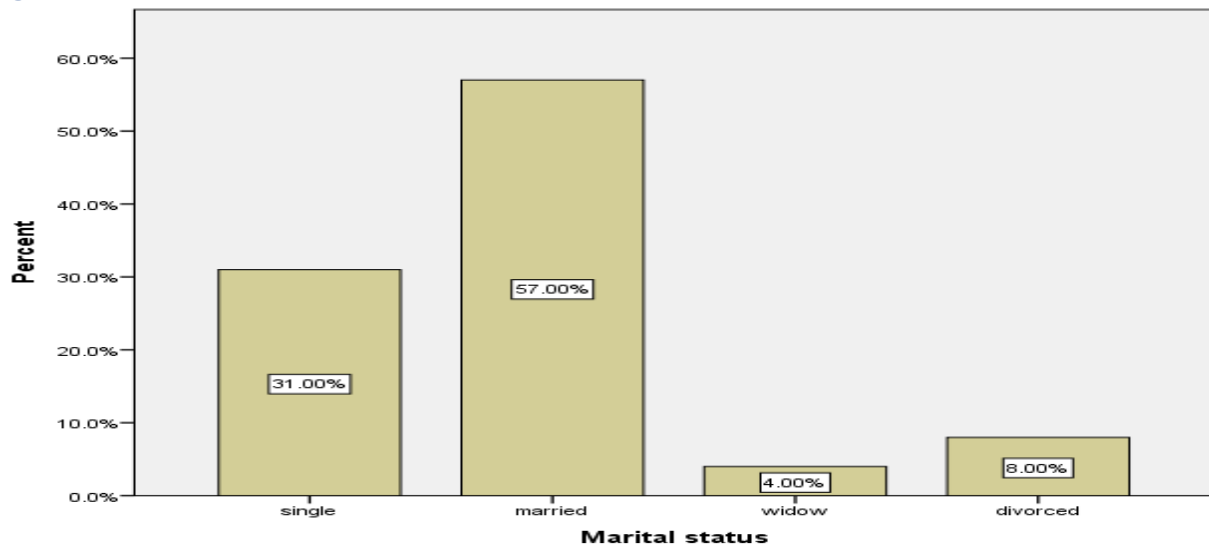
27% of the respondents are women aged between 41 and 50 years, indicating a significant presence of mature entrepreneurs. This group is likely to have wide experience in their professional fields and hence much to contribute to their businesses. These women are more apt to create sustainable enterprises utilizing their knowledge base and preexisting networks.

Through entrepreneurship, this group shows how the accumulation of experience over time in many cases evolves into successful businesses and how often those businesses provide both stability and dependability to the entrepreneurial economy.

The smallest group, making up 8% of respondents aged 50 and above, is indicative of the inclusiveness of entrepreneurship across age groups. This group of women entrepreneurs proves that it's never too late to start a business, with many of them coming with unique perspectives and years of experience. Many of these entrepreneurs might also focus on niche markets or use their expertise to solve particular problems in their respective industries. Their success has been an inspiration to older persons who may have in mind to start their own entrepreneurial ventures,

as well as the need for creating opportunities at all ages. This would also mean that different age groups among women entrepreneurs in Kuwait may have different motivational factors and challenges. For instance, the younger entrepreneur may emphasize innovation and agility, while a woman in her mid-career may put strong emphasis on network use and experience. At the same time, an older entrepreneur generally offers more stability and experience. Knowing the difference is key to framing appropriate support mechanisms and policies for addressing different needs for each specific age group. In all, the age brackets for female entrepreneurs in Kuwait, as identified from Figure 1, define the vibrant character of the entrepreneurship environment: from the young, bright innovator to the mature and seasoned professional. Resources, training, and opportunities must be available for women of all ages, say the policymakers and stakeholders, in order to actively contribute to the economic growth and development of Kuwait. In this way, the entrepreneurial sector will keep on growing and developing by being all-inclusive for all age groups.

Figure 2 Marital Status



From Figure 2, it is clear that 57% of the total participants were married women, 31% were single, 8% were divorced, and 4% were widows.

Married status distribution in figure 2 clearly depicts that majority of women entrepreneurs in this study were married (57%) indicating that women entrepreneurs have family responsibilities apart from business. This could be for purpose of wanting to be financially independent as well as have the desire to become an income earner within the household (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Self-

employment may also be good for married women entrepreneurs for the following reasons: Family support may be an additional source of capital, moral support and a bedrock upon which to assume risks inherent in entrepreneurship (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Family responsibilities might have an impact on business actions and pursuits, which might be to guarantee sustainable organization growth, and stability in work-life balance challenges.

31% of the participants were single women suggesting a significant proportion of the business owners were single and solely concentrating on business growth without having children to take care of in the house. This demographic could afford to be more risky, more aggressive in business expansion or spend more time on their businesses. And while less than a tenth of all respondents reported being divorced (8%) or widowed (4%), indicates women who could become entrepreneurs due to circumstances such as divorce, or as a way to reconstruct their lives upon the loss of a spouse. These different marital experiences demonstrate the various reasons that push women into business ownership; entrepreneurship motivation, difficulties, and constraints as influenced by their marital history.

The marital status distribution from the Figure 2 shown below reveals that 57% of the participant women were married. This goes a long way to show that many of the women entrepreneurs are bearing the dual responsibilities of family and business. For most people the desire to embark on entrepreneurship may be prompted by the need to generate an income and add on the family's income. Self-employment could also be considered less suitable to marriage, or even desirable based on the family model that married women choose to have. Family support can be considered as additional factor which motivates one undertakes and also offers financial support and relieved work shares which are vital components of entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial women who are married are always exposed to certain difficulties due to conflict between family and work. The responsibility of fixing house chores put pressure on the individual's capacity to effectively run the business. However, family support can also help married woman to make calculated risk and gain long term business growth. For instance, the business may be receiving moral support, financial support or even operational from the family members or even the spouse. All these make married women entrepreneurs as an essential category of population that is a crossover of family and entrepreneurship.

The 31% of single women in the study make another important category of entrepreneurs as well. Since single women may not have family issues which may take most of their time then single women may focus much on their businesses. This demographic is more likely to bear more risks in their business; invest in the growth of the business as well as in their careers. The women entrepreneurs may also be driven by personal gains or desire to pursue a career or generate income, or the desire to create unique careers in the respective fields. The examples given here show how women are involved in entrepreneurship and why many of them engage in business.

Here the 8% of women entrepreneurs who were divorced and only 4% that were widowed describe how individual events can affect business operations. For the many divorced women, business could provide the means of regaining the financial and assertiveness that was lost with a divorce. On the same note widowed women may engage in business to be in a position to support themselves and their families in case of losses incurred within the business. Their business ventures are true indicatives of how women can overcome personal adversities.

Likewise the marital status information reveals the nature and potentiality of the problems and prospects that the women entrepreneurs come across based on their different life phases.

Whereas, the married women might face conflicts between work and family, the single women may be pulled by cultural or Discrimination from the male dominated organizations. Married women suffer related to finance but are also more initiative in business compared to unmarried women. I have already mentioned that awareness of these subtleties is necessary because it forms a prerequisite for determining the right key activities that refer to the organisation of marital background-sensitive and targeted framework conditions for female self-employment.

Overall, the marital status distribution presented in Figure 2 demonstrates that women entrepreneurship in Kuwait is not a mere decision, but mustered and connected with several barriers. William, it does not matter what pushes them, whether it is family issues or desire whether forced or not these women are central to the entrepreneurial value chain. The identified diverse categories of policy makers, advisors and stakeholders should relate with these groups and offer them items of needs such as flexible funding, business linkages and capacity building. If this country tried to look into the challenges that married single divorced and widowed women

entrepreneurs come across in Kuwait this could go along way to empower women who are into business thereby making the environment favorable for any would be entrepreneur.

Figure 3 How many years have you spent on your own project?

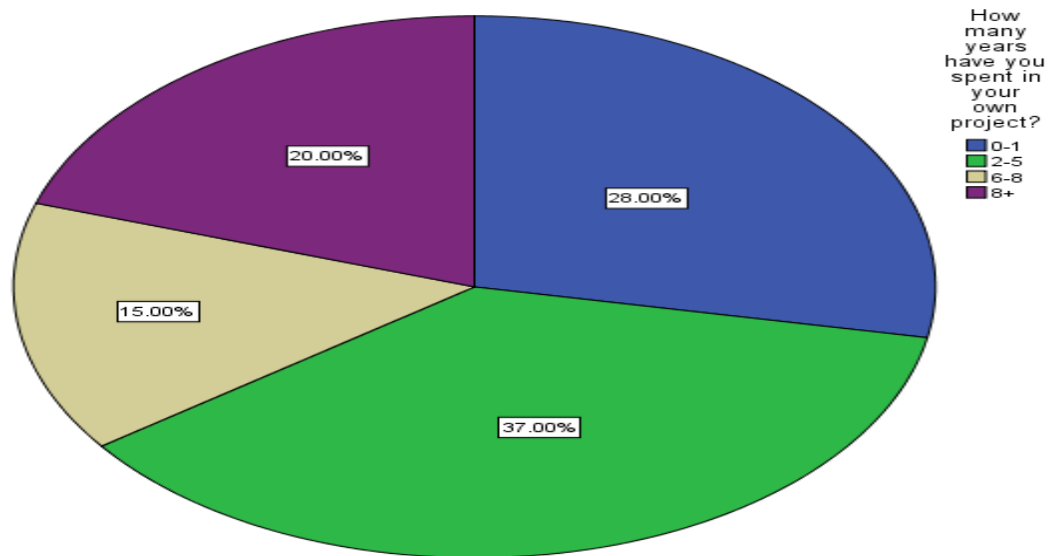


Figure 3 shows that 37% of the women who participated in the study had spent 2 to 5 years in their projects, 28% had spent one year and below, 20% had spent more than 8 years, and 15% had spent six years to eight years. Figure 3 indicates that the entrepreneurial experience varies widely among women participants in this study. Specifically, 37% of these women have two to five years of experience working with their companies. This medium level of experience would suggest that numerous business owners are developing procedures and possibly expanding their businesses. Whereas the 28% of participants who have been active for a year or less are young business owners, still fighting their initial challenges. In contrast, the 20% with more than eight years of experience, in concert with the 15% with six to eight years, signal continuity and a dedicated segment which, in all likelihood, contributes a good deal of expertise and stability to Kuwait's entrepreneurial scene.

The details as reflected on Figure 3 are point out the variability of entrepreneurial experience of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. A third, 37% have been in business for 2-5 years signaling a potentially important period where business owners are starting to develop and expand business operation. During this period it enables the business people to polish their business strategies and build strengths in their marketplace and solve operational issues. This group consists of a strong

movement of the female participants driven by the contemporary development of women entrepreneurship in Kuwait. It also has become clear within their experience that they are developing personal and organizational awareness and coping mechanisms to manage the dynamics of starting and operating a business in today's environment.

28% of the participants have been in business for one year and below and therefore, they fall under the growing category of women in business. Such people can be still at the initial level where they are still struggling to come up with policies, relations, and initial challenges. Many signify this stage by high levels of energy and ideas as they try out their new ideas as well as the market forces. Nevertheless, it is time of weakness, when members of these communities need other people's help for their continued existence and development, in particular, mentoring and resources. Its presence calls for the formulation of good policies that enhance the spirit of entrepreneurship among female Kuwaitis.

The same data reveals that 20 per cent of women in business have been in operation for over eight years. This group comprises of experienced business persons, who have already mastered the challenges of being able to sustain a business for a long time. Their long leadership positions betray their resilience to remain relevant in the market having survived several risks and trends. These sophisticated business owners most probably exert a large influence on helping and encouraging other novices, it is therefore, helping in the spreading and recognition of knowledge and technique within the business arena. This paper argues that successful success stories of such individuals can help motivate other aspiring entrepreneurs, and help bring into focus women and their businesses in Kuwait.

