
Factors Affecting on the Performance of Women Entrepreneurs’ in Small and Medium Entities

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurs contribute to the economic development of Sri Lanka. Most of small businesses are engaging in innovating byproducts or services and these micro businesses are supporting the development of the country. Therefore, proper establishment of these types of small and medium businesses are important to contribute to the country’s development. Thus, this study explores the factors affecting both financial and non-financial performance of women entrepreneurs in small and medium entities (SMEs’) in Anuradhapura district in Sri Lanka. Entrepreneurs’ Orientation of individuals, Human Capital, Entrepreneur’s goals and motivations, Legal and government barriers, Access to finance, Social-cultural factors are used as independent variables which consisting internal influencing factors and external influencing factors. Opportunity recognition is used as mediator in between influencing factors and performance of women entrepreneurs. A sample of 100 women entrepreneurs was selected based on random sampling method and structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Factors of entrepreneur orientation, human capital, entrepreneurship goals, motivational and social cultural factors have affected the women entrepreneurs’ performance in SME’s in Anuradhapura district. Therefore, it is identified that motivational and awareness programs enhance educational and practical skills of women entrepreneurs to improve performance in SME entities in Anuradhapura district. This study emphasizes the importance of the development of small and medium entrepreneur business in Sri Lanka for the country’s development.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Opportunity recognition, Performance, Small and medium enterprises, Women entrepreneurs

1. Introduction

Since a decade time, women's contribution to economic development has increased. Not only in managerial positions and other executive jobs, their involvement as entrepreneurs has become vital (Baumol, 1968). Entrepreneurship means the activity which involves in the discovering, evaluating and exploiting of opportunities to the innovation (Shane, 2003). According to the Census and Statistics Department, the education level has been increased and female undergraduates are 60% from total undergraduates. According to that women in Sri Lanka make up about 35.5% in labor force (The Women's Chamber of Industry and Commerce, 2019). Therefore, women are a considerable agent for the development in Sri Lanka because; they have sufficient educational knowledge and practice. The Asian Development Bank (2018) has granted \$12.5 million in order to support a program to employ, train and promote more women in banks and government agencies and to foster women's entrepreneurship.

In Sri Lanka, SMEs are considered a significant strategic sector and they are the driver for the changing of economic growth, increase in employment rate, development in regional areas and reduction of poverty. The Women's Chamber of Industry and Commerce -WCICSL (2019) revealed that there is an 80% of the economy is driven by SMEs' and out of them only 10% is led by women entrepreneurs. Further it mentioned that majority of women entrepreneurs are micro entrepreneurs. The reasons for that is lack of financial facilities, inadequate of financial literacy and strict government policies etc. These barriers and difficulties demotivate women to enter into the entrepreneurship. Financial barriers are influenced because of lack of confidence due to family issues, weak marketing strategies, labor difficulties and disagreement with association. These reasons cause as the common problems after the implementing of the business activities (Wijeratnam & Perera, 2013). As women entrepreneurs are major contributors to the Sri Lankan economy, this study focuses on investigating factors influence on women entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka.

1.1. Research Problem

The most important thing is to get awareness about the performance of women entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka. Entrepreneur characteristics are led to establish the performance. Theo and Chong (2007) expressed that individual characteristics, parental influence, business motivation and goals, business strategies, networking and entrepreneurial orientation and environmental factors (Girma, 2015) are included in measuring the performance. According to them, for the success of the business and to the growth of economy, the entrepreneur characteristics strengthen their enterprises. Thus, these factors are expected to affect entrepreneur performance.

Among other cities in Sri Lanka, geographically Anuradhapura district spread over 205 km (127 mi) and it has sufficient space for the entrepreneur activities. Manufacturing handicrafts, foods, and providing services (like salons) are the main income sources of women entrepreneurs in this area. Anuradhapura district is consisted with 22 Divisional Secretariat and the total population is 886,945. Among them 51.2% (440,475) population is female (Anuradhapura divisional secretarial data, 2018). As per Department of Census and Statistic Report (2013/2014), women entrepreneurs' in the rural areas (26%) is significantly above than that of urban areas (22%) in Sri Lanka. As Anuradhapura district falls under rural category it is clear that it has a considerable number of women entrepreneurs who would serve for the economic development of Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate the factors that affecting the performance of women entrepreneur in SMEs' in Anuradhapura district.

