

Relevance of Innovation on Survival of Women-owned Business in Nigeria



Olushola Joshua Omolekan¹
Busayo Alli²

University of Ilorin, Faculty of Management Sciences, Department of Business Administration, Ilorin, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Women's involvement in entrepreneurial activities in developing countries has been a source of concern to organizational psychologists and researchers. Women-owned businesses form a larger percentage of small businesses in Nigeria in recent times but the continuity and survival of such enterprises posed serious challenges. Most women-owned businesses hardly survive beyond a few years of incorporation. Thus, this paper evaluated the relevance of innovation on the survival of women-owned businesses. Specifically, the study seeks to: determine the effect of product/service innovation on the market share; and examine the influence of process innovation on business reputation. The study adopted a survey design. Multi-stage sampling was employed in deriving the sample size. A structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from the women business owners in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. Ordinary least square regression was used to analyze the data and it was found that; products/services innovation affects the market share with R^2 -value of 0.541 and process innovation influences business reputation with R^2 -value of 0.517. Hence, the study concluded that innovative behaviours are statistically significant on the survival of women-owned businesses since all the variables used in the study are statistically significant. It was therefore recommended among others

¹ Corresponding author, e-mail: o.omolekan@gmail.com

² Email: sayitnow0416@gmail.com

that innovative behaviour is required by women entrepreneurs to adapt, grow, and survive in their dynamic business environment.

KEY WORDS: *women-owned businesses, survival, innovation, business reputation, competition*

Introduction

The growing importance of entrepreneurial activities as a growth-seeking, poverty reduction, job creation and livelihood strategies in addressing the issues of unemployment in a developing economy like Nigeria where white-collar jobs are limited cannot be overemphasized. In Nigeria, 40% of the women population is involved in entrepreneurial activities (Oluseyi, 2017) which shows that women are important forces in the development of any country. Women Business Enterprise Council (WBENC) (2018) report shows a significant increase in women-owned businesses by 58% compared to the overall business performance of 12%, hence, women-owned businesses contribute massively to enterprises worldwide. Today, women are largely concentrated in the informal, micro, low profit and growth areas where competition is intense such as the fashion design, textile, and agricultural businesses among others. However, since most of these businesses owned by women contribute substantially to the economic growth and industrial development of most nations, it becomes expedient to develop strategies to facilitate their business growth, success, and enhance their performance as well as the survival chances of these businesses.

One of the major objectives of small business in twenty first century is survival (Oluseyi, 2017). Business survival is concerned with the continuance, endurance, or longevity of the business. However, according to WBENC (2018), 20% of small-sized businesses owned by women fail in their first five years and 50% of them do not survive the past five years. Survival and success of a business depend on the attempts made by the business to be distinctive in their mode of operations to compete favourably through strategic products launch, value added, integrated marketing strategies and cost reduction measures to increase profitability as a result of innovation in the business (Kithaka, 2016).

Innovation requires translating ideas into goods/services that creates value that customers will pay for (Mwangi & Namunsong, 2014). Innovation is of paramount importance to the survival of not only women-owned

businesses, new businesses, introducing new and/or improved products or services, or creating new markets but also for already existing businesses that are likely to face the threat of disruption from new technologies. The competitive nature of business enterprise in gaining competitive edge over other business firms in the same industry are evident through firms' innovative abilities in terms of product design, process design, marketing activities and customer satisfaction. With a new perception of economic opportunities, an improved method of thinking by managers, and changes in customers' needs revealed the significance of innovative thinking by market leaders.

Women are traditionally seen as caregivers in the African context meant to be indoor, take care of their children and elderly ones. Women that are involved in entrepreneurship are mostly over-represented in the smallest, informal and low growth businesses characterized by stiff competition and rivalry coupled with issues such as lack of family support, insufficient finance, lack/insufficient entrepreneurial skills, inadequate government support, and the likes hinders their survival chances in their chosen businesses. Therefore, this study examines the relevance of innovation on the survival of women-owned businesses. Specifically, the study seeks to: determine the effect of product/service innovation on market share; and examine the influence of process innovation on business reputation.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Concept of Innovation

The primary concept of innovation as related to entrepreneurship and economic development was advocated by a German economist - Joseph Schumpeter. He is of the opinion that innovation is synonymous with creativity, advances in technologies, new processes and products/services, research and development, and quality improvement (Rosli & Sidek, 2013). Innovation is summarily described as the creation of wealth or improvement of current resources for value addition or creation of new wealth (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004). It is a process of invention, development of a new ideas, new products/services development, a new way of doing things, and process of meeting dynamic needs of the market. Innovation is the process of introducing minor or major changes that result in new invention in an organization that add value to the organizational outputs and knowledge. For

this study, innovation is seen as the means of introduction and improvement of products/services through innovative abilities in design, process, products/services and integrated marketing services to meet the needs and expectation of customers in a dynamic and competitive market.