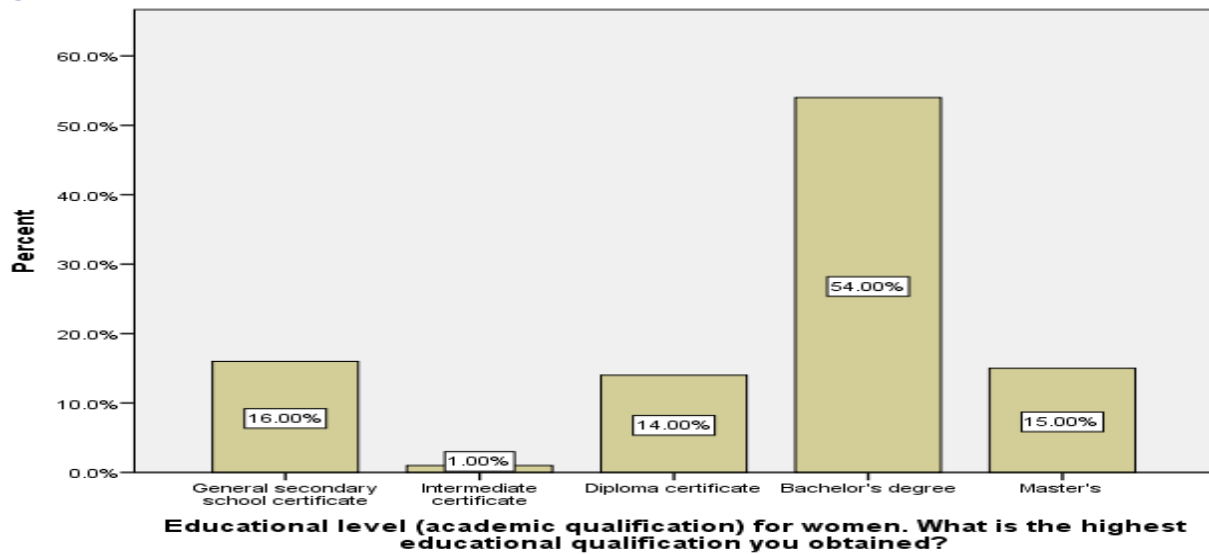
The remaining 15% of the participants with six to eight years of experience also support the diversification of entrepreneurial experience in Kuwait. This group may be in the maturity phase where the main strategic direction is the continuity and the search for additional development possibilities. They may have stable customer networks, and social networks, capable of delivering products on time and having efficient operations. Some of them might be significant operations that add to the economic base through the delivery of employment and possibly harboring of innovation. Knowledge of their difficulties and achievements can uncover insight into the factors that promote sustainable business development among Kuwait's female proprietors.

The differences in entrepreneurial experience of the participants described in this study are a result of the dynamic Kuwaiti entrepreneurial environment. It showed how women entrepreneurs at different levels of the business lifecycle experience different issues and potentially have different opportunities they could capitalise on, which supports the idea for women to have unique support structures. For instance, while new entrants may require seed capital, business development trainings, and business incubation services; experienced entrepreneurs may require export development services, methods of expanding to global markets, and value addition services from innovation hubs. This article looks into the various needs that require to be identified and met in order to promote the development of an entrepreneurial culture in Kuwait.

Lastly, the observations from figure 3 also support the need to foster entrepreneurial culture inclusively at every level of experience. Governments, industry, and consumers have a role they need to play in order to come up with policies that will allow women at these stages of business. This could have included possible scholarships, seminars in specific area of spoor, or internships to the targeted companies. In this way, considering the peculiarities of Kuwait and women entrepreneurs' inactivity, it is possible to highlight the moments that will contribute to further development of business that will create new jobs, introduce innovations, and bring positive changes to the country. I have collected various experiences in the present study that clearly demonstrate that women entrepreneurs are determined, persistent and unique, and therefore they are significant for Kuwait's economy.



Figure 4 Education Level



From Figure 4, it is clear that 83% of the women entrepreneurs who participated in this study had higher education certificates with 54% having bachelor's degrees, 15% having Master's degrees, and 14% having diploma certificates. However, 16% had a general secondary certificate, while 1% had an intermediate certificate. This indicates that most women entrepreneurs in Kuwait are educated.

Figure 4: Level of Education Figure 4 illustrates that a very solid educational background within the number of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait; therefore, one may assume that there is a strong correlation between the highest level of educational attainment and engagement within entrepreneurship activities (Bryman & Bell 2011). Since the majority of the females have advanced degrees, they could potentially hold vital knowledge and capabilities to help them overcome certain difficulties within managing a firm. A high percentage of females with bachelor's and master's degrees shows that more females seek advanced education to improve their professional and business skills (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). The educational experience could introduce resilience, strategic thinking, and creativity in them and make them potential contributors to the economic development in Kuwait.

The data from Figure 4 shows that Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs possess higher education certificates: 54% of them have bachelor degrees, 15% master, and 14% diploma certification. This trend indicates that education is an important factor in their entrepreneurial process, as well as source of knowledge and competencies to cope with business adversities. In its turn, higher

education prepares entrepreneurs to interact with the ideas like the management of finances, market evaluation, and product invention. This foundation might help to understand why More educated women in Kuwait are actively involved in the entrepreneurial activities since they are more equipped to grasp market opportunities.

Education and entrepreneurship have been studies together in several writings in the literature. Education will increase intelligence levels, creativity and overall decision making which is vital in entrepreneurial pursuits. Female business owners who graduated college and have a graduate degree tend to document a better formal approach in their business planning and implementation from the strategic to the tactical level. Besides, education makes people familiar with different networks and ideas, which can encourage entrepreneurship and joint cooperation. In this context, the mentioned connection shows the need for increasing the availability of qualitative educations focused on women, entrepreneurship in Kuwait.

Education also creates tenacity as is importance when overcoming adversity that is inherent in entrepreneurship. Since education raises problem-solving skills, it is also more likely that women entrepreneurs with advanced degrees demonstrate a higher level of flexibility in addressing current trends, such as fluctuations in customer demand, global economic crises, or sectoral changes. It let them to build strategies which minimize possible negative effects and maximize the existing positive effects. Of course, this resilience is not only helpful to the individual companies but also to Kuwait's overall economy and the future progress of the key players in the nation's entrepreneurial scene.

Furthermore it is seen that many women are educated the social culture has also changed in such a way that women should education in order to get success in their life. The sponsorship of education by women entrepreneurs leads to improved education and accomplishment indicating their readiness to perform well in their chosen areas of operation. This trend may encourage the generations of women to be more determined to gain university education and businessmen for the purpose of acquiring business mindedness for the improvement of women opportunities in Kuwait employment and business market. This is in consonance with Intergovernmental reluctance to gender preferences, in a bid to properly empower women economically.

More on the extensive analysis of Kuwait, it was identified that the area of entrepreneurship might also benefit from more specific programs that would take into account the educational profile of women entrepreneurs. For example, a few of the activities that could tap the potentials of formally educated women include, the programs in mentorship, business incubation, and advanced training workshops capable of filling perceived or real education deficits. Authorities and consumers could possibly work alongside educational facilities to develop programs which bring entrepreneurial studies into curricula and equip women with tangible knowledge and understanding to thrive in business. Programs of such nature would enhance transference between academic content and practical application.

The analysis indicates that the Kuwaiti's women entrepreneurs have a great prospect of being factor for economic development of the country. It also makes them stand as competent business leaders and as role models among the generation of entrepreneurs who wish to pursue business education. Failure to support educated women into entrepreneurship in Kuwait is a lost opportunity for the Kuwait's economy and society to gain significantly. They include innovation, employment generation, and improved global competition respectively. As more women invest in their education to walk into entrepreneurship, Kuwait's economy has been set in a position to diversification and more future sustainable investment.

**Table 1 Growth and Performance Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
What is your degree of satisfaction with the financial performance and growth of your business compared to the previous year?	100	1.00	10.00	5.0300	2.67595
Valid N (listwise)	100				

Table 1 indicates that the mean of the degree of satisfaction with the financial performance and growth of the business compared to the previous year among the participants was 5.0588, and a standard deviation of 2.655816. This indicates that participants of the study felt that their

businesses had similar performance in terms of satisfaction with the financial performance and growth of their businesses in the previous year and the year of study (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

Mean satisfaction score was 5.03 which indicates that the participants perceives their satisfaction with business growth and financial performance as moderate, given the scale used that was 1–10. Perhaps this midpoint rating indicates participants' neutrality among the sample, some of whom may be satisfied with their current state of affairs and others of whom may struggle to achieve greater levels of financial development (Ramandani et al., 2012). Meaning that the level of satisfaction varies from participant to another as indicated by the wide standard deviation of 2.68. This variation can be interpreted as meaning that although some of the business owners considered the conditions for their business to have improved, others had problems with continued or increasing growth (Shastri et al., 2019).

This variation may be due to differences in economic environment the companies are in, the type of industries that they belong to or specific business plans they employ. Companies might have had different level of market pressure, resource availability or limitations, which affected their satisfaction levels regarding growth results (Ramandani et al., 2012). Further, other external influences such as the market forces, the government regulations, and competition may have influenced self-organised perceptions of performance. Such a variability of the satisfaction score indicates the variability of experience of female entrepreneurs and, therefore, the necessity to consider these factors for identification of challenges and opportunities more detailed to discover the major reasons behind performance perception (Bryman & Bell 2011).

Mean value of 5.03 and SD value of 2.676 indicate the moderate perception of Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs about the financial performance and growth of their ventures. That is why it can be stated that although some participants could be satisfied with the financial results, others had some problems which influenced their satisfaction. External concerns might include market factors, organizational complications and lack of funds could be some of the reasons behind such difference. By answering these concerns with personalized aware support programs, for example, financial-, and strategy-concerned workshops, total satisfaction and overall optimistic perceptions of business results could be enhanced.

The quite extensive range from 1.00 to 10.00 illustrates the variability of women, entrepreneurs' outcome perceptions in terms of financial performance and growth. This could partly be as a result of the difference in the industry sectors, resource endowment and entrepreneurial experience. For example, there can be significant problems of reaching satisfactory growth among businessmen in more hard- or lower-paid niches. This data can be highly informative for policymakers and stakeholders to create more targeted sector level initiatives because the challenges of women are not the same in all sectors and they face inequality in support by wherein some sectors they are over supported and some sectors they are under supported which is not fair or healthy for a balanced entrepreneurial environment.

Also, the studies indicate that, comparisons on the business performance and satisfaction should be done year by year. Such comparative score means that there was no progressive change in the satisfaction levels from the previous year to the year of the study for many participants. This may require calls for proactive strategic modifications such as identifying new market opportunities, developing new income generating models or employing technological applications to improve performance competitiveness. Orientation programs for enhancing the knowledge of the existence of such strategies, as well as the mentoring programs could help the entrepreneurs in the identification of these strategies towards the attainment of a sustainable growth.

The results of this study also imply the potential advantages of collecting and analysing denominators in addition to quantitative proxies such as satisfaction scores. Perhaps, knowing why participants are satisfied or dissatisfied could offer further insight into factors that might breed or hinder growth. Possibly, subsequent interviews or focus groups might provide practical recommendations, e.g., problems of obtaining funds/information or the effects of economic regulations or policies on businesses, for trying to improve efficiency.

Finally, these results provide the essential signal to constantly track the business development and satisfaction dynamics. This way, entrepreneurs not only get objective data that can be used identify trends and combat challenges, but also establish a healthy pace of metrics evaluation. Likewise, such findings can be of help to stakeholders, including government agencies and business associations, to monitor the outcomes of support initiatives and any modifications when necessary. Such efforts would go a long way in enhancing the conditions, climate and support for

women entrepreneurs in Kuwait and subsequently enhance satisfaction levels and long-term efficiency outcomes for the business.

#### 4.2. Descriptive Analysis

##### *Dependent Variable*

##### .2. Table 2 Growth and Performance

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
GRTHPER2	100	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.2800	1.26395
GRTHPER3	100	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.5100	.96917
GRTHPER4	100	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.2800	1.23975
GRTHPER5	100	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.4000	1.10096
GRTHPER6	100	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.9300	1.11242
Valid N (listwise)	100					

Table 2 shows that the financial returns of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait's commercial project were not favorable represented by the small mean value of 2.28 and standard deviation of 1.26395. This shows that most women entrepreneurs who participated in this study indicated that their businesses recorded low levels of financial returns in the last three years. The mean of the number of employees involved in running women entrepreneurs' businesses in Kuwait was 1.51, with and standard deviation of .96917, indicating that there were few employees involved in running their businesses. Besides, the table indicates that women entrepreneurs indicated that their marketing and advertising campaigns were effective in contributing to the growth of their business, represented by the higher mean value of 3.28, and a standard deviation of 1.23975. The mean of the women entrepreneurs in meeting a social network or group related to the same field as their businesses was 2.4, and a standard deviation of 1.10096, indicating that they rarely meet a social network or group related to the same field as their businesses. Lastly, GRTHPER6 recorded a mean value of 2.93 and a standard deviation of 1.11242, indicating that the women entrepreneurs in Kuwait somehow agreed that professional network provides sufficient support and opportunities for their entrepreneurial endeavors.

The financial returns (GRTHPER2) average was 2.28 and the standard deviation: 1.26395, and so women entrepreneurs in Kuwait reported poor growth and revenue figures in their business

ventures in the last three years. This implies that although market opportunities are relatively satisfactory, there are hindrances that prevent women entrepreneurs from enjoying good profit outcomes on their ventures. They may lack financial capital, have high working expenses, or faces challenges in expanding their operations. Solving these problems may require increasing the availability of affordable credit, developing or refining financial literacy campaigns for the targeted public, and offering government-guaranteed incentives for better financial returns.

The result implies that the overall impact of human resource management practices is low since only 1.51% of employees participated in managing businesses owned by Kuwaiti women. This means that most women in business operate with limited employees implying that the businesses might not expand as expected. That might be because of financial issues, hesitance to pay because of economic factors, or just because people like to control what is going on. Employee training should be low-cost and or provided by the government or by investors who expect the result of increased employee competency to boost their return on investment in the business; hiring tax credits or rebates; or shared co-working spaces could help those entrepreneurs access the tools to grow their labour force and improve business output. On the positive side, GRTHPER4 with a mean value of 3.28 and standard deviation of 1.23975 show that women entrepreneurs feel that their marketing and advertising are useful in the growth of their business. This something that calls for investment in promotional activities to ensure enough people recognize the brand and make purchases. However, this finding also points to the need for continued improvement to marketing techniques especially as they relate to online touchpoints to reach beyond a single audience. In the wake of this, other training activities such as workshops or mentorship programs in areas of more complex marketing strategies such as the social media and analytics could enhance the campaign capabilities of these entrepreneurs in its sustainability.

The result of the factor GRTHPER5 with a mean value of 2.4 indicated that, women entrepreneurs in Kuwait do not actively engage in social networks or groups of interest for their fields. This suggests that there is a missed opportunity for supporting peer relationships, cooperation, and acquisition of knowledge, offered by such networks. Inviting participants to join industry relevant discussion groups, associations or entrepreneurial meetings could also

help to notice connection, share and idea and practice that are helpful for more business advancement. Organized networks to connect with other women in business and government and private sponsorship towards social meetings for women in business would expand their access to support, advice, and most importantly market connections.

The mean value of GRTHPER6 is 2.93 indicating that women entrepreneurs have somewhat attitude towards the response that professional networks provide sufficient support and opportunity. This is discouraging but there is potential to enhance the position of the professional organizations in the business pursuits of the people. Designing effective programs that would bring women entrepreneurs in contact with experienced businessmen, investors, and professionals may well prove to be the major strategic improvement that could dramatically improve the opportunities of women entrepreneurs to get the information, capital, and market intelligence they are in desperate need of. Self-sustaining networks of support are something that professional organisations can facilitate and through which women can build powerful and lasting enterprises in the Kuwait.

### *Independent Variables*

.3. Table 3 Social and Cultural Factors

		SOCUL1	SOCUL2	SOCUL3	SOCUL4	SOCUL5	SOCUL6
N	Valid	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.9400	4.0200	3.7500	2.3700	2.5300	2.8900
Median		3.0000	4.0000	4.0000	2.0000	2.5000	3.0000
Mode		4.00	4.00	4.00	1.00	3.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		1.28566	.98453	1.20918	1.29221	1.20147	1.28625

From Table 3, SOCUL1 recorded (M = 2.94, Std Dev. = 1.28566, Mode = 4) which indicates that the respondents of the study somehow agreed that societal norms, traditions, and cultural prejudices have influenced their decision to enter and continue in entrepreneurship. SOCUL2 (M= 4.02, Std Dev. = .98453, Mode = 4), and SOCUL3 (M = 3.7500, Std Dev. = 1.20918, Mode = 4) which are greater than a mid-point of five-points Likert frame. This shows that most women entrepreneurs who participated in this study viewed the general societal acceptance of women in



leadership and entrepreneurship positions in Kuwait as receptive and that family responsibility and their role as women have affected their ability to focus on and develop their work. SOCUL4 (M = 2.3700, Std Dev. = 1.29221, Mode = 1) shows that most women respondents indicated that they did not face challenges or rejection from family members because their commercial (pioneering) project conflicts with societally accepted gender roles. SOCUL5 (M = 2.5300, Std Dev. = 1.20147, Mode = 3) shows that the participants were neutral on that they have experienced gender bias or discrimination while running their businesses. SOCUL6 (M = 2.8900, Std Dev. = 1.28625, Mode = 4) shows that a large number of participants agreed that gender stereotypes about women's abilities affect how others view their work.

Specifically, results from SOCUL1 to SOCUL6 highlighted the complex interplay between culture and women's venture development in Kuwait. The scale of organizational culture (SOCUL1, M = 2.94) indicates that norms, custom, and prejudice of the society influenced the respondents' entrepreneurial process. While the mean is somewhat lower than the midpoint, the mode of the respondents' answers indicates that a substantial number of them somewhat agreed with this attitude: The mode is 4. This though points towards the fact that while societal norms play a role in influencing decision making they do not entirely stifle entrepreneurship.

On the other hand, SOCUL2 (M = 4.02) and SOCUL3 (M = 3.75) indicate a slightly more positive attitude as concerns women leadership and entrepreneurship within society. That both means emerged above the mid-point proves that prevailing attitude for Kuwaiti women is generally permissive having in mind the idea of beginning and conducting their own businesses. However, SOCUL3 indicates an external acceptance kind of sort but internal pressure from the family is still an industry. Such a dualism proves that successful women need familial support and organizational environments that would not unbearable the burden of striving to meet professional goals while keeping traditional family duties.

About SOCUL4 (M = 2.37) and SOCUL5 (M = 2.53) which also revealed the perception of the society and individual experiences regarding societal issues. SOCUL4 is in agreement that most women never faced rejection from their family because of these gender role conflicts as can be garners from the changing society's norms and improved familial support. However, after analysing data from SOCUL5 that the organisation is neutral, there is an element of uncertainty as to whether or not gender bias or discrimination exists in business operations. Whereas some of them might have experienced some form of prejudice for being women, the same seems less

overt here. At the same time, SOCUL6 ( $M = 2.89$ ) indicates that gender stereotypes regarding women's skills remain a concern as they no longer are confined to the enterprise solely in terms of perception by others.

#### .4. Table 4 Self-Confidence

		CONF1	CONF2	CONF3	CONF4	CONF5
N	Valid	100	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.8900	4.0900	4.2100	4.2000	3.8000
Median		4.0000	4.0000	5.0000	4.0000	4.0000
Mode		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		1.02391	1.09263	1.11278	.91010	1.03475

Self-confidence was also used as a factor influencing the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. From Table 4, CONF1 was recorded (Mean = 3.89, Std Dev. = 1.02391, Mode = 5) indicating that most women entrepreneurs who participated in the study considered their self-confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities very high. That table also shows that CONF2 (Mean = 4.09, Std Dev. = 1.09263, Mode = 5), CONF3 (Mean = 4.2100, Std Dev. = 1.11278, Mode = 5), and CONF4 (Mean = 4.2000, Std Dev. = .91010, Mode = 5). This indicates that the women entrepreneurs in Kuwait strongly agreed that self-confidence affected their desire to continue as an entrepreneur with a business project, and their entrepreneurial decision-making process, and that they were confident in their ability to overcome challenges and obstacles in their entrepreneurial journey. CONF5 recorded (Mean = 3.8000, Std Dev. = 1.03475, Mode = 4), which showed that the participants agreed that the level of self-confidence affects their willingness to seek feedback and pursue personal development in their entrepreneurial endeavors.

The cross sectional results in self-confidence derived from Table 4 revealed a significant factor in the construction of the entrepreneurial journey of women in Kuwait. Mean scores have been averagely high on all the confidence measures used (CONF1 to CONF5) implying that Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs are likely to have high self-confidence in their entrepreneurial competence. While it empowers their goals, it also readies them for the challenges inherent in business of any kind. In particular, CONF3 and CONF4, with the mean values that are above 4.2, that indicates

that these women feel readiness to cope with the challenges and to be persistent in their decision making. Thus, these outcomes illustrate the importance of confidence as a factor for developing strong women entrepreneurs' endurance and their focus on the market.

Similar to the results from CONF5 with a slightly lower mean, 3.8, the participants expressed their attitudes toward feedback and personal development. However, this means that participants are eager and receptive, though consensus may still point to a area of inertia. It is slightly more compact, which could mean that although self-confidence is the motor of the entrepreneurial enthusiasm, certain females are afraid or only partially willing to get as much criticism as possible or look for possibilities to improve skills. Solving this could offer a course for significantly even more business advancement.

Furthermore, the data together assert that confidence is present not only as an incentive but also as a protection against possible failures in the path of an entrepreneur. Kuwaitian women entrepreneurs seem to appreciate the importance of confidence in maintaining business and operating in uncertain markets. This puts emphasis on the fact that policy-makers alongside other stakeholders must design environments of support that build confidence through availability of resources, avenues for meeting other entrant businesses and trainings offered. As women are empowered whereby their confidence is boosted, and capability is improved, the aspect of entrepreneurship shall further boost the economy diversification and development in the Kuwait region.

#### .5. Table 5 Economic Factors

	CARE 1	CARE 2	CARE 3	MAOPP 1	MAOPP 2	ECOINF 1	ECOINF 2	ECOINF 4
Mean	3.2400	3.1100	3.1100	3.9400	3.5700	3.5000	3.1800	3.6400
Mode	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00
Std. Deviation	1.2319	1.1798	1.2135	1.0901	.9455	.9587	1.0286	.9268
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

Table 5 indicated that moderately high mean values for Access to Capital and Resources variables; CARE1 (Mean = 3.240, Std Dev. = 1.2319, Mode = 3), CARE2 (Mean = 3.110, Std Dev. = 1.1798, Mode = 3), and CARE3 (Mean = 3.110, Std Dev. = 1.2135, Mode = 3). These

indicate that participants of the study somewhat agreed that women entrepreneurs in Kuwait have access to financing opportunities and resources, have easy access to financial credit to start businesses, and that the government has effective initiatives such as incentives and grants that encourage women to start and grow their businesses.

Market Opportunities recorded high mean values that are MAOPP1 (Mean =3.940, Std Dev. = 1.0901, Mode = 5), and MAOPP2 (Mean =3.5700, Std Dev. = .9455, Mode = 4) indicating that the participants strongly believe that market dynamics and demand affected the success of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait and that the availability of market opportunities for women-owned companies in Kuwait is enough. Besides, the table indicated that women entrepreneurs faced economic infrastructure challenges while doing their jobs represented by ECOINF1 (Mean =3.50, Std Dev. = .9587, Mode = 4). ECOINF 2 recorded (Mean =3.18, Std Dev. = 1.0286, Mode = 3), which shows that the economic infrastructure to support women entrepreneurs in Kuwait is reliable and helpful, while ECOINF 3 (Mean =3.64, Std Dev. = .9268, Mode = 4) indicated that women entrepreneurs in Kuwait believe that economic competition affects the growth and sustainability of women-owned businesses.

This is evidence from the high mean values obtained for the market opportunities (MAOPP1 and MAOPP2) which show that market dynamics and demand are essential in the growth of women enterprises in Kuwait. The results of this study imply that female entrepreneurs have a very high degree of sensitivity towards perceiving the business environment as being very favorable in terms of availing enough opportunities for new business growth and expansion. This positive perspective may encourage women to either begin new businesses or expand existing ones. However, regarding market opportunities it is considered sufficient while the issue of access for women entrepreneurs and inclusion in such opportunities is still important.

While, regarding the economic infrastructural development hitches which women entrepreneurs face, the data partially supports this observation. The results of ECOINF1 and ECOINF2 show concerns regarding the stability of the facilities through which Women-Owned concerns receive their products and services, with means indicating moderate consensus. This means that as much as the infrastructure that is currently in place offers some level of support to e-learning, there are deficiencies that inhibit the support. Credibility and reliable means of transportation, access to capital and the proper use of technology can considerably improve the business environment for women in Kuwait to reach the level of sustainable business development and performance.

To the same extent, business competition or the ECOINF3 is believed to influence the sustainability of women owned enterprises in Kuwait. A mean of 3.64 suggest that women entrepreneurs feel placed to understand the competition within the market environment, as strength and auras of weakness, assessment. More so, competition enhances innovation, productivity and efficiency; on the other hand, competition is a force that requires strong strategy and tools to live with. Therefore, the presented field of competition can be viewed as the competitive imperative of women entrepreneurs' training and development activities – mastering planning and marketing skills, as well as the use of digital tools. These actions could even enhance their ability to exploit on market signals and even carry on their activities in the long run.

.6. Table 6 Women's Education

	EDL2	EDL3	EDL4	EDL5	EDL6	EDL7
N	100	100	100	100	100	100
Valid						
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.4700	3.5600	2.7200	3.1900	3.3700	3.1000
Mode	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Std. Deviation	1.25090	1.19189	1.27984	1.31576	1.33072	1.27525
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

From Table 6, EDL2 recorded (Mean =3.47, Std Dev. = 1.2509, Mode = 4), which indicates that women entrepreneurs who participated in this study perceive their academic qualification and studies as contributors to their qualification in becoming business women and entrepreneurs. EDL3 recorded (Mean =3.56, Std Dev. = 1.19189, Mode = 4), indicating that participants agreed that their education affected their ability to recognize and seize economic growth. EDL4 (Mean =2.72, Std Dev. = 1.27984, Mode = 2), shows that women entrepreneurs disagreed that skills and experiences in entrepreneurship and running their projects were part of their academic studies. EDL5 (Mean =3.19, Std Dev. = 1.31576, Mode = 4) shows that participants agreed that their academic qualifications and certificates have impacted investors and customers in considering

their project as a trustworthy project. EDL6 (Mean =3.37, Std Dev. = 1.33072, Mode = 4) shows that educational qualification affects women entrepreneurs' self-confidence in making decisions related to their business projects. Lastly, EDL7 (Mean =3.10, Std Dev. = 1.27525, Mode = 4), shows that women with higher academic qualifications are more successful as entrepreneurs.

#### 4.3. Reliability and Validity Test

The study used the Cronbach alpha test to test whether the data collected was reliable for the study. This test was conducted with the purpose of understanding whether the data collected represented the consistency of the participants in responding to the questions in a survey. The use of the Cronbach alpha test gives the value of the coefficient that lies between 0 and 1, where the desirable level of reliability is suggested to be 0.7 and above (Bujang et al., 2018)

.7. Table 7 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.870	36

Table 7 shows a Cronbach alpha value of 0.870, which is greater than 0.7, which proves that the data collected was reliable and qualifies for the analysis. From Table 7, It can be observed that the Cronbach's alpha value of 0.870 has been computed on the 36 items that were in the study and these results proved to be highly reliable. This value is above the acceptable level of 0.7 which indicate that the survey or measurement tool captured the intended constructs relating to factors impacting performance and growth of women entrepreneurship in Kuwait (Bryman & Bell 2011). A high Cronbach's alpha is a desirable condition that will ensure that the amount of data collected has low variability, and is reliable across different items containing the constructs currently under study (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). Therefore, with such a reliability score, the data is appropriate for statistical analysis and interpretation incorporating the findings of the study as credible.

#### 4.4. Correlation Analysis

The study used Pearson correlation analysis to test for the relationship between the variables. Positive values indicated a positive correlation while negative values indicated a negative correlation. A correlation value greater than 0.5 indicated a strong correlation while a value less than 0.5 indicated a weak correlation.

.8. Table 8 Correlation Analysis

		Growth and Performance	Social and Cultural Factors	Self-Confidence	Economic Factors	Women's Education
Growth and Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.131	.228*	.192	.291**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.195	.022	.055	.003
Social and Cultural Factors	Pearson Correlation	.131	1	.222*	.302**	.359**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.195		.027	.002	.000
Self-Confidence	Pearson Correlation	.228*	.222*	1	.362**	.414**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.027		.000	.000
Economic Factors	Pearson Correlation	.192	.302**	.362**	1	.380**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.055	.002	.000		.000
Women's Education	Pearson Correlation	.291**	.359**	.414**	.380**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.000	.000	.000	

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

c. Listwise N=100

The finding from Table 8 indicates that overall, sociocultural factors and economic factors have a positive weak correlation with the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait ( $r = 0.131$ ,  $\text{sig.} = 0.195$ ) and ( $r = 0.192$ ,  $\text{sig.} = 0.055$ ) respectively. Both correlations were insignificant at a 0,05 level of significance. Self-confidence among the women entrepreneurs in Kuwait showed a weak positive but significant correlation with their performance and growth ( $r = 0.228$ ,  $\text{sig.} = 0.022$ ). The results also indicated that women's education had a significant

positive but weak correlation with the growth and performance of women-owned businesses in Kuwait ( $r = 0.291$ ,  $\text{sig.} = 0.003$ ).

Table 8 depicts an overall picture of the correlations between the growth and success of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait with the main variables: sociocultural contexts, economic circumstances, self-confidence, and women's education. While all sociocultural and economic characteristics have minor positive correlations with the success of female entrepreneurs, they were not significant at the 0.05 level with  $r=0.131$  and  $r=0.192$  correspondingly. This therefore insinuates that though there might be a positive correlation between these factors and the success of entrepreneurship, this will not be strong enough to have any real or, for that matter, predictable impact on the outcomes in this setting (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). The insignificance of such findings could also point to some potential constraints within the social and economic structures of Kuwait that dampen the potential supportive role these components have in fostering the growth of entrepreneurship in the future.

Although the statistical relationship is not significant, this marginally positive relationship between the performance of women-owned businesses and the various sociocultural factors makes it an important finding. Sociocultural support might enable or motivate female entrepreneurs in most regions to perform well economically because of the acceptive atmosphere (Ramandani et al., 2012). The findings, however, suggest that social acceptability might not be a predictor of women's entrepreneurial success in Kuwait. The insignificance may suggest that other more significant sociocultural barriers do exist or that the development/evolution of the attitudes in society is slow and their impact will take longer to manifest into relevant entrepreneurial output (Bryman & Bell 2011). Another possibility is that the Kuwaiti social mechanisms are not yet in a position to support women entrepreneurs fully, and hence the effect of sociocultural support in bringing development is curtailed.

A correlation between the factors and growth and prosperity among female entrepreneurs was weak and statistically insignificant (Shastri et al., 2019). From the correlation value of  $r=0.192$ , although financial resources and an economic circumstance are favorably correlated with women's company performance, many female entrepreneurs may not find them conveniently available or substantial enough to generate considerable development. This could also be a symptom of more pervasive financial problems, such as limited capital resources available to women, funding network limitations, or institutional barriers in financial life that



disproportionately discourage female entrepreneurs (Ramandani et al., 2012). While financial aid is usually critical in the success of any business, the weak link-in this context, the weak link refers to Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs who were unable to generate sufficient economic returns which could satisfy their needs-this may suggest varied indications that economic factors alone may not be satisfactory to empower Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs, a situation which calls for more streamlined financial policies and allocations (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009).

Conversely, a very weak positive but statically significant relation between women entrepreneurs and business success was depicted as self-confidence measured against the degree of correlation  $r = 0.228$  with  $p = 0.022$  significance level. This study further elucidates how important self-confidence is for Kuwaiti female entrepreneurs to grow their businesses. While many other conditions may be environmental and external, self-confidence is an attribute internal to the individual that shapes the true ability of the entrepreneur to handle risk, undertake innovation, and persevere in light of adversity (Shastri et al., 2019). This finding brings forth the importance of self-efficacy among Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs in being able to successfully lead them through business environments, surmount challenges emanating from the outside, and sustain momentum within businesses even when social or economic inhibitions experienced by these entrepreneurs impede their growth (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

It means that women's education is positively and significantly, though marginally, correlated with entrepreneurial development and success:  $r = 0.291$ ,  $p = 0.003$ . This infers that education statistically influences the performance of women as entrepreneurs, though in a small way. Education equips them with the knowledge, ability, and assets to manage and grow a business (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). In this respect, education in Kuwait may arm women with the managerial, technical, and financial skills that will serve to compete within a new economy. It may facilitate planning and increase productivity at work (Bryman & Bell 2011). The correlation being low, applicability suggests that increasing educational opportunities for women may prove one of the most essential policy issues toward increasing the sustainability and entrepreneurial success of Kuwaiti women-owned businesses.

#### 4.5. Collinearity Test

A collinearity test was conducted to identify the variables that would have a which are highly correlated, affecting the quality of regression analysis. According to Lavery et al. (2018), multicollinearity occurs when predictor variables are highly correlated, thus failing to provide independent or unique information in the regression model (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). VIF value greater than 5 indicates a severe correlation that would affect the coefficient estimate and p-values in the regression output, making them unreliable.

Table 9 Collinearity Statistics

	Tolerance	VIF
Social and Cultural Factors	.838	1.194
Self-Confidence	.778	1.286
Economic Factors	.780	1.282
Women's Education	.719	1.391

From Table 9, the VIF value for social and cultural factors was 1.194, self-confidence (1.286), economic factors (1.282), and women's education (1.391). Since all values were between 1 and 5, the variables indicated moderate correlations between predictor variables but not severe enough to attract attention or have an influence on the quality of regression results. Therefore, the study used all for independent variables, and predictors for the performance and growth of women-owned enterprises in Kuwait.

Testing the seriousness of multicollinearity The VIF values shown in table 9 augment the fact that the predictor variables used in the study is not seriously multicollinear. The VIF values of all the variables lie between 1 and 5 so the constructed model of social cultural factors, self-confidence, economic factors and women's education are not highly correlated (Bryman & Bell 2011). It is usually within this range not to unduly affect the model estimates and thus these variables can be included in the model.

The tolerance values, which are the reciprocal of VIF, also support no significant multicollinearity as all fall above 0.2 benchmark. This means that no two independent variables are very similar and not a lot of the information from any one independent variable can also be obtained from the other. The results show that the tolerance value, for example, for women's

education is 0.719, meaning that over 70% of its variation is explained by none of the other predictors. As a result, each of them offers unique information relevant to the possible determinants of women entrepreneurs' performance in Kuwait (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009).

By factoring social and cultural characteristics, self- efficacy, economic environment, and women education when predicting the state of entrepreneurship, a nearly accurate picture of the shaping forces is presented. Moderate levels of correlation allow for sufficiently diverse in its makeup and capable of capturing a wider range of effects as evidenced in the R Square results above, though still not very powerful over all (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). Perhaps future studies would look into the interaction effects or to more specific factors within the above mentioned general types so as to refine the analysis and get a more detailed picture.

#### **4.6. Regression Analysis**

The regression analysis was to test for a causal relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The study applied multiple regression analysis since the number of independent variables was more than one (Bryman & Bell 2011). In contrast to correlation analysis, the regression analysis was used to allow deeper exploration and understanding of the relationship between the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait and independent variables; sociocultural factors, economic factors, self-confidence, and women's education.

This regression study pursued the possible causal relationship between a range of independent variables, including sociocultural factors, economic factors, self-confidence, and education on the dependent variable, which in this case is the development and success of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Analogously, multiple regression analysis is very apt for this scenario since it explains how the different independent variables contribute in various ways to the explanation of variations in the dependent variable when holding the other ones constant. This will be a more enhanced research from simple correlation on the combined and individual effects of several variables, hence allowing a full review of how each component may influence business outcomes for female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. From the regression model, the exact influence of sociocultural attitude is shown (Shastri et al., 2019).

Whereas correlation analysis looks at the direction and strength of a relationship between two variables without causality, regression analysis enables deeper hypothesis testing on cause-effect dynamics. Such a difference in approach is very critical on the side of entrepreneurship research, considering the multi-dimensional interdependencies driving success (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). For instance, regression analysis may reveal which one of these two factors has a statistically significant contribution, other things held constant, when correlation may suggest both the self-confidence and community support happens to be positively correlated with performance (Ramandani et al., 2012). It therefore focuses on many aspects of entrepreneurial success and gives deeper insights into how any factor, whether sociocultural, economic, or personal, may directly or indirectly influence development and performance outcomes for Kuwaiti female entrepreneurs.

The factors studied were self-confidence, economic considerations, sociocultural factors, and women's education-all of which are identified as critical to women's success in various entrepreneurship ventures in similar socioeconomic circumstances (Bryman & Bell 2011).. For example, sociocultural factors denote how the general society embraces and supports women in business, which may, depending on cultural views, serve either to help or hinder. By and large, economic issues include the response to financial resources and capital availability that by itself directly influences the viability as well as the scope of enterprises (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Self-confidence involves psychological notions internally and pertains to the internal psychological component required for the commitment of risks necessary for a business (Shastri et al., 2019). To this respect, this category is normally associated with successful business. Finally, education related to providing women with the necessary knowledge and management techniques and capabilities for running businesses profitably.

Table 10 Summary of Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.320 <sup>a</sup>	.103	.065	.80724

*a. Predictors: (Constant), Women's Education, Social and Cultural Factors, Economic Factors, Self-Confidence*

From Table 10, the regression analysis gave an R Square value of 0.103, which explains the extent to which the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables. The results show that socio-cultural factors, economic factors, self-confidence, and women's education define the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait by 10.3%. The level of R Square value indicates that there are more factors influencing the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. The adjusted R Square value was 0.065.

The regression summary in Table 10 presents an R Square value of 0.103, which means that only 10.3% of the variance in the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait is explained by the independent variables in this model: ; social and cultural factors; economic aspects, self-esteem; and women's schooling. This relatively low and R Square value indicates that though these variables do play a part they do not explain all the variations in the level of entrepreneurial performance in this case (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). This accredits the propensity of other influences to make significant contribution to these results, possibly environmental or unaccounted for in this study.

Furthermore, the adjusted R Square value of 0.065 is slightly lower than the R Square value indicating that there is a low variable explained by the model given the number of predictors in the study. The adjusted R Square is used here to correct the R Square value when new variables have been added and useful here to demonstrate that the independent variables offer little extra to the prediction of growth and performance outcomes (Bryman & Bell 2011). This adjusted measure implies that may be adding more or other factors could lead to a better model fit as information that would improve the status of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

Consequently, due to findings that the R Square and adjusted R Square values indicate a limited predictive capability of this model, additional variables would have to be investigated in subsequent studies to enhance the model's predictability (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

For example, such an essential phenomenon as the availability of funding, family sponsorship or encouragement, markets' receptiveness, and policy stimulus may also significantly influence the entrepreneurial outcome. Thus, enlarging the set of variables, future models can capture more critically influence factors on women entrepreneurs performance in Kuwait.

TABLE 11 ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	7.085	4	1.771	2.718	.034 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	61.905	95	.652		
Total	68.990	99			

*a. Dependent Variable: Growth and Performance*

*b. Predictors: (Constant), Women's Education, Social and Cultural Factors, Economic Factors, Self-Confidence*

The ANOVA of regression gave an F statistic value of 2.718, and a significant value of 0.034, which is less than 0.05. This shows that the regression model was significant and can be used to test for the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

From the analysis of the ANOVA table the overall regression model is statistically significant at  $0.034F=2.718$  ( $p<0.05$ ). This therefore mean that the model has certain level of predictive ability in determining the impact of ‘social-cultural variables and self-confidence, economic factors and women education level’ on the growth and performance of women Entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

Besides, though specific predictors in the model may not be significantly different from zero, the overall accrual of these variables influences the within-group variability in growth and performance.

Based on the results a part of the variation in women entrepreneurship performance as presented by the regression sum of square (7.085) as compared to residual sum of square (61.905) thus indicating that, this model has captured part of the variability of the dependent variable. But, the value of RSS remains comparatively higher which implies that there are still large variations that are unaccounted for by means of variation in the independent variables, which when included in the model, can impact performance crucially.

Therefore, the overall significance of the model does not mean that every factor influencing women entrepreneurs in this context has been fully captured. Perhaps, other studies could examine other potential predictors or examine interactions between the predictors to enhance the predictive value of the model. However, affected by the significance of the ANOVA test, these

factors together appear to offer a preliminary starting point for explaining some aspects of women entrepreneurs' development and achievements.

**TABLE 12 COEFFICIENT**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.157	.495		2.335	.022
Social and Cultural Factors	.008	.111	.008	.071	.943
Self-Confidence	.106	.104	.113	1.023	.309
Economic Factors	.071	.117	.067	.610	.543
Women's Education	.182	.097	.216	1.888	.062

*a. Dependent Variable: Growth and Performance*

The regression analysis results from Table 12 show a coefficient value of 0.008 and sig. Value of 0.943; self-confidence recorded a coefficient value of 0.106 and sig. Value of 0.309, economic factors recorded a coefficient value of 0.071 and sig. Value of 0.543, while women's education recorded a coefficient value of 0.182 and sig. Value of 0.062. These shows that the four independent variables had a positive insignificant relationship with the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

The analyses suggest that social culture, confidence levels, economic factors, and education among women failed to turned out to be the drivers for growth and performance of women business entrepreneurs in Kuwait; all the p-values were greater than the specified level of significance of 0.05. Despite the comparatively higher coefficient of (0.182) and a marginal p-value of (0.062) for women's education the analysis indicates that the measure lacks statistical significance within this model framework. With respect to the present data, this analysis indicates that those factors do not have strong direct effects on entrepreneurial performance in the Kuwaiti context despite assuming such effects in other contexts (Ramandani et al., 2012). There are other conceivable explanations which may be given to the fact that Kuwait kind of

possesses different socio-economic characteristics or that there are other factors which may feature much larger roles as yet unconsidered. Future research could target other variables or interactions that could describe the effects on women entrepreneurs' success in the region better.



## 5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

### 5.1. Introduction

The main aim of this study was to determine factors influencing female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in Kuwait in the current competitive business arena. Focused on sociocultural aspects, self-confidence, economic factors, and women's education in encouraging them to become entrepreneurs (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). This chapter provides a discussion of the findings mainly focusing on the four proposed research questions.

The study used a sample size of 100 women entrepreneurs in Kuwait who agreed to participate in the study and fully answer the questions included in the survey. The sample participants were all women entrepreneurs from different age groups (Bryman & Bell 2011). The study through collecting data from young and elderly women entrepreneurs ensured that the information provided was not biased on age. Besides, the women entrepreneurs who participated in this study were from different marital status groups; single, married, divorced, and widows. This ensured that the study provided a nuanced understanding of the different factors influencing women entrepreneurs. According to Kaciak and Welsh (2020), women from different marital statuses might face different challenges, especially in balancing work and life, and have different entrepreneurs' experiences, and support systems. They also may have different access to resources, affected by different cultural and social norms, and also can allow the researcher to provide a comprehensive analysis and understanding of factors influencing women entrepreneur's effectiveness (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009).

The study also showed that the researcher reached out to women entrepreneurs with different educational backgrounds from bachelor's degrees to master's degrees to diploma certificates to general secondary certificates to intermediate certificates (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019). Besides, most of the participants had higher education qualifications. This played a pivotal role in shaping the sociocultural, economic, and psychological factors like self-confidence influencing the effectiveness and success of women entrepreneurs (Shastri et al., 2019).

The findings of the study also showed that women entrepreneurs with different years of experience in the entrepreneurial field participated in the study. This ensured that the data collected offered valuable insights based on real-world situations, providing deep insights into industry-specific challenges, market dynamics, and business strategies. Their insights helped in

the development of a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing women entrepreneur's effectiveness and enhanced the overall quality of the research, making it more credible (Azmat & Fujimoto, 2016).

The variation of the experience of the women entrepreneurs who were involved in the study enriched the results. Participants varied in experience with entrepreneurship, from those who started their entrepreneurial careers recently to those with two or more years of experience (Ramandani et al., 2012). Thus, this variety allowed the researcher to collect data on various stages of development, and, thus, encompassing the array of challenges and achievement peculiar to a particular phase. Seasoned entrepreneurs, for instance, gave advice on how to plan for the future and how to manage through the worst, while young/beginner entrepreneurs explained what challenges them in the early stage providing a diverse and detailed database (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

To ensure coverage of all the challenges affecting the micro-business across industries, the study afforded the researcher the opportunity to incorporate data from both experienced and non-experienced entrepreneurs (Bryman & Bell 2011). This approach was helpful in identifying the challenges that women face when running businesses crosscutting all sectors for example retail and technology and hospitality. Experience of the business owners exposed them to industry-specific practices effective in organizational sustainability, which include, changes, competitiveness, and customers (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Such findings were particularly useful in pointing out potential factors that could influence some of the factors leading to sustenance or success of women entrepreneurship in Kuwait (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

The implications of this study also reveal that market environments faced by women business owners are differently cherished depending on their experience level (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). This is what those that have been in the business for longer periods said, including the changing customer trends, fluctuations in the economy and any change of events in the market. On the other hand, new entrants into the market struggle to define their market and within short order, they need to create a brand image (Ramandani et al., 2012). Collectively, these views offered a comprehensive exploration of the current state and evolution of Kuwait's entrepreneurial ecosystem, with further recognition that resources for supporting it should be appropriate for entrepreneurs of all stages.

Furthermore, ideas of competitory strategies implemented by women entrepreneurs at different levels of experience were useful recommendations for new women in business. Some of the key themes important in their business development and overcoming factors such as lack of capital or access to formal training where networking, mentorship as well as knowledge sharing. At the same time, new entrepreneurs gave careful attention to the digital, marketing, innovation and speed when conducting businesses in the contemporary society. Therefore, through these different approaches the study found the best practices to be used in the development of how women entrepreneurs can nurture their businesses and evenly compete within the cut throat economy.

The variability in entrepreneurial experience among the women contributed to higher credibility and generalization of the study. Since the facts and real-life scenarios exposed the issues that women entrepreneurs face daily and the appropriate steps that members of industries can take, the actionable results should be appealing to stakeholders seeking to promote women entrepreneurship (Ramandani et al., 2012). With such understanding, policymakers, financial institutions and business development organizations can design programmes and strategies to fit in the various entrepreneurship development phases. To overcome this limitation, the study was undertaken to cover a wide cross-section of experiences in endeavouring to give a balanced and credible foundation for recommendations aiming at supporting women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

## **5.2. Descriptive Findings**

The study analyzed the satisfaction levels of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait with financial performance and growth (Bryman & Bell 2011). The findings showed that most women entrepreneurs reported low financial returns with few numbers of employees involved in running their businesses. However, they believed that their marketing and advertising campaigns contributed to their business growth. They rarely meet social networks or groups related to their fields, and professional networks provide sufficient opportunities and support for their entrepreneurial endeavors (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019)

Additionally, the study found that societal norms, traditions, and cultural prejudices influenced women entrepreneurs in making their decisions to enter and continue the market (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

study also found high score for general societal acceptance indicating broader societal norms in Kuwait are increasingly supportive of women entrepreneurs and women in leadership roles (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Most women entrepreneurs viewed general societal acceptance of women entrepreneurs in leadership and entrepreneurship positions in Kuwait as receptive. Besides, they indicated that they never faced challenges or rejection from their family members because their commercial projects conflicted with society their roles as women and family responsibilities influenced their ability to focus on and develop their work. These highlights the ongoing impacts of traditional gender roles on women's entrepreneurial activities. According to Cesaroni et al. (2018), women entrepreneurs should be supported to address these challenges such as promoting more balanced distribution of domestic responsibilities and providing childcare support. The low score on the challenges from family members suggested that families were not major barrier for their ventures, but the received support from their families that is crucial factor helping them to sail and sustain them on entrepreneurial ventures (Azmat and Fujimoto 2016). The study also found the neutral stance on gender bias and discrimination, which suggested that although some may face discrimination, it was not a universal experience. this calls for interventions to address specific instances of bias rather than a broad-brush approach. The study also highlighted the area that needs attention, through the recognition of gender stereotypes affecting women perceptions. According to Love et al. (2024), programs that aimed at changing societal perception and education both women and men about the women entrepreneurs' capabilities can be used to mitigate the impact of stereotypes in the society.

The study also considered self-confidence as a factor influencing the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Most of the study's respondents indicated that their self-confidence in entrepreneurial abilities was very high, and they were confident in overcoming challenges and obstacles related to their entrepreneurial journey (Ramandani et al., 2012). The willingness to seek feedback and pursue personal development in their entrepreneurial endeavors was also dependent on self-confidence. Economically, the study indicated that women entrepreneurs in Kuwait have moderately accessed capital and resources. According to Lerner and Nanda (2020), access to capital allows entrepreneurs to start and grow their businesses by investing in essential resources, innovating, maintaining competitiveness, and managing cash flow. Adequate capital allows entrepreneurs to reach a broader customer base expand into new markets and mitigate risks, providing a buffer against economic downturns and market fluctuations.

The study also indicated that women entrepreneurs had access to financial resources and opportunities for government initiatives that encouraged them to start and grow their businesses, and ease in accessing financial credit to start businesses. According to Nakku et al. (2020), government initiatives such as training and mentorship programs, financial support and grants, regular support, and access to market and infrastructure promote diversity and inclusivity in entrepreneurship. More so, government initiatives focus on promoting inclusivity and diversity in entrepreneurship, supporting women to level the playing field and encourage a more diverse entrepreneurial ecosystem (Neumeyer, 2020).

The study indicated that market opportunities were also high for women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, indicating that market dynamics and demand affected their success. Buccieri et al. (2023) assert that market opportunities allow entrepreneurs to introduce a new service or product, expand existing offerings, or enter an untapped market to drive growth and profitability. However, analyzing customer needs, competitive landscapes, and industry trends to find gaps or unmet demands is needed in the identification and capitalization of market opportunities (Ramandani et al., 2012). The study indicated that the economic infrastructure to support women entrepreneurs in Kuwait was reliable and helpful. It serves as a foundation for systems and facilities that support economic activities and enable the smooth running of businesses. Women entrepreneurs can boost their productivity, and efficiency in entrepreneurial endeavors as robust economic infrastructure improves access to markets, reduces costs, and enhances the business environment (Azmat and Fujimoto (2016).

Furthermore, the study found that women entrepreneurs in Kuwait perceived their academic qualifications as a contributing factor to their success. Consistent with this finding, Hasan and Almubarak (2016), indicated that academic qualification provides entrepreneurs with essential knowledge and skills in the areas of marketing, management, and finance, qualifying them as businesswomen. The study indicated that education affected the ability of women entrepreneurs to recognize and seize economic growth opportunities by equipping them with essential finance, marketing, and business analysis knowledge (Bryman & Bell 2011).. Education allows entrepreneurs to develop critical thinking and analytical skills that enable them to identify emerging trends, assess market potential, and make informed decisions. More so, exposing women to case studies, networking with industry professionals, and real-world projects during

their studies provide them with practical insights and strategies to effectively capitalize on economic opportunities.

However, the study indicated that skills and experiences in entrepreneurship and running projects were part of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. This shows that women entrepreneurs developed their skills and experiences in entrepreneurship and running projects through real-world experiences, practical challenges, and hands-on learning (Hasan & Almubarak, 2016). Rani and Sinha (2016) also assert that academic theory cannot teach the intricacies of business management, adaptability, and problem-solving compared to on-the-ground experience.

The study also indicated that women's academic qualifications and certificates impact investors and customers in considering women entrepreneurs' projects as trustworthy projects. According to Buccieri et al. (2023), investors and some customers use academic credentials as tangible evidence of knowledge, skill, and commitment to excellence in entrepreneurship. Academic background can be used as competence and reliability indicators which can instill confidence in the project's potential for success. On the other hand, can use these credentials to enhance their trust in the products and services being offered, thus maintaining their loyalty (Shastri et al., 2019). The study also observed that educational qualification affected women entrepreneurs' self-confidence in making decisions related to their business projects, with higher academic qualifications being more successful entrepreneurs. Neumeyer (2020) supports this by indicating that knowledge and skills acquired through academic journey provide entrepreneurs with a solid foundation for assessing risks, devising strategic plans, and evaluating opportunities, that instill confidence to navigate challenges and make informed decisions contributing to their success (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). More so, the study indicated that women with higher academic qualifications tend to be more successful as entrepreneurs, which is attributed to the comprehensive understanding of business principles, industry insights, and management techniques gained through higher education. Azmat and Fujimoto (2016) posit that capabilities in effective running of businesses, adapt to market changes, innovate, and seize opportunities.

### **5.3. First Hypothesis: Socio-cultural aspects do not significantly determine women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait**

The study investigated whether social-cultural aspects significantly determine women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait. The study found a positive insignificant relationship between socio-

cultural factors and the performance and growth of women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait (Ramandani et al., 2012). Therefore, failing to reject the hypothesis and concludes that women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait is not significantly determined by socio-cultural aspects.

The finding of this study is consistent with other works of literature that recorded that while socio-cultural factors can influence entrepreneurship, they are not the primary determinant. From the literature review, the study of entrepreneurship is primarily driven by the individual's capacity for innovation and risk-taking, regardless of social-cultural contexts. According to Welter et al. (2017), entrepreneurs are outliers who break away from traditional norms to create new business ventures. Besides, Oyeyemi et al. (2024) post that entrepreneurs often exploit market opportunities, identifying untapped potential due to changes in market conditions, technological innovations, or customer preferences. Kepler and Shane (2007) indicated that individual agency and personal traits often determine the success of entrepreneurs despite the influence of sociocultural factors. Rauch and Frese (2007) also showed that personal characteristics such as resilience, proactive personality, and self-efficacy outweigh social-cultural constraints, with entrepreneurs having high self-confidence and strong internal locus of control being more likely to succeed regardless of the socio-cultural environment.

The influence of sociocultural factors on entrepreneurial success has been outweighed by globalization and technological advancement. Jardim (2021) highlighted that the rise of digital platforms and the internet has created a global market for entrepreneurs allowing them to operate and succeed outside their local socio-cultural constraints. Currently, entrepreneurs have access to networks, markets, and global resources, diminishing socio-cultural impacts on their success (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

Additionally, Cabrera and Mauricio (2021) found that opportunities for entrepreneurship are directly and largely driven by market demands and economic factors rather than cultural or social influences. This perspective suggests that entrepreneurship will flourish in the presence of high market demand and economic incentives irrespective of the prevailing social-cultural factors. Kuwait has strong legal frameworks and support for small businesses, which helps in mitigating the negative social-cultural factors on entrepreneurship, and external support to counteract socio-cultural limitations. While various studies indicated sociocultural factors influence the provision of resources for entrepreneurs, it can be argued that these resources are also accessible through

formal institutions and markets (Khan et al., 2021). Besides, risk-taking and innovation; the fundamental entrepreneurial characteristics are derived more from individual traits rather than social and cultural factors. Therefore, women with a strong internal drive and resilience are likely to pursue entrepreneurial ventures regardless of their social networks.

Moreover, Naser et al. (2012) highlighted the interplay between entrepreneurship and social factors. Their study indicated that key activities in entrepreneurship such as market exploitation, resource mobilization, and innovation highly depend on economic opportunities and incentives rather than socio-cultural support. Besides, entrepreneurs are primarily driven by the potential for the identification of market opportunities and economic gain that can be pursued independently of social and cultural influences. Although some studies such as De Vita et al. (2014) emphasize the importance of cultural norms, the increasing digitalization and globalization of the market suggests that entrepreneurs are more influenced by global trends and opportunities than by local cultural norms. Aderibigbe (2023) asserts that globalization and digitalization have allowed entrepreneurs to tap into global trends and opportunities that transcend socio-cultural limitations. Internets and digital platforms have increasingly provided entrepreneurs with access to global markets, networks, and resources reducing the local socio-cultural barriers' impact and allow entrepreneurs to succeed by leveraging international opportunities. According to Khan et al. (2021), the global marketplace allows women entrepreneurs to access resources, markets, and knowledge beyond their immediate social and cultural environment, thus, diminishing the impact of local cultural factors on entrepreneurial activities.

Despite the study's findings that societal norms, traditions, and cultural prejudices have somewhat influenced their decision to enter and continue in entrepreneurship. This indicated that although societal norms, cultural, and traditional prejudices can influence entrepreneurial decisions, they are not the primary determinants. Consistently, Ladge et al. (2019) assert that societal norms such as gender roles may discourage women from pursuing entrepreneurship, but they can be overcome by personal drive, resilience, and ambitions (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

In regions with supportive socio-cultural settings, the level of entrepreneurial activity is highly driven by necessity rather than opportunity. According to Oyeyemi et al. (2024), women often turn to entrepreneurship out of a need to survive economically, rather than being motivated by a favorable socio-cultural context. Entrepreneurs in less supportive social-cultural settings often



inhibit high levels of resilience and adaptability, that enable them to overcome socio-cultural barriers and succeed in their ventures. Cabrera and Mauricio (2021) assert that personal characteristics such as proactive personality, resilience, and self-efficacy influence entrepreneurial success, often outweighing socio-cultural constraints (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009).

Furthermore, economic pressure and the need to generate own income have significantly led to a high number of women in entrepreneurship, even in the absence of socio-cultural support. Using the data collected from young women entrepreneurs in Arab countries, Mehtap et al. (2017) found that entrepreneurs in these regions are motivated by the urgent need to create a livelihood for their families and themselves, suggesting that economic initiatives and the necessity to generate income significantly drives women to entrepreneurship than socio-cultural factors. Kepler and Shane (2007) also found that women are increasingly finding creative ways to mobilize resources, exploit resources, and navigate market challenges despite socio-cultural barriers. This allows them to be successful entrepreneurs, not necessarily influenced by socio-cultural factors.

#### **5.4. Second Hypothesis: Self-confidence does not significantly determine women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait**

The study also focused on investigating whether self-confidence significantly determines the performance and growth of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Self-confidence was considered a personal trait based on individuals' attitudes about their abilities and skills. Women with self-confidence were considered to know about their strengths and weaknesses, a unique set of qualities and skills (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). Women entrepreneurs in this study indicated that their self-confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities was very high affecting their desire to continue with their business project, and their entrepreneurial decision-making process.

Women's confidence influenced their abilities to overcome challenges and obstacles in their entrepreneurial journey, and their willingness to seek feedback and pursue personal development in their entrepreneurial endeavors (Ramandani et al., 2012).

Despite the high self-confidence levels and perceived influence on different aspects of entrepreneurship, the correlation and regression analyses conducted in the study provided contradicting results; where the prior indicated a positive significant correlation and the latter

indicated a positive insignificant relationship. It is important to note that correlation measures the strength and direction of the relationship, this indicates that self-confidence recorded a positive significant relationship with the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, it signifies that as self-confidence increases, the performance and growth also tend to increase. However, the correlation does not imply causation (Ramandani et al., 2012). Therefore, an insignificant causal relationship between self-confidence and women entrepreneurs' performance and growth implied that self-confidence does not statistically significantly impact performance and growth.

While the women entrepreneurs in Kuwait believe that self-confidence is crucial to their entrepreneurial activities, it might enhance subjective experience but not necessarily objective performance metrics. Besides, the performance and growth of entrepreneurs are multifaceted and influenced by different factors such as industry trends, financial management, customer base, market conditions, and operational efficiency, thus making it insufficient to drive significant improvement in performance and growth. According to Pidduck et al. (2023), self-confidence is a positive attitude that encourages women entrepreneurs in problem-solving, resilience, and innovation, and inspires them for new opportunities. However, it does not necessarily lead to improved performance and growth. For self-confidence to be effective, persistent action is needed, where entrepreneurs are required to adopt an optimistic mindset, fostering resilience during setbacks and fueling creative problem-solving (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). The positive correlation between self-confidence and the performance growth of women entrepreneurs can be supported by the virtual self-confidence triggering positive thinking, inspiring people, and creating a supportive environment for entrepreneurs' endeavors. It also shapes entrepreneurial behavior but has no direct connection with entrepreneurial growth and performance (Charness et al., 2018).

A positive correlation between self-confidence and the performance of women can be noticed especially among women who do not give up easily and have fewer excuses such as family responsibilities when pursuing their objectives. Consistent with the study, Bird (2019) indicated that women with high levels of self-confidence assert their autonomy and agency to let external obligations or constraints hinder their pursuit of success and fulfillment. Contrary to women with low levels of self-confidence who possess a weak sense of perseverance and tenacity, succumbing to challenges or setbacks (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009).

Women with high levels of self-confidence record high performance levels as they embody a mindset of determination, agency, and refusal to be deterred by social expectations and other cultural challenges, embracing their self-confidence to empower themselves to overcome obstacles and achieve their aspirations regardless of contrails and external pressures (Rieger, 2012).

Consistent with the findings of the study Asoni (2011) found that self-confidence is a crucial factor for entrepreneurs which helps them in facing new challenges and make better decisions. A positive correlation indicates that women with high levels of self-confidence are more competitive in the market to face different barriers and have better policies to reach business goals. However, the influence of self-confidence on the performance of women entrepreneurs is determined by professional networks, entrepreneurial certifications, and emergency management experience. Likewise, Twibell et al. (2008) found that individuals with a perceived high level of self-confidence have higher intelligence that tends to gravitate towards entrepreneurship.

Twibell et al. (2008) also identified higher performance among women entrepreneurs with high levels of self-confidence. These women perceive greater benefits with fewer risks. However, the causal relationship between self-confidence and performance and growth is determined by their entrepreneurial certifications, professional networks, and emergency management experience. Asoni (2011) also found a significant correlation between self-confidence and performance indicating that self-confidence leads to business initiation. However, the causal impact is determined by the level of entrepreneurial intelligence, which leads to business longevity (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016)..

Some women entrepreneurs show excessive self-confidence that leads to overconfidence bias, where they underestimate risks or overestimate their capabilities, leading to poor business decisions (Boldureanu et al., 2020). Garaika et al. (2019) also found that self-confidence motivates entrepreneurs to take initiative, pursue opportunities, and persevere through challenges but a lack of practical skills like human resources, operation, sales, marketing, and financial management limits its benefits to entrepreneurs. According to Rathore et al. (2015), while self-confidence allows women to make, informed decisions depends on their ability to analyze the market, strategic planning, and market research, which also require skills in strategic planning in

order to reach the final results. Therefore, self-confidence alone cannot help women entrepreneurs navigate challenges critical to their performance.

Consistent with the findings of this study, Amatucci and Crawley (2011) found that self-confidence empowers women entrepreneurs to believe in their abilities and competencies, enabling them to make good decisions, overcome challenges, and achieve goals. This mindset is crucial to women entrepreneurs especially where the risk and uncertainties are inherent. However, its impact may be limited by various challenges in accessing financing, mentorship, and networks compared to their male counterparts. Mostly, gender biases and societal expectations can create additional hurdles for women entrepreneurs, affecting their business outcomes despite their self-confidence.

Moreover, women entrepreneurs face challenges due to a lack of self-confidence, gender stereotyping, and assertiveness. In a patriarchal social structure, women's self-confidence is often limited by their fathers or husbands, and close family members often decide for them (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Motivation and support positively influence women's self-confidence to start a business and the performance of women-owned businesses. Male entrepreneurs have a high level of self-motivation, leading to better performance (Dabo, 2019). In Kuwait, psychological motives such as the search for independence, self-confidence, and supportive environment factors affect women entrepreneurs from intention to performance. Self-confidence is influenced by resources, particularly education, managerial skills, and experience level in entrepreneurship, which affects the performance of SMEs (Dalborg, 2015). Highly educated women have shown high self-confidence and high performance in their businesses but financial constraints limit their entrepreneurial objectives.

### **5.5. Hypothesis Three: Economic factors do not significantly determine the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait**

The study also focused on investigating whether economic factors have and significant influence on the growth and performance of the women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. The correlation analysis indicated that economic factors have a positive significant correlation with the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. This indicates that there is a direct relationship between economic factors and the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. In other words, favorable market opportunities, access to financing, and supportive infrastructures are

likely to increase the performance and growth of women entrepreneurs (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). This also shows that a decline in these factors will tend to a decrease in the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait (Naser et al., 2012). The significant correlation between the economic factors and the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait shows that the correlation is unlikely to be due to chances, but a real and reliable relationship between them (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

The study found that women entrepreneurs in Kuwait have better access to financing opportunities and resources. This is crucial for women entrepreneur's performance as it provides capital for startup and growth, enabling them to cover costs like market research, marketing efforts, and development of products and services. According to Mutairi and Fayeze (2015), access to capital helps entrepreneurs manage cash flow, and marketing, invest in R&D, maintain optimal inventory levels, and technology adoption, attract and retain skilled personnel, and invest in training and development. Adom & Anambane (2020) highlighted that access to financial resources helps entrepreneurs reduce dependency on a single revenue stream as it acts as a buffer against uncertainties and diverse product lines and services. However, financial sources require collateral to secure loans and investments, a significant challenge for many female entrepreneurs who lack access to collateral due to cultural norms and property ownership entrepreneurs (Naser et al., 2012). Therefore, despite financial resources and opportunities being accessible, some women may be limited as financial mechanisms become more formalized. Kuwait offers various financial sources for entrepreneurs, including microfinance institutions, banks, and government incentives, but many women entrepreneurs are unable to access these resources due to cultural norms and property ownership. As financial mechanisms become more formalized, the number of women accessing them tends to decrease, underscoring systemic barriers faced by women entrepreneurs in accessing capital (Al Mutairi and Fayeze, 2015).

Economic factors such as favorable market dynamics and sufficient market opportunities mean that women-owned businesses can find and serve customers, leading to higher business growth and sales. Favorable economic conditions often indicate strong customer demand allowing women entrepreneurs to tap into this demand (Mhadhbi, 2014). Women entrepreneurs who are capable of reaching customers more efficiently, have higher purchasing powers and make higher sales compared to those within unfavorable market dynamics (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). A favorable market dynamic in Kuwait means that women entrepreneurs can diversify their product

offerings, catering to different customer needs and increasing sales opportunities. More so, the positive correlation between economic factors and the performance and growth of women entrepreneurs from a marketing perspective encourages investment in innovation, enabling their enterprises to develop new products and services that meet evolving customer demands. Naser et al. (2012), assert that access to resources such as financing may enhance operational efficiency, improve supply chains, and risk mitigation. Women entrepreneurs can plan and operate with greater confidence as a strong economic environment provides a buffer against market fluctuation and uncertainties.

Furthermore, reliable economic infrastructure reduces obstacles and enables women entrepreneurs to focus on growing their businesses by supporting smooth business operations (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

. Access to financial infrastructures facilitates connections with investors and venture capitalists, providing innovation and expansion capital (Mutairi and Fayez, 2015). Strong digital infrastructure supports the establishment and growth of online businesses, providing additional market opportunities and revenue streams to women entrepreneurs. Economic infrastructures such as efficient transportation networks ensure entrepreneur's access to the market in time, ensuring timely delivery, minimizing delay, and reducing costs (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009).

The regression analysis indicated that the causal relationship between the economic factors and the performance and growth of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait was insignificant. This shows that while there may be a slight positive relationship between economic factors and women entrepreneurs' performance and growth, the relationship is not strong enough to be statistically significant or they are not the primary drivers of entrepreneurial success for women in Kuwait. (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016) Despite the finding of the study indicating that women entrepreneurs generally have access to financing opportunities and resources, an insignificant relationship between women entrepreneurs' performance and economic resources suggests that while financing is available, it may not be the sole or most critical factor in driving performance and growth of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

Informal financial credits are a popular choice for women-owned SMEs in Kuwait due to their quick approval turnaround times, personal, relationship-based lending model, flexible evaluation

criteria, and cultural and social factors. These credits offer quick financing for urgent business needs or opportunities, overcoming barriers or discrimination faced by women entrepreneurs when interacting with formal financial institutions (Langworth and Warnecke, 2020). According to Cabrera and Mauricio (2017), easy access to credits might exist but barriers such as operational challenges and market conditions, can limit its influence on the performance and growth of women entrepreneurs. Besides, the study indicated that the government initiatives in Kuwait were effective. However, they could not be sufficiently utilized or aligned with the specific needs of women entrepreneurs limiting their impact on growth and performance (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

An insignificant relationship between overall economic factors and the performance and growth of women entrepreneurs could also mean that external factors mitigate the potential benefits of market opportunities or are not sufficiently leveraged (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). While women entrepreneurs in Kuwait believed that market dynamics and demand affected their success, market opportunities might not correlate strongly with their performance if they find difficulties in capitalizing on them or are not fully accessible due to other constraints. The study confirmed that women entrepreneurs faced infrastructure challenges that potentially hindered their performance despite the availability of other resources. Consistent with this finding, Orser et al. (2006) indicated that women entrepreneurs in Kuwait have encountered challenges related to economic infrastructure such as access to logistics and transportation to the available telecommunications and utilities. Although the country has maintained a reliable infrastructure backbone, there are still some instances of service disruptions or inefficiencies that impact business operations (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009). Insufficient infrastructure can create operational inefficiencies that outweigh the benefits of access to capital and market opportunities.

The study indicated a positive response on the reliability and helpfulness of economic infrastructure, which might indicate that although infrastructure is generally supportive, its impact might not be enough to be statistically significant. From the literature review, Orser et al. (2006) indicated that the perception of economic infrastructure depends on individual experiences and perspectives. Besides, Mulaudzi and Schachtebeck (2022) revealed that high operational costs, lack of opportunities awareness, a male-dominated industry, and lack of trust are the main challenges facing women entrepreneurs. The economic competition was perceived

to be a significant factor affecting the growth and sustainability of women entrepreneurs yet high competition may limit market share and profitability, thus dampening overall performance.

Likewise, Kuwait Bugawa and Aljuwaisri (2019) indicated that economic factors do not have a significant impact on the performance and growth of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait as some face discrimination and stereotyping when interacting with financial institutions. Women entrepreneurs in Kuwait also experience less availability of finance due to the inability to penetrate financial networks. They find both internal and external sources awkward due to the absence of lending institutions and the lack of sufficient savings. A lack of internal credits subjects most women enterprises to financial constraints and inadequate savings, leading to under-resourced enterprises not making big profits nor expanding (Fuerlinger et al., 2015).

#### **5.6. Fourth Hypothesis: Education does not play a significant role in the success of women entrepreneurs**

The study also focused on investigating whether education level plays a significant role in the success of women entrepreneurs. Consistent with prior studies women with higher academic qualifications were found to be more successful entrepreneurs (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). The study found there is a positive insignificant correlation and causal relationship between women's level of education and the performance and growth of their enterprises. This supports the existing literature indicating a positive relationship/correlation between education level and the performance of entrepreneurs. For example, Westhead and Solesyik (2016) found that education has a positive correlation with the level of formal entrepreneurial activities among women and that most women succeeding in entrepreneurship had gone beyond secondary education. Nabi et al. (2018) also found a positive correlation between education level and entrepreneurial performance, with individuals with high levels of education having high intent and entrepreneurship behavior and finding it easier when approaching problems, sharing ideas, finding solutions, and implementing solutions based on a spectrum related to enterprise ownership (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016).

Women entrepreneurs perceive their academic qualifications and studies as contributing factors to their success as businesswomen and entrepreneurs, affecting their ability to recognize and seize economic growth (Azmat & Fujimoto 2016). However, their skills and experiences in entrepreneurship were not part of their academic studies. Women entrepreneurs also considered



their academic qualifications and certificates impactful to investors and customers in considering their projects trustworthy and affected their self-confidence in making decisions related to their business projects. Consistently, Bullough et al. (2015) found that there is a positive relationship between education and the performance of women entrepreneurs.

Women entrepreneurs perceived their educational background as crucial to their success by believing that it helps them recognize and seize economic opportunities, which contributes to business growth. Westhead and Solesyik (2016) support this study by indicating that educated women and those with a strong belief in having skills, experience, and knowledge and their likelihood of owning a business. Likewise, Zhang et al. (2014) noted that less educated women are less equipped to start and manage a business. Despite most countries including Kuwait having business development services the population of women in entrepreneurship using it is minimal because of necessity, availability, access, and cost (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).

The fact that the study found skills and experiences in entrepreneurship were not part of women entrepreneurs' formal academic studies, suggests that traditional educational programs did not adequately prepare them for entrepreneurial practical challenges such as financial management and business planning and strategy. According to Staniewski (2016), effective financial management involves practical skills in managing cash flow, financial forecasting, and budgeting which is often learned through real-world experience rather than classroom instructions. Panda (2018) found that lack of business knowledge and experience are the major problems facing women in running their businesses. Besides, challenges such as developing comprehensive business planning and long-term strategies require hands-on and adaptability to real-world market conditions. Azam et al. (2009) assert that managing daily operations efficiently and creating and executing marketing strategies and sales tactics require practical problem-solving skills, understanding of market dynamics and customer behavior, and the ability to adapt the changing circumstances, which are best learned through direct experience.

The fact that women entrepreneurs considered academic qualifications and certificates helped them to gain the trust of investors and customers, doesn't guarantee high performance and growth. According to Seelos and Mair (2005), marketing conditions such as changes in market demand economic downturns, and customer satisfaction and loyalty can affect the performance

of entrepreneurs despite their trust. These factors require consistently delivering quality services and products thus directly influencing performance and enhancing a strong brand position which fosters growth. More so, academic qualifications were found to influence women entrepreneurs' self-confidence in making informed and strategic business-related decisions, a critical component of an entrepreneur's success.

Similar to this study, Bae et al. (2014) found a positive correlation between education and entrepreneurial intentions. However, the exact benefit of entrepreneurial performance was still unknown. The insignificant relationship between education level and performance and growth of entrepreneurs indicates that there is a need to enhance entrepreneurial components of academic programs to foster the confidence of women entrepreneurs and help them leverage their academic qualifications in business contexts. The fact that Kuwait has a well-established education system, students can pursue higher education in Local Universities or abroad while the government should invest significantly in education to enhance opportunities for advancement (Ramandani et al., 2012). Likewise, Chinomona and Maziriri (2015) indicated an insignificant causal relationship between education and the performance of women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs with more experience have a higher probability of identifying business gaps and identifying the best strategy to fill the gap, but a substantial value in the business opportunity is required to establish a new venture and take the initiative (Fuerlinger et al., 2015). Their study also indicated that skilled and educated women are limited to pursue various opportunities due to factors like limited access to infrastructure, and financial problems, which may limit them from starting or growing their businesses (Azam Roomi, Harrison & Beaumont-Kerridge, 2009).

The study recording an insignificant relationship between education level and performance and growth of women entrepreneurs shows that education level is not the main factor determining the success of women entrepreneurs. Consistent with this finding, Nowinski et al. (2019) found that the majority of women entrepreneurs including the successful ones are not well-equipped in terms of education and skills. However, practical knowledge acquired in the field helped them to sail through entrepreneurship. Piacentini (2013) indicated that most women entrepreneurs lack market participation knowledge and experience, a serious problem when marketing their products and services. Besides, a lack of knowledge about international acceptability due to a lack of exposure to the international market limits educated women's enterprises from performing well (Ladge Eddleston & Sugiyama 2019).



## 6. CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATION

### 6.1. Conclusion

The main aim of this study was to investigate factors influencing female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in Kuwait in the current competitive business arena. To successfully address this research topic, the study focused on four research objectives including the investigation of whether sociocultural aspects, self-confidence, economic factors, and women's education have a significant influence on the performance and growth of the women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Using a deductive research approach, a quantitative research method was chosen to randomly select participants, collect data, and analyze it using statistical methods. Convenience sampling techniques were also applied to target women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, with snowball being the most suitable method. The data was collected through questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses. Research ethics were upheld, ensuring participants were fully aware of the study's purpose, data handling, and analysis. The study concluded sociocultural aspects have no significant relationship with the growth of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, failing to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that women's entrepreneurship in Kuwait is not significantly determined by socio-cultural aspects. This indicates that, while sociocultural factors can influence entrepreneurship, they are not the primary determinant, which is supported by the virtual of entrepreneurs being outliers that break away from traditional norms to create new business ventures. The study indicated that technological advancement and globalization have outweighed the influence of socio-cultural factors on entrepreneurial success. With the rise of digital platforms and the internet, entrepreneurs can operate and succeed outside their local socio-cultural constraints.

In regions with supportive socio-cultural settings, the level of entrepreneurial activity is highly driven by necessity rather than opportunity. Entrepreneurs in less supportive social-cultural settings often inhibit high levels of resilience and adaptability, enabling them to overcome socio-cultural barriers and succeed in their ventures. Personal characteristics such as proactive personality, resilience, and self-efficacy influence entrepreneurial success, often outweighing socio-cultural constraints. Women entrepreneurs are finding relative ways to mobilize resources, navigate market challenges, and exploit resources despite socio-cultural barriers, making them successful entrepreneurs, not necessarily influenced by socio-cultural aspects.

The study also found that women entrepreneurs found there is a positive insignificant relationship between self-confidence and female entrepreneurs' effectiveness in the current competitive business arena of Kuwait, suggesting that as self-confidence increases, performance and growth tend to increase, however does not signify causality. Women with high self-confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities were more likely to continue their business projects and make better decisions. Besides, women with low self-confidence have a weak sense of perseverance and tenacity while women with high self-confidence assert their agency and autonomy. Although women with high levels of self-confidence are more competitive in the market and have better policies to reach business goals, the influence of self-confidence on the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs depends on emergency management experience, entrepreneurial certifications, and professional networks, leading to bias. The benefits of self-confidence on the female entrepreneurs' effectiveness are also limited by a lack of practical skills like human resources, operation, sales, marketing, and financial management limits its benefits.

The study also found that there is a positive insignificant relationship between economic factors and the growth and performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Therefore, failing to reject the hypothesis and conclude that economic factors have insignificantly determined the performance of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Women entrepreneurs in Kuwait have better access to financing opportunities and resources, which is crucial in providing capital for startup and growth, enabling them to cover costs like market research, marketing efforts, and development of products and services. However, the study indicated that financial sources require collateral to secure loans and investments, a significant challenge for many female entrepreneurs who lack access to collateral due to cultural norms and property ownership entrepreneur. Favorable market dynamics and sufficient market opportunities allowed women entrepreneurs to find and serve customers, diversify their product offerings, cater to different customer needs, and increase sales opportunities. The presence of reliable economic infrastructure reduces obstacles and enables women entrepreneurs to focus on growing their businesses by supporting smooth business operations, facilitating connections with investors and venture capitalists, and establishing and growing online businesses, providing additional market opportunities and revenue streams to women entrepreneurs.

The study contributes to the growing body of literature on female entrepreneurship by providing empirical evidence on the sociocultural and economic challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Previous studies on female entrepreneurship in the Middle East have often focused on broader economic and political contexts without specifically addressing the micro-level factors influencing individual business performance. This study fills this gap by examining how sociocultural norms, economic barriers, and personal attributes such as self-confidence and education interact to shape entrepreneurial outcomes. The findings highlight the need for further research into the psychological and social dimensions of female entrepreneurship, particularly in conservative societies where gender norms play a significant role in shaping professional opportunities.

Moreover, the study's methodological approach, which combined descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses, offers a robust framework for analyzing complex relationships between social, economic, and psychological variables. Future research could build on this framework to explore the long-term impact of sociocultural and economic changes on female entrepreneurship. The study also underscores the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in understanding female entrepreneurship. By integrating insights from business studies, sociology, and psychology, future research could develop more comprehensive models of entrepreneurial success for women. Additionally, the study's findings have implications for entrepreneurship education, suggesting that business programs should include tailored training modules that address the specific needs and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in conservative social environments.

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## **6.2 Managerial Implications**

From a managerial perspective, the study offers several key insights for policymakers, business leaders, and support organizations seeking to enhance the success of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait. First, the findings underscore the need for targeted financial support programs for women entrepreneurs. Limited access to capital remains a significant barrier, and addressing this issue through gender-focused funding schemes, microfinance initiatives, and venture capital partnerships could help bridge this gap. Second, the study highlights the importance of building professional networks for women entrepreneurs. Establishing women-focused business associations,

mentorship programs, and peer support networks could provide women with the strategic guidance, emotional support, and business connections needed to succeed.

Third, the study emphasizes the role of self-confidence in driving entrepreneurial success. Business training programs should incorporate confidence-building exercises, leadership development workshops, and exposure to successful female role models to help women overcome psychological barriers. Fourth, education emerged as a critical factor in enhancing business performance. Providing women entrepreneurs with access to business education, management training, and industry-specific knowledge could strengthen their strategic decision-making and operational capabilities. Finally, the study calls for greater involvement of governmental and non-governmental organizations in creating an enabling environment for female entrepreneurship. Policies that promote gender equality in business, eliminate discriminatory practices, and provide incentives for female-led enterprises could significantly improve the entrepreneurial landscape for women in Kuwait.

### **6.3 Limitation**

While the study offers valuable insights into the factors influencing female entrepreneurship in Kuwait, it is not without limitations. First, the study's sample size was relatively small, consisting of only 100 women entrepreneurs. Although this sample provided meaningful insights, a larger and more diverse sample could improve the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study relied on convenience and snowball sampling methods, which may introduce selection bias and limit the representativeness of the sample. Future research should consider using random sampling techniques to enhance the validity and reliability of the results.

Third, the study focused primarily on sociocultural and economic factors, self-confidence, and education as determinants of entrepreneurial success. However, other factors such as technological access, market competition, political stability, and legal frameworks may also play important roles in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes. Future research should adopt a more holistic approach by examining these additional variables. Fourth, the study was cross-sectional in nature, capturing data at a single point in time. A longitudinal study could provide deeper insights into how the entrepreneurial environment for women in Kuwait evolves over time. Lastly, cultural sensitivi-

ties and social norms may have influenced the responses of participants, leading to potential response bias. Future studies should explore alternative data collection methods, such as in-depth interviews and focus groups, to gain a more nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by female entrepreneurs

The study aimed to establish factors influencing female entrepreneurship in Kuwait using socio-cultural, self-confidence, economic factors, and education level as independent variables. This limited the study to only these variables which did not fully explain what determined the success and growth of female entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

The study used only quantitative research methods in collecting data from women entrepreneurs, which limited them from giving in-depth information about the topic of the study. The fact that the study found an insignificant causal relationship between all independent variables and dependent variables, means that the research never addressed the immediate factors affecting the effectiveness of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. The participants were denied the chance to give information on what really affects their entrepreneurial endeavors.

The study used a small sample size of 100 women entrepreneurs, compared to a thousand of women owning and running businesses in Kuwait. This could have contributed to insufficient information about the reality of the influence of economic, and socio-cultural factors, education level, and self-confidence in affecting female entrepreneurs in real life.

The scope of the study was also limited to only women entrepreneurs residing in Kuwait. Since the study was based on the perceptions, opinions, and experiences of factors influencing women entrepreneurs in Kuwait, the male participants could have participated in this study. Therefore, the study's findings could provide limited and biased knowledge about the real state and can only be used to explain female entrepreneurs in Kuwait and not in other regions.

In addition, the research also failed to incorporate mentorship and networking factors as some of the key factors that may determine female entrepreneurship in Kuwait. Thus, both, and particularly, the invitations as well as the networking can prevent receiving an inauspicious response from the business world and act as a source of support, advice, and encouragement for female entrepreneurs. Such aspects are crucial in order to identify how the relationships with other like-minded experienced entrepreneurs and formal business networks, and mentorship



opportunities might influence the outcomes and advancement of women's businesses. Future research work could possibly include all these variables in order to give a broader perspective of some of the factors that may affect women entrepreneurs.

One of the study's weaknesses is that it does not delve into technological adaptation and Digital literacy level among women entrepreneurs. As the business environment tends to turn into the digital environment, knowledge of the possibility to operate in virtual space may also be crucial for success. However, the study did not offer economic, socio-cultural or educational insights into the possible roles of digital skills or usage of platforms. I also wanted to include this element as it might offer a wealth of information regarding the ways in which technology favours or hinders women enterprisers particularly in a growing and highly demanding market such as Kuwait.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and limitations of the study, several recommendations can be made to improve the entrepreneurial success of women in Kuwait. First, policymakers should introduce targeted funding initiatives for female entrepreneurs, including low-interest loans, grants, and venture capital opportunities. These financial support programs should be designed to address the specific needs of women-owned businesses and reduce barriers to accessing capital. Second, business support organizations should establish mentorship and networking programs to provide women entrepreneurs with access to professional advice, strategic guidance, and business connections.

Third, educational institutions and business training programs should develop tailored courses for female entrepreneurs, focusing on leadership development, strategic planning, and financial management. Incorporating real-world case studies, business simulations, and practical exercises could enhance the effectiveness of these programs. Fourth, psychological and social support should be integrated into business training programs to address self-confidence issues. Confidence-building workshops, peer support groups, and exposure to successful female entrepreneurs could help women overcome psychological barriers and enhance their entrepreneurial resilience.

Lastly, governmental and non-governmental organizations should collaborate to create an enabling environment for female entrepreneurship by promoting gender equality in business, eliminating discriminatory practices, and providing incentives for female-led enterprises.

The study was also silent on the effect of legal and regulatory environment on women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Knowledge of legal reforms, legal requirements for licensing and taxation and other policies affects business ventures is an important prerequisite in any work on business ventures. For example, policies based on the gender or questionably restrictive licensing procedures might only impact women entrepreneurs. Due to this exclusion the study painted a partial picture of entrepreneurship in Kuwait because, more often than not, there are regulatory barriers that determine the growth and survival of businesses.

The study failed to examine the roles of family responsibilities and work/ family conflict on female entrepreneurs. Society often presents women with tasks at home, in this case, women from Kuwait may not have adequate time in managing and expanding a business. Unfortunately, this research failed to do so on how family support, child care responsibilities and unspoken societal culture of feminine roles influenced women's entrepreneurship. Their inclusion might show how the combinations of family and business affairs affect women entrepreneurs' success and may give insight on how to engage the right policy frameworks to make it easier for such individuals.

The strength of the given quantitative approach that was mainly used in the study was the weakness that yielded a less complex understanding of the personal experiences of the women entrepreneurs. Interviews, focus group discussions quantitatively would enable participants to explain their experiences, challenges, and motivations in their own views giving a broader spectrum of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Such insights were however missed out in the study since the study purely relied on quantitative methods without giving much touch on culture or emotion of the female entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

The research was limited in scope and did not explore the possible effects that global economy and competition have on Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs. Local businesses could be greatly affected by forex because external variables like global recessions, inflation or volatility in the oil market that is a primary driver of Kuwait's economy. Thus, the absence of an evaluation of larger economic contexts imposing fund restriction on global economies was another weakness

originating from the emphasis on domestic socio-cultural and economic characteristics of women business entrants. Subsequent studies, future works, might consider addressing the results from an international perspective, how global economic conditions affect the prospects and problems that Kuwaiti women are facing while starting their own businesses.

## **6.2. Recommendations**

The study recommended that future studies include both quantitative and qualitative research methods to increase the validity of the findings and conclusions. The use of both methods will give participants a chance to give information on what really affects their entrepreneurial endeavors, which also allows the researcher to understand the immediate factors affecting the effectiveness of women entrepreneurs in Kuwait.

The study recommended that future study to include large sample size and both genders as this will provide sufficient information about the topic under the study, while the results provide knowledge about the real-life situation. In addition, the study suggests that future studies should explore the need for and utilization of digital technology by Kuwaiti women entrepreneurs. As the business environments in different world economies are transformed by technology, knowledge on how women entrepreneurs leverage on digital platforms, social media, and e-commerce could help policy makers learn how to implement policies which would prop up their competitiveness. Including this element in future research would show how technological facility and connection affect business results, client base, and productivity to empower Kuwaiti women to harness new technologies to develop their businesses.

The study also recommended that Kuwait should develop support structures for women, especially women business people in the country together with mentorship programmes. Organizing discussions in which problems and achievements of women become the subject of discussion would help create a support system and consolidate the efforts of women entrepreneurs. It was also such networks could also assist new entrepreneurs with new business ideas through consulting from the already established women business moguls. Further, this could also mean that established and new firms would benefit where there are few training programs that allow new trainers to be trained by experienced ones with knowledge that would enhance their ability to meet their goal in today's competitive world.

The last suggestion from the study is that the policymakers should endeavour to establish more transparent and available funding for female entrepreneurs. The study shows that women experience major issues in terms of access to capital, therefore, it might be effective to offer special financial products or apply subsidies to encourage more ladies start and develop businesses. Measures such as providing low interest rate for the credit and grant as well as introduction of government insured credit could go along way in lightening the burden facing the women entrepreneurs so that they are able to devote adequate attention towards innovations rather than struggling to obtain adequate funding for their business.

This study also recommended that Kuwaiti educational institutions promote and integrate dimensions of training in skills for entrepreneurship in school particularly women. The reduction of outdated gender stereotyping for girls was also evident and overall, bringing in programs ranging from high school to university levels that deal mainly with entrepreneurship indicated that young women could build their base upon which they would be ready to launch into business on their own. Some of the areas that the courses may include are financial management, business planning and digital marketing since they are vital for the business to know. If female students were exposed to entrepreneurship at this tender age they would be encouraged to be entrepreneurial and also be armed with the basic knowledge that would enable them to handle most of the challenges that confront most business people.

In addition, the study suggested that future researchers explore the relationship between cultural attitudes and women's business outcomes in Kuwait. Given that sociocultural factors were recognised as important in the study, further extension of the ways in which cultural norms regulate female choice and business performance might prove useful. They can be used to look at how perceptions people in society have about gender influence actresses' confidence and their ability to make economic decisions in business. It just might be that a deeper understanding of these dynamics might be helpful for the development of programs and projects that addressed the cultural issue and thus started making the business environment more suitable for women.

The study recommended that further research be done whereby the research's focus is generalised across various industries and areas of Kuwait. It might be possible that by confining ourselves to one area and one type of organization only, some or most of the difficulties as well as opportunities that women encounter will be left unnoted. Exhausting the geographic and

industrial variety would give a broader perspective about the situation of Kuwaiti women in entrepreneurial activities and thus create policies that capture the complexity of their experience.

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