2. Literature Review

Currently Sri Lanka doesn't have a generally accepted definition for SME (Attygalle et al., 2014). However, different countries have defined SMEs in various ways using parameters such as number of persons employed, amount of capital invested, and amount of turnover or nature of the business. According to Circular 01 of 2017 of Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Bank Supervision Department "Enterprises with an annual turnover not exceeding Rs. 750mn will be considered as SMEs". According to Shane and Venkataraman (2000), "entrepreneurship is an activity that involves the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities to introduce new goods and services, ways of organizing, markets, processes, and raw material through organizing efforts that previously had not existed." Hasan & Almubarak (2016) defined entrepreneurship as "a process of innovation and creation with four dimensional elements: individual, organization, environmental factors and process, with support from the government, education, and constitution."

2.1. The Concept of Business Performance

Olabisi et al., (2013) defined that performance as the act of performing, of doing something successfully, using knowledge as distinguished from merely possessing it. Gimeno et al. et al., (1992) examined various factors which influence business performance such as, experience, education, and occupation of parents, gender, race, age, and entrepreneurial goals. The most comprehensive summary of factors influencing performance noted in a literature review by Theo and Chong (2007) include individual characteristics, parental influence, business motivation and goals, business strategies, goals and motives, networking and entrepreneurial orientation. According to the Girma (2015) performance means overall activities and operations by entrepreneurs that strengthening their enterprises.

2.2. Factors Affecting Performance of Women Entrepreneurs in SMEs

Entrepreneurs are often defined as a kind of innovative, sensitive and risky people. Increasingly, female entrepreneurs are considered important for economic development. They have not only contributed to employment creation and economic growth through their increasing numbers, but they have also made a contribution to the diversity of entrepreneurship in the economic process (Roy et al., 2017). It is important to know characteristics of women starting new businesses, their motivations for doing so and their performance levels in businesses (Hasan & Almubarak, 2016). Argument is that neglecting of women in the development process of any country constitutes a human resource waste (Nneka, 2015). In Sri Lanka context, women constitute more than half of the population and their active participation in the economy is relatively low. Encouraging them for entrepreneurship would not only lead to economic prosperity but would also improve their standard of living. Therefore entrepreneurship is considered a decisive factor for economic development of any country (Ranasinghe, 2008). Which is an exclusive women Business Member Organization, Sri Lanka Women Chamber of Industry and Commerce (WCIC), has been working with the government and with financial institutions to raise issues pertaining to women entrepreneurs such as improving financial services for women and fostering women's entrepreneurship in the SME sector (García-Palma & Molina, 2016).

Problems faced by women entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka are mainly low access to credit and marketing networks, lack of access to land and property, and reduced risk-taking capacity, lack of access to modern technology, lack of personal security and risk of sexual harassment, severe competition in the domestic and international markets, low level self-confidence and social and cultural barriers such as exclusive responsibility for household work and restrictions on mobility (Wijeratnam & Perera, 2013).

Women Entrepreneurs have grown in a large number across the globe over the last decade and increasingly the entrepreneurial potentials of women have changed the rural economies in many parts of the world. But this does not mean that the problems are totally resolved. In support of this a review by (Hasan & Almubarak, 2016) and (Girma, 2015) identified the following factors that affect women entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurs' Orientation of individuals (EO) is "the extent to which entrepreneur is inclined to take business-related risks (the risk-taking dimension), to favor change and innovation in order to obtain a competitive advantage for his/her firm (the innovation dimension), and to compete aggressively with other firms (the pro-activeness dimension)" (Covin & Slevin, 1989).

The knowledge earned from education and experiences are considered as a foundation that people possess differently and it is essential to recognize divergence in identifying and exploiting opportunity (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). According to Lerner et al. (1997), the influence of Human Capital (HC) factors on performance had diverse results. So, the fields of occupational experience, business skills, and a high level of education are positively linked to venture performance while previous start-up business experience has no link to this.

Many literatures discussed internal motivations of entrepreneurs for establishing the start-up tasks and it is considered an important ingredient of entrepreneurial success recipe (Pandian et al., 2011).

Legal and government barriers (LGB) refer to the various issues related to administrative bodies and government regulations affecting the performance of women entrepreneurs (Wube, 2010). Financial help should be provided to women entrepreneurs by government as well as non-government financial agencies as it removes their difficulty in procuring loans (Roy et al., 2017). In most of the developing countries women need to get supports from financial institutions to start their business as a result of poverty, unemployment, limited family income and failure in saving (Ekpe et al., 2010).

Sociological theorists argue that social structures (the workplace, the family and organized social life) create problems for women, stopping them from getting entrepreneurial opportunities and having an effect on their performance (Aldrich, 1989). 'Culture' is considered as a factor contributing to the success of women entrepreneurs of Sri Lanka (Ranasinghe, 2008). Both developed and developing countries revealed that family factors such as the spouse occupation, father's occupation and responsibilities towards husbands and children may deter women and prevent them from becoming entrepreneurs (Naser et al., 2009).

Opportunity Recognition (OR) is one of the factors affecting women EP. Even though identification of the entrepreneurial opportunity is a subjective issue, the opportunity itself is an objective phenomenon that is recognized to particular individuals at a particular time (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Researchers have emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship not only to encourage the development of new business but also the recognition and pursuit of new entrepreneurial opportunities (De Carolis & Saporito, 2006; Fillis, 2009)

Exploitation of the opportunity depends on the entrepreneur's level of education, skills or knowledge acquired through work experience, social networks, credit, and cost-benefit analysis of the business (Shane, 2003). The viability of a business venture will depend on how

an entrepreneur comes to recognize opportunities and decide which opportunities to pursue (Anderson & Miller, 2002).

2.3. Conceptual Model and Research Hypotheses

According to this study, there are seven independent factors affecting the performance of women entrepreneurs in SMEs namely entrepreneur orientation (EO), human capital (HC), entrepreneur goals and motives (EGM), Legal and government barriers (LGB), access to finance (AF), social-cultural factors (SCF) and opportunity recognition (OR).

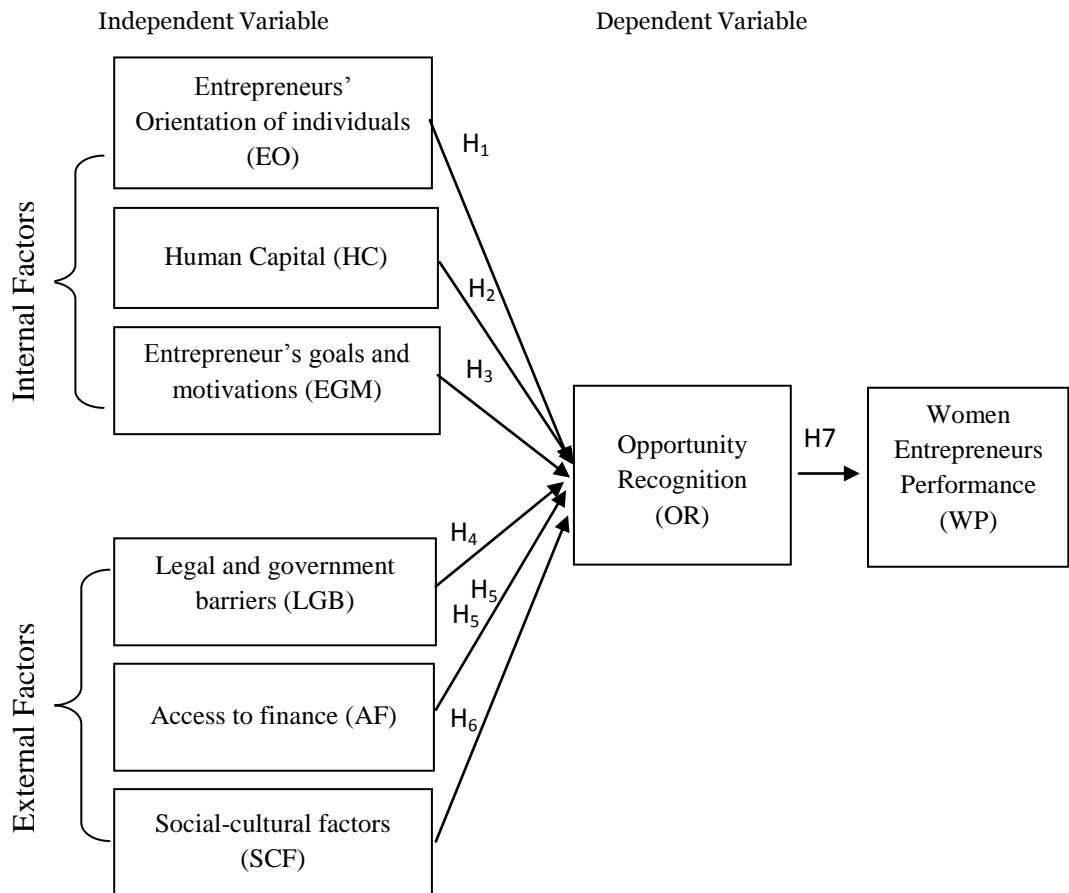


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Adapted from Hasan & Almubarak (2016)

2.3.1. Entrepreneurs' Orientation of individuals (EO) and Opportunity Recognition (OR)

Shane (2003) theory of entrepreneurship stated EO as the capability of entrepreneurs to find out and utilize opportunity related to entrepreneurial performance, which vary among people and it is based on individual situation regarding risk acceptance. People with negative attitude toward risk will not find out entrepreneurial opportunity. In the same perspective, some people possess creative ideas and have high propensity to access micro finance. Still, their scarce of risk will avoid them from having good utilization of entrepreneurial opportunity (Ekpe et al., 2010).

H1: EO influences women entrepreneurs' OR.

2.3.2. Human Capital (HC) and Opportunity Recognition

The significance of HC could be restricted by two main demographic characteristics, which are education and experience. According to HC theory by Gary Becker, people with high performance in implementing missions usually possess higher HC. Furthermore, prior studies reveal that HC at the early phases of entrepreneurial venture is significant, that results in growing OR and consequently the success of entrepreneurship (Hasan & Almubarak, 2016).

H₂: HC influences women entrepreneurs' OR.

2.3.3. Entrepreneurs Goals and Motivations and Opportunity Recognition

According to Teoh and Chong, (2007), goals are the positive outcomes that someone expects to get from doing reasoned behavior, while motivation is the process by which goal-directed activity is activated and sustained. Sadi and Al-Ghazali (2012), compare Saudi Arabian women entrepreneurs and Bahraini women entrepreneurs and the study found that the most outstanding aspect that attracts Saudi Arabian women is self-actualization. It was observed that personal motives and goals have a connection towards performance in female enterprises, whereas opportunity motivation was connected to survival and independence was associated with no growth (Khan, 2014).

H₃: EGM influences women entrepreneurs' OR.

2.3.4. Legal and Government Barriers and Opportunity Recognition

Research on obstacles facing women entrepreneurs in developing countries indicates that taxation, regulation, and legal barriers can play as major constraints for women entrepreneurs and success of their business (Haxhiu, 2015). The policy makers should carry on their efforts in nurturing more women entrepreneurs and also to facilitate their success (Teoh & Chong, 2007).

H₄: LGB influences women entrepreneurs' OR.

2.3.5. Access to Finance (AF) and Opportunity Recognition

AF refers to the set of fundamental information related to internal project financing and external market condition that affect business or an investment's value (Wube, 2010). In most of the developing economies, women need to get funds from financial organizations to start their businesses as a result of poverty, unemployment, limited family income and failure in saving (Ekpe et al., 2010). Women need effective collaterals that exclude household properties and negative attitude of lending institutions towards women (Wube, 2010).

H₅: AF influences women entrepreneurs' OR.

2.3.6. Socio cultural Factors (SF) and Opportunity Recognition

Sociological theorists argue that social structures (the workplace, the family and organized social life) create problems for women, stopping them from getting entrepreneurial opportunities and having an effect on their performance (Aldrich, 1989). Arasti et al. (2012) shows that, the social network enables entrepreneur to identify opportunities, information and resources then influence entrepreneur for the growth orientation. Furthermore, they gain emotional support from their close connections (husband, father and mother, friends and relatives).

H₆: SCF influences women entrepreneurs' OR.

2.3.7. Opportunity Recognition and of Women Entrepreneur Performance

The theory of entrepreneurial opportunity is strongly related to entrepreneurship. In developing countries, there are formal and informal entrepreneurial opportunities. Rapid evolution countries generally practice remarkable transfer in local market, creating opportunities for fresh participants (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

H₇: OR of women entrepreneurs' influences women EP

3. Methodology

This is an explanatory study which is conducted through primary data which was collected through a structured questionnaire from a sample of 100 women in SMEs in different business sectors that were registered at Anuradhapura Divisional Secretariat from 25,296 of registered SME's in Anuradhapura district. Random sampling method was applied for selecting the sample. A structured questionnaire adapted from the study of Hasan & Almubarak(2016) was applied to collect data. Conceptual framework (Figure 1) consists 6 independent variables, 1 mediator factor and 1 dependent variable. The researcher applied reliability analysis to test the internal consistency, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis to test the strength of the relationship and regression analysis to test the hypothesis.

Table 1: Operationalization of variables

Variable	Dimension	Source
Entrepreneurs' Orientation of individuals of individuals	Innovativeness	(Covin & Slevin, 1989)
	Risk Taking	
	Competitive aggressiveness	
Human Capital	Education Background	(Bosma, Praag, Thurik, & Wit, 2004)
	Working experience	
	Managerial Experience	
Entrepreneurs' goals and motivations	Independence	(Kuratko, Hornsby, & Naffziger, 1997)
	Mastery Goals	
Legal and government motivation	Government support	(WUBE, 2010)
	Registration & operational procedure	
Access to finance	Motivations	(WUBE, 2010)
Social-cultural factor	Parent occupation	(WUBE, 2010)and (Teoh & Chong, 2010)
	Strong relationship	
	Gender stereotypes	
Opportunity Recognition	New business or Business Expansion	(Shane, 2003) and (Ekpe, Mat, & Razak, 2010)
Women entrepreneurs' performance	Financial measure	(Bosma, Praag, Thurik, & Wit, 2004)
	Nonfinancial measure	

Source: Developed by the researcher (2017)

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

The questionnaire part one addresses to the demographic profile of the women entrepreneurs in the sample. Table 02 depicts the Demographic profile of the SME in the sample.

4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Bellow 20 years	12	12%
21-30 years	28	28%
31-40 years	31	31%
Above 40 years	29	29%
Total	100	100%
Education Level		
Grade 5-10	9	9%
GCE O/L	29	29%
GCE A/L	37	37%
Diploma	17	17%
Degree	8	8%
Total	100	100%
Work Experience		
Less than 6 months	9	9%
Less than 1 year	22	22%
2-3 years	27	27%
More than 3 years	42	42%
Total	100	100%
Marital Status		
Married	73	73%
Single	19	19%
Divorced	3	3%
Widowed	5	5%
Total	100	100%

Source: Survey data (2017)

According to the Table 02, most of respondents are between the age group of 30-40 years and their educational level was up to GCE Advanced Level with more than 3-year experience as married women entrepreneurs.

4.2. Characteristics of Women Entrepreneurs in SME's

There are number of distinct criteria that make women entrepreneurs and their enterprises different from that of men entrepreneurs even though there are common elements. According to this study Table 03 shows the characteristics of women entrepreneurs such as dependents, sector, and number of employees, legal ownership and starting funds.

Table 3: Characteristics of Women Entrepreneurs

Dependents	Frequency	Percentage
No	28	28%
Less than 3	40	40%
3-5	24	24%
More than 5	8	8%
Total	100	100%
Number of Employees		
Less than 5	90	90%
6-10	10	10%
Total	100	100%
Sector		
Trade	26	26%
Manufacturing	46	46%
Service	25	25%
Other	3	3%
Total	100	100%
Legal Status		
Sole Ownership	85	85%
Partnership	4	4%
Family Business	11	11%
Total	100	100%
Startup Motives		
Family Tradition	14	14%
To be self employed	16	16%
Bring high income	43	43%

Small investment is required	9	9%
No other alternative for incomes	18	18%
Total	100	100%
Skills		
From having a training	49	49
From past experience	16	16
Support from family	31	31
Other	4	4
Total	100	100
Other relative business		
Yes	64	64%
No	36	36%
Total	100	100%
Family Relation		
Husband	14	14%
Father	11	11%
Mother	4	4%
Grandfather	5	5%
Grandmother	8	8%
Brother	9	9%
Sister	7	7%
Other	6	6%
Missing	36	36%
Total	100	100%
Startup Funding		
Personal Saving	13	13%
Household	8	8%
Borrowed from relatives or friends/money lenders	7	7%
Micro finance institutions	43	43%
Inheritance borrowed from bank	27	27%
Other	2	2%
Total	100	100%

Source: Survey data (2017)

Among the characteristics of women entrepreneurs, most women are engaging in production sector with the intention of generating higher income for the comfort of their family members. Also most women have started up their businesses through micro finance

institutions. Thus, that the task of micro finance institutions is very essential in Anuradhapura district to establish and for the improvement of the business as well as to the growth of country's economy.

4.3. Reliability

This section examines the internal consistency of the construct that researcher has used to measure key variables of the statistics. Cronbach's Alpha was performed for this purpose. The table 4 below shows the reliability statistics for the independent variables and dependent variable.

Table 4: Reliability of Dependent and Independent Variables

	Variables	No of items	Cronbach's Alpha value
Independent Variable	Entrepreneurs' Orientation of individuals	6	0.703
	Human Capital	6	0.741
	Entrepreneurs goals and motivation	3	0.794
	Legal and government barriers	4	0.749
	Access to finance	2	0.743
	Social-cultural factors	3	0.767
Dependent Variable	Opportunity recognition	2	0.712
	Women entrepreneurs' performance	5	0.783

Source: Survey Data (2017)

The table 4 shows that reliability value (Cronbach's alpha) of all variables is greater than 0.7 and all variables are reliable and acceptable through this structured questionnaire.

4.4. Descriptive Analysis

Table 05 shows that the statistical information about the respondents' answers related to the variables in this study. Majority of respondents believe that these variables are moderately affected for being as women entrepreneurs in Anuradhapura district. The highest mean value is from access to finance variable. It denotes most of respondents believe that access to finance is affecting the women entrepreneurs' performance.

Table 5: Summary of Descriptive Analysis

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Entrepreneurs orientation	2.700	0.832
Human capital	2.933	0.709
Entrepreneurs goals and motivation	2.800	0.895
Legal and government barriers	2.950	0.813
Access to finance	3.525	1.106
Social cultural factor	2.967	.0999
Opportunity recognition	2.500	0.655
Women entrepreneurs performance	2.540	0.699

Source: Survey data (2017)

4.5. Regression Analysis

This study employs regression analysis to test hypotheses and the mediator of the research. Thus three regression analyses were performed. The first regression analysis was performed to test the impact of independent variables on mediator. Then the second regression analysis was employed to test the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable and the final regression analysis was performed to test the impact of all variables including the mediator on the dependent variable.

4.5.1. Regression Analysis 1

The first test was carried out between Opportunity Recognition (Mediator) and other independent variables as follows. EO, HC, EGM, LGB and SCF were significant at $p < 0.05$. There are positive Beta values for those variables. Here R square value is 0.726 and it means, 72.6% influence can be explained by using predictors and F value is 21.849 and p value of ANOVA table is 0.000 which indicates that at least one variable out of six independent variables can be influenced on model significantly.

4.5.2. Regression Analysis 2

Table 7.1 shows the results for independent variables and dependent variable. Opportunity recognition has been excluded from this analysis. The results for the second step shows that influence of EO, EGM, SCF were significant and has positive impact on the women entrepreneurs' performance. According to this regression analysis R square value is 55.6% and it has 19.415 of F value and it is significant in level of 0.000.

Table 6: Summary Table of Regression Analysis 1

R=0.852 R Square= 0.726 Adj R²=0.708 F value=21.849
Sig=0.000

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-2.011	0.343		-5.865	0.000
Entrepreneurs orientation	0.138	0.049	0.175	2.801	0.006
Human Capital	0.388	0.058	0.420	6.688	0.000
Entrepreneurs goals and motivation	0.526	0.054	0.719	9.823	0.000
Legal and government barriers	.0274	0.064	0.340	4.316	0.000
Access to finance	-0.034	0.047	-0.057	-0.724	0.471
Social cultural factor	0.283	0.040	0.432	7.089	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Opportunity recognition

Source: Survey Data (2017)

Table 7.1: Summary Table of Regression Analysis 2

R=0.746 R Square= 0.556 Adj R²=0.527 F value=19.415
Sig=0.000

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.012	0.466		0.026	0.980
Entrepreneurs orientation	0.467	0.067	0.555	6.992	0.000
Human Capital	-0.044	0.079	-0.044	-0.555	0.580
Entrepreneurs goals and motivation	0.198	0.073	0.254	2.723	0.008
Legal and government barriers	0.064	0.086	0.074	0.736	0.464
Access to finance	-0.048	0.064	-0.075	-0.750	0.455

Social cultural factor	0.277	0.054	0.396	5.105	0.000
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a. Dependent Variable: Women entrepreneurs' performance

Source: Survey Data (2017)

According to Table 7.2, opportunity recognition has been considered as excluded variable and then it can be identified that there is as significant relationship with dependent variable as 0.000 of p value ($p < 0.05$) and there is positive beta value as 0.499 according to the table mentioned below with opportunity recognition as an excluded variable.

Table 7.2: Exclude Variable (Opportunity Recognition)

	Beta In	T	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance
Opportunity recognition	0.499 ^b	4.091	0.000	0.392	0.274

a. Dependent Variable: Women entrepreneurs' performance

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Social cultural factor, Entrepreneurs orientation, Legal and government barriers, Human Capital, Entrepreneurs goals and motivation, Access to finance

Source: Survey Data (2017)

4.5.3. Regression Analysis 3

Third step was carried out using all independent variables including (EO, HC, EGM, LGB, AF and SCF) OR and considered women EP as dependent variable. Table 08 shows the results of this analysis. According to the table 8, there is a positive relationship between opportunity recognition and women entrepreneurs' performance. According to the Table 7.1: Regression analysis 2 table, R² value is 55.6%, when opportunity recognition is excluded and according to the Table 8: Regression analysis 3, R² is 62.4%, when opportunity recognition is considered as an independent variable.

Therefore, it is identified that opportunity recognition has a significant relationship with women entrepreneurs' performance. The summary of three step regression analysis by using mediator of OR. EO, EGM and SCF are effect for women entrepreneurs' performance and OR is the mediator variable for those variables.

Table 8: Summary Table of Regression Analysis 3

R=0.790 R Square= 0.624 Adj R ² =0.596 F value=21.849 Sig=0.000					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.084	0.504		2.150	0.034
Entrepreneurs orientation	0.393	0.064	0.468	6.120	0.000
Human Capital	-0.250	0.089	-0.254	-2.825	0.006
Entrepreneurs goals and motivation	-0.082	0.096	-0.105	-0.856	0.394
Legal and government barriers	-0.083	0.088	-0.096	-0.945	0.347
Access to finance	-0.030	0.059	-0.047	-0.502	0.617
Social cultural factor	0.126	0.062	0.180	2.025	0.046
Opportunity recognition	0.533	0.130	0.499	4.091	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Women entrepreneurs' performance

Source: Survey Data (2017)

By using table 8 regression equation can be solved as follows,

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7$$

$$WEP(Y) = 1.084 + 0.393(E) + -0.250(HC) + -0.082(EGM) + -0.083(LGB) + 0.030(AF) + 0.126(SCF) + 0.533(OR)$$

5. Discussion

According to the results of correlation, five factors affect the performance of women entrepreneurs. Those are EO, HC, EGM, SCF and OR. The results indicate that EO influences on women entrepreneurs' performance. This finding is compatible with research findings of Shane (2003) that have disclosed Entrepreneurs' Orientation of individuals is the main determinant to the business growth. The results also indicate that HC influences women EP complying with many researchers who discovered that HC positively influences firm performance (Bosma et al., 2004). The results also indicate that EGM influence women EP. Prior study showed entrepreneurs motivation is the main determinant to the business growth (Shane, 2003). There is a positive relationship between EGM and women EP. The results show that LGB do not influence women EP. That is contrary to many previous studies that confirm the relationship between LGB influence women EP (Girma, 2015) and (Wube, 2010). There is no significant relationship with AF with women EP. However previous studies have

revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between access to finance and women entrepreneurs' performance (Ekpe et al., 2010). SCF influence women entrepreneurs' performance. Previous studies also proved that there is a significant relationship between SCF and women EP. It is considered that social connections, cultural norms and values highly influence women entrepreneurs' performance (Haxhiu, 2015). It is also found that there is a significant relationship between OR and women entrepreneurs' performance which is compatible with entrepreneurs' theory of Shane (2003) who claims that business environment is consisted with activities that lead to entrepreneurial opportunities and the entrepreneur's decision to exploit such opportunities leads to resource acquisition and improve performance

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

The main objective of this research is to identify factors affecting women entrepreneurs' performance in SME's in Anuradhapura district. It was identified among the independent variables that Entrepreneurs' Orientation of individuals, entrepreneurs' goals and motivation, human capital and social cultural factors effect on women entrepreneurs' performance. Educational background, skills and experience as human capital are influence on women EPs. Unfair competition, informal economy, non-implementation law of gender equalities also affects women entrepreneurs' performance.

Starting an own business means, creating a sense of women independence, flexibility and financial freedom. It is important for women entrepreneurs to become self-confident on their capabilities and to empower themselves using education and training. Also women entrepreneurs should look for ways to enhance the performance and success of their own businesses. Entrepreneurs' Orientation of individuals is affect to women EP. Entrepreneurs' Orientation of individuals is consisted of dimensions such as risk taking, innovativeness, competitiveness, future and the fact that women entrepreneurs pay less attention to risky investments can result in lack of innovations. Thus, if the government can take actions to protect them, there may be innovations since they can make decisions without any fear and they can recognize opportunities. Also the government or any responsible authority can conduct training programs for them and make them aware of how to prepare future plans and to originate future goals. In long run, for future generations of women entrepreneurs, there are two of most important things, which are to improve women access to education and effect changes in the cultural, socio-economic environment to accord them higher status and ensure more control over economic resources.

It is essential and important to make gender-specific allocation of resources to women's entrepreneurship development. Socio cultural factors also influence on women EP. A

majority of women have to face problems within their families. There should be awareness raising activities on gender issues, adopting technology that reduce women's workload, existing laws, expanding assertiveness training etc.

6.1. Suggestions for Future Research

As majority of Sri Lankan population is consisted with women and their contribution to the economy is essential, there is a need for future research studies within this scope. Other factors may be added to develop model for future studies. Furthermore, fewer researchers have used opportunity recognition as mediator of relationship between entrepreneurial internal factors and work performance. (Shane, 2003; Ekpe et al., 2010). Mediator is very important to explain cause and effect relationship between independent and dependent variables. It is also suggested to compare the finding between men and women entrepreneurs using a comprehensive framework.

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