Drivers of Innovation

- i. Emerging technologies: According to Manuylenko et al. (2015) the presence of new technologies always encourage businesses to be innovative, as technologies help to make work faster and easier.
- ii. Competitors' action: Actions of competitors do encourage businesses to make moves or provide products that will better satisfy customers than those provided by competitors (Tsvetkov, 2011).
- iii. New ideas: Modern businesses engages a lot of stakeholders in the innovation process. This helps to reveal opportunities that otherwise might have gone undiscovered (Rosli & Sidek, 2013).
- iv. External environment: The political, social, and technological environment changes that occur require that businesses should innovate to be able to realign with their new business environment (Rosli & Sidek, 2013).

Types of Innovation

a. Product/service innovation:

This is simply the creation new products/services or re-modification of current line of products/services to meet and satisfy the need of the customer. The improvement in existing products/services can create a new demand or market for the products/services (Wang & Wang, 2012). Products/services innovation is one of the means to gain a competitive advantage over other competitors in the same industry through improved product quality and performance which gives the organization a competitive edge. Camison and Lopez (2010) confirmed that corporations must be able to adapt and evolve if they wish to survive. This is because competitors always introduce new products that will change the basis of competition, the ability to change and adapt therefore is very key to the survival of any business. Summarily, products/service innovation refers to the new products/services introduction and continuous improvements of an existing products/services to satisfy

customers' need. For this study, product/service innovation were measured using the introduction of new products/services; and improving existing products/services as proxies.

Introducing new products/services: This means introduction of a new product. It is referred to the presentation of new goods or services; one in which the consumers are not yet familiar with in the market (Walobwa, Ngugi & Chepkulei, 2013). An innovative business must be willing and capable of introducing new products to meet the frequent changes in consumers' preferences, increase in competition, and advances in technology.

Improving existing products/services: Practically, every product in the market today has been improved; these semi-new products can act as replacements to existing products of the business and earn the name new products (Chong et al., 2011). They however provide enhanced performance or a greater perceived value over the old products. Once a business knows that its product/service has a weakness or competitors product/service has a feature that makes it preferable by customers then enhancing those areas of lapses is needed.

Process Innovation

Process innovation is simply the transformational means of invention. It comprises of skills, equipment, technologies used in production process and delivery of products/services, research and development, technical design, and all other manufacturing and commercial activities (Gokhberg, 2011). Process innovation involves the means of carried out innovative abilities with little or no stress. It improves the innovation efficiency, speed, prompt delivery and process development (Oke, Burke & Myers, 2007). In a manufacturing context, process innovation implies a new methods or improved techniques used in the production of goods while in the service sector, it refers to the techniques of service delivery targeted towards efficiency and meeting customers' expectation. Process innovation includes modification or adopting a new means entirely in achieving the stated goals and objectives with minimal cost while ensuring environmental sustainability (Kamau & Munandi, 2009). For this study, process innovation is seen as an improvement in the techniques, skills, and equipment used to produce and deliver products or services. Here, process innovation is in form of the use of modern equipment and improvement in techniques.

Use of modern equipment: Businesses of today simply cannot function without the help of technology/equipment. Outdated equipment can spell

disaster for efficiency and productivity in the workplace (Mwangi & Namusonge, 2014). Modern equipment should be seen as an investment in the total productivity of a business rather than plain expenses. In this study, modern equipment is seen as tools or appliances of the present time that makes work faster and easier.

Improvement in techniques: Techniques are methods of doing an activity, usually a method that involves practical skills. It is the skills and ability that are developed through training and practice (Collins, 2019). In the context of this study, improvement in techniques which has to do with the proper and continuous training offered to employees to enhance their performance

Concept of Women-Owned Business

A woman-owned business is defined as one that is at least 51% owned, operated, and controlled daily by one or more females (Nawaz, 2010). The definition used by WEConnect International cited in Arjan (2016) is comprehensive and captured the key conceptual issues in terms of ownership structure, mode of operation, management and control of women-owned businesses. A women-owned business must be owned by women (with at least 51% ownership by women), operate and control by one or more women, capital formation or expertise by women and operate without any external interference from non-certified firms. For this study, woman-owned business is defined as a business solely owned by a woman that has been in operation for not lesser than a year, with at most twenty (20) employees and/or apprentices and operating under a group association in the informal sector.

Business Survival

In the contemporary business world, one of the major objectives of small business enterprises is survival (Oluseyi, 2017). Survival in this context does not mean a rivalry with the market leaders in the industry but in catching a niche of the market that are ignore by the global corporation for profitability and survival. Business survival is concerned with the continuance, endurance, or longevity of the business. Varying statistics say that only five percent of start-ups businesses make it to the first five years and ninety percent of businesses do not even last three years (Gartenstein, 2019). Research has made it clear that the survival and success of a business depend on the attempts made by businesses to be distinctive and competitive through

innovative abilities of launching new product, process design, value addition, integrated marketing activities, cost saving measures and meeting customers' need profitably. These are the result of innovation in the business (Kithaka, 2016). Here, business survival is seen as the continued existence of the business. Therefore, factors that can help determine the continuance or otherwise of business include but are not limited to market share and business reputation.

Market Share: This is the ratio of firms' total sales to the proportion of the market where it operates. It is the quota of customer-based control by a particular firm or product in the industry (Will, 2018). Market share represents the aggregate turnover that a particular business enterprise or product earned over a particular period of time. It shows the strength of customers' loyalty, patronage, and preference for a particular product over and above close substitutes' products. An increased market share implies increase in sales, low marketing efforts, strong market control and barriers for competitors and new entrance (Kithaka, 2016). An improved market share implies the market leaders gains more as the market expands. In this study, market share implies the total number of customers earned by a business in relation to the market it operates.

Business Reputation: This is the general opinion that people have about the business. It described the perception, perceived opinion, informed judgment and feeling of others about a particular business based on their past experience with the business enterprise or product. Consumer experience varied and differ based on the word of mouth and personal observations. It may be good or bad. A business reputation could make or mar the business. Creating a good reputation takes time but can be lost in an instant. A business reputation can be looked upon from the angle of ethics, the talent of employees, leadership, social responsibility, and quality of the product, or services delivered by the company (Barcey, 2012). However, business reputation depicts business perception from all stakeholders such as employees, customers, suppliers, creditors and other interested parties.

Influence of Innovation on Business Survival

Innovation is known for providing new and improved products/services that help to maintain and attract customers to the business. The availability of modern equipment that makes work faster, easier, reduces wastage and cost, as well as the presence of well-trained personnel with the necessary skill to

offer the needed products or services, helps to increase market share and build a good reputation for the business enterprise (Will, 2018).

Theoretical Review

The theories that are relevant to this study were discussed below:

Schumpeter's Innovation Theory

Schumpeter innovation theory has described by Kithaka (2016) view innovation as the creative destruction. It is a means of wealth creation by disruption of the existing product to create a new market structure. This theory focuses more on re-modification of existing product by improving the quality, usability and efficiency of product. In doing this, resources were channel from the old product to new product. The innovation will allow the growth of the new firm. This theory assumes that entrepreneurs always seek, maximize and utilize change and opportunity for a purposeful innovative behavior needed for the survival and success of a business.

Resource-Based Theory

According to Walobwa, Ngugi, and Chepkulei (2013), resource-based theory emphasize that the valuable, rare, inimitable capabilities of the firm are the determinants of its performance (this relates to innovation). The theory views the ability of a firm to develop distinct capabilities (innovation) which enhances its ability to adapt to the changing competitive environment and improves its survival prospects.

Social Feminist Theory

According to Kithaka (2016), the social feminist theory propagated by Kalleberg and Leicht suggests that, due to differences in early and on-going socialization, women and men do differ inherently, these affect value formation, intentions, and characters (ability to take the risk, start something new and the likes) these are obvious from the way men and women perceived reality differently (i.e. application of the formed characteristics) which causes a difference in their achievement.

This study adopts the social feminist theory because it cuts across all the variables of the study. It refers to the early life socialization of a woman characterized by patriarchy (seeing men as being the head or meant for the

top) which influences their behavior, attitude and character (i.e. it makes them to be undermined in certain characteristics as an entrepreneur) which in turn affects the way they respond to a real-life situation and therefore produces a result that is different from men.

Empirical Review

Ojo et al. (2017) measured the effect of innovation on entrepreneurial success. Questionnaire and interview were used to elicit information from the 216 sampled respondents. Data were analyzed using correlation and regression analysis and the result shows that positive significant relationship exist between innovation and business financial performance. Their study concluded that firm competitiveness is a function of owners' creativeness and innovative abilities. Thus, the study only focused on competitiveness while the present study focuses on the survival of women-owned businesses through market share and business reputation.

Mwangi and Namusonge (2014) examined the influence of innovation on SMEs growth in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey. A combination of purposive and stratified sampling techniques was used. Structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from the sampled respondents. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study found a significant influence between innovation and business growth. It was recommended that Kenyan's government should create strong link with the identified SMEs to boost innovative strategies targeted towards business expansion. This study was carried out in a foreign country with different regulatory systems from Nigeria and it focused on mainly the garment industry without trying to know the influence of innovation on other types of businesses.

Rosli and Sidek (2013) examined the effect of innovation on small and medium manufacturing enterprises performance in Malaysia. A survey design was adopted for the study. Questionnaires were administered to 284 sampled SMEs in Malaysia. Hierarchical regression was used to analyzed the data and the findings revealed that product and process innovation significantly influence firms' performance. Though, product innovation effect was stronger in their findings than process innovation. It was concluded that innovation is a serious factor that must be put into consideration in today's entrepreneurial activity and suggested that further study should put into consideration the cost-benefit effect of innovation on the business enterprise. The study focused on small and medium enterprises in general without

distinction as to whether it is owned by men or women, and when a general reference is made to business much concern is on men-owned businesses, which provides the basis for this study focusing on women-owned businesses.

Lai et al. (2010) evaluated the influence of innovation on the success of female entrepreneurs in Malaysia. The study adopted a survey research design and questionnaires were administered to the sampled respondents. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the collated data. The findings revealed that innovation mindset, innovation creed and innovation conviction were correlated with female entrepreneurs' need for achievement in the study area. It was concluded that entrepreneurs should be innovative for the success of their businesses.

Ashford (2008) in his work, evaluated the factors that influence the survival of women-owned small business start-ups in the city of Tema, Ghana. Interview and open-ended questionnaire were used to solicit information from the 40 sampled respondents. The findings revealed that innovation was the most influential factor to the survival of women-owned businesses in the study area; other factors include the business plan, family support, and social network. It was concluded among others that women need to be innovative to ensure the survival of their businesses.

Development of Hypotheses

Ojo et al. (2017) were of the opinion that creativity and innovation create competitive advantage for business enterprise which improve their financial performance while Rosli and Sidek (2013) are also of the view that innovation enhance business performance. Business survival depend largely on enterprise performance which is also a function of products/services patronage. Firm market share determines products/services patronage which in turn affect performance. Thus, the study hypothesized:

H₀₁: Product/Service innovation does not have a significant influence on a business market share

Mwangi and Namusonge (2014) concluded in their study that innovation influence business growth while Lai et al. (2010) attributed entrepreneurial success to innovative abilities. Ashford (2008) opined that innovation is the most influential factor especially for infant businesses which has to do with the products/services transformation process, ease of use, equipment used in meeting the customers' expectation, building trust, image and loyalty. Therefore, the study hypothesized:

H₀₂: Process innovation does not significantly influence the reputation of the business

Methodology

This study adopted a survey design through administration of questionnaire to examine the relevance of innovation on the survival of women-owned businesses in Kwara State, Nigeria. The emphasis is on Ilorin – the state capital with the perceived highest numbers of women-owned businesses in the State. The target population was all the 1,096 businesses owned by women in Ilorin metropolis providing one or more product or service that have been in existence for more than a year, having not more than twenty (20) employees and/or apprentices, and operating under a group association in the informal sector. The figure gotten from the identified groups is as follows:

Table 1: Target Population

S/N	Local Government Areas	Association	Business	Figures
	Ilorin-east (7 zones out of 12 with at least 22)	Sugar Bender of Kwara	Baking	163
	Ilorin-south (10 zones out of 19 with at least 38 members)	Nigeria Association of Hairdressers, Cosmetologist, and Barber (NASHCOB)	Hairdressing	403
	Ilorin-west (12 zones out 21 with at least 43 members)	Association of Kwara Women Tailoring	Tailoring	530
	TOTAL			1096

Source: Registrar of Businesses (2019)

Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination formula was used which gives an approxiamted two hundred and eighty-five (285) sample size. Multi-stage sampling techniques which comprise of stratified sampling, judgmental, purposive, and simple random techniques were used to group the target population into three strata based on the numbers of businesses understudy to ensure a sample representation in terms of numbers and attributes. The respondents are the business owners (women) in Ilorin metropolis. The justification for this location is that Ilorin is the commercial

hub of Kwara state and is seen as the main city which is highly populated and houses a vast number of women-owned businesses in the state. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire with 5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to disagree. The questionnaire was self-administered and the collated data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics using ordinary least square regression to show the relationship between the latent variables.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The findings from Table 2 on respondents' age revealed that the most dominant age of the respondents was between age 20 to 40 years. Going by the life expectancy in the study area put at 50 years as at 2018, it implies that majority of the women entrepreneurs are still young, in their productive years, agile and energetic to embrace innovative ideas. Respondents' education revealed that, 3.06% had no formