



Women Entrepreneurs of Nueva Ecija: A Study on Reasons, Benefits, and Challenges of Work from Home

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Abstract— *Women entrepreneurs all around the world are making a difference by contributing countless ideas as well as a significant amount of energy and resources to their communities. This study focused on the reasons why women entrepreneurs work from home. This research also described the benefits of working from home for female entrepreneurs. Furthermore, this study addressed the challenges that women entrepreneurs face when working from home. The method of research used in this study is descriptive quantitative method. Purposive sampling was used by the researcher, who distributed survey questionnaires to a total of 58 female entrepreneurs, 25 began working from home as entrepreneurs, and 33 began their businesses from home as a result of the pandemic. Work-from-home women entrepreneurs have reasons, benefits, and challenges. Women entrepreneurs in Nueva Ecija found out that their main reasons working from home were the involvement of their family members, assurance of monitoring and controlling their money specifically their income, and assumption of workspace is readily available at home. They know that they have benefitted working from home because they can focus on customer relations and provide convenience of working space for their business since they will not go out to go to the office. However, there were also challenges as entrepreneurs working from home such as lack of formal training in entrepreneurship, competitions in business, and financial stability. Based on these conclusions, researcher recommends that women entrepreneurs working from home should strengthen the involvement of family members in doing their business because this could be a source of motivation to cope with when challenges would come in. An exclusive workspace should be established at home to sustain the business and home area. Business scheduling and family time are also important to maintain work and life balance. Women entrepreneurs are encouraged to communicate with the local government unit, schools, or even online advertised trainings in entrepreneurship to strengthen their skills on customer relations and enhance their skills in product development, marketing, and as well as, financial management.*

Keywords— *Women Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurship, Work from home.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneurs all around the world are making a difference by contributing countless ideas as well as a significant amount of energy and resources to their communities. A woman entrepreneur is defined as a woman who has started a business and is actively involved in its management, owns at least 50% of the company, and has been in existence for one year or more (Ahmad et al., 2011).

It is believed that when a woman entrepreneur's networks (bridging social capital) and feelings of control over resources (self-efficacy) grow through social media, this would have a greater impact on society (Ajjan et al., 2014).

The enterprises are expanding their network using an online platform. Market sellers must be dynamic and sensitive to various sorts of distribution channels in varied conditions (for example, pandemic crises) (Santos & Santos, 2020). The following are the advantages of online

marketing: online business sellers do not need to build up online stores because social media can serve as their marketing platform, they can easily reach clients via internet connection, and they can have two-way conversations at their own pace (Santos, 2020).

In light of the foregoing studies, the researcher sought to assess the reasons for and benefits of women entrepreneurs working from home. The researcher also wanted to know about the difficulties that women entrepreneurs face when working from home.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Women entrepreneurs have been identified as a key untapped source of economic growth, owing to the fact that they generate new jobs for themselves and others, offer various solutions to management, organizational, and business difficulties and impediments, and seize business opportunities (Ramadani et al, 2013).

One of the most significant issues posed by the COVID-19 is that women are more likely to control many of the smallest, most vulnerable firms (Manolova et al., 2020). However, women entrepreneurs are more inclined to prioritize and reduce risk in order for their company and personal life to coexist, whereas male entrepreneurs are more likely to establish a firm in order to generate money and have greater business expectations (Kepler & Shane 2007).

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study focused on the reasons why women entrepreneurs work from home. This research also described the benefits of working from home for female entrepreneurs. Furthermore, this study addressed the challenges that women entrepreneurs face when working from home.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive quantitative method as it describes the present condition. It is also concerned with the existing state or connection; the prevalent practices; and the attitudes and processes that are taking place; the impacts that are being felt or the trends that are forming (Cohen et al., 2002).

Purposive sampling was used by the researcher, who distributed survey questionnaires with likert-scale responses to 58 women entrepreneurs in Nueva Ecija. The respondents ranged in age from 23 to 48 years old and did not hold a business or entrepreneurship degree. From a total of 58 female entrepreneurs, 25 began working from home as entrepreneurs, and 33 began their businesses from home as a result of the pandemic. Owning a sari-sari store, online selling, and direct selling were the types of businesses.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1. Reasons for Working from Home

Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I have a convenient / adequate workspace at home	3.32	Strongly Agree
2. My husband / family does not want me to go out for work.	2.96	Agree
3. I can look after my family responsibilities.	2.74	Agree
4. I can save money working from home.	3.34	Strongly Agree
5. I have control over my income.	2.82	Agree
6. My family helps me in my business.	3.47	Strongly Agree
7. I can start business to be financially independent.	2.98	Agree
General Weighted Mean	3.09	Agree

Legend	Verbal Interpretation
3.25 - 4.00	Strongly Agree
2.50 - 3.24	Agree
1.75 - 2.49	Disagree
1.00 - 1.74	Strongly Disagree

Table 1 shows the reasons of women entrepreneurs in Nueva Ecija for choosing to work from home. Based on the result, the respondents got a general weighted mean of 3.09, which has a verbal interpretation of “Agree”. To highlight, the top reasons that the respondents “Strongly Agreed” are as follows: “My family helps me in my business” (mean = 3.47), “I can save money from working from home” (mean = 3.34), and “I have convenient / adequate workspace at home” (mean = 3.32). The results indicate that women entrepreneurs of Nueva Ecija chose to

work from home because of they want to involve their family members, they can monitor and control their money specifically their income, and they can provide workspace readily available at home. The analysis confirms the study of Leung, Mukerjee, and Thurik (2020) and Akehurst, Simarro, and Mas-Tur (2012) that family support of the women entrepreneurs is very important because it contributes to the entrepreneurial prosperity by providing emotional and financial resources.

Table 2. Benefits of Working from Home

Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I do not need to buy or rent business premises.	3.33	Strongly Agree
2. I able to avoid tied into long-term tenancy agreements.	3.36	Strongly Agree
3. I can save time and money spend in travelling to work.	2.99	Agree
4. I can increase product range to increase my profit.	3.23	Agree
5. I can advertise through word of mouth.	3.10	Agree
6. I have increased personal contact with my customers.	3.92	Strongly Agree
7. I can provide quality time to follow up my customers.	3.46	Strongly Agree
General Weighted Mean	3.34	Strongly Agree

Legend	Verbal Interpretation
3.25 - 4.00	Strongly Agree
2.50 - 3.24	Agree
1.75 - 2.49	Disagree
1.00 - 1.74	Strongly Disagree

Table 2 shows how working from home benefits the women entrepreneurs of Nueva Ecija. Based on the result, women entrepreneurs got a general weighted mean of 3.34 that has a verbal interpretation of “Strongly Agree”. Among the benefits were Strongly Agreed by the women entrepreneurs are the following: “I have increased personal contact with my customers” (mean = 3.92), “I can provide quality time to follow up my customers” (mean = 3.46), “I am able to avoid tied long-term tenancy agreements” (mean = 3.36), and “I do not need to buy or rent business premises” (mean = 3.33). These statistical values uphold

that benefits of working from home focus on customer relations and convenience of working space for their business.

The analysis validates Mithas, Krishnan, and Fornell (2005) that there is an effect of customer relationship management (CRM) on customer knowledge and customer satisfaction. Equally, when women entrepreneurs have personal contact and provide quality time to their customers could lead to the satisfaction of their customers.

Table 3. Challenges Encountered Working from Home

Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I cannot attend formal training in entrepreneurship that could help me perform better.	3.81	Strongly Agree
2. I experience social isolation.	2.61	Agree
3. I have difficulty separating home and work life.	3.20	Agree
4. I need to find initial expense of setting up my business at home.	3.42	Strongly Agree

5. I fear competitions because many entrepreneurs are also working from home.	3.58	Strongly Agree
6. I have customers who expect too much at minimal cost.	3.30	Strongly Agree
7. I need to borrow funds from my family to overcome working capital problems.	3.15	Agree
General Weighted Mean	3.30	Strongly Agree

Legend Verbal Interpretation

- 3.25 - 4.00 Strongly Agree
- 2.50 - 3.24 Agree
- 1.75 - 2.49 Disagree
- 1.00 - 1.74 Strongly Disagree

Table 3 presents the challenges of women entrepreneurs of Nueva Ecija who are working from home. Based on the result, women entrepreneurs got a general weighted mean of 3.30, which has a verbal description of “Strongly Agree”. They strongly agreed that the challenges they encountered are follows: “I cannot attend formal training in entrepreneurship that could help me perform better” (mean = 3.81), “I fear competitions because many entrepreneurs are also working from home” (mean = 3.58), “I need to find initial expense of setting up my business at home” (mean = 3.42), and “I have customers who expect too much at minimal cost” (mean = 3.30). The data suggests that the challenges encountered by the women entrepreneurs in Nueva Ecija are lack of formal training in entrepreneurship, competitions in business, and financial stability. In alignment, it has been shown in the study of Putta (2014) that trained entrepreneurs have more management skills to run the enterprise than entrepreneurs without entrepreneurship training. In relation to competition among entrepreneurs, Cacciotti and Hayton (2014) presented that subjective perceptual variables (for example, fear of failure) have a significant impact on women’s entrepreneurial inclination and account for a significant portion of the gender disparity in entrepreneurial activity.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Work-from-home women entrepreneurs have reasons, benefits, and challenges. Women entrepreneurs in Nueva Ecija found out that their main reasons working from home were the involvement of their family members, assurance of monitoring and controlling their money specifically their income, and assumption of workspace is readily available at home. They know that they have benefitted working from home because they can focus on customer relations and provide convenience of working space for their business since they will not go out to go to the office.

However, there were also challenges as entrepreneurs working from home such as lack of formal training in entrepreneurship, competitions in business, and financial stability.

Based on these conclusions, researcher recommends that women entrepreneurs working from home should strengthen the involvement of family members in doing their business because this could be a source of motivation to cope with when challenges would come in. An exclusive workspace should be established at home to sustain the business and home area. Business scheduling and family time are also important to maintain work and life balance. Women entrepreneurs are encouraged to communicate with the local government unit, schools, or even online advertised trainings in entrepreneurship to strengthen their skills on customer relations and enhance their skills in product development, marketing, and as well as, financial management.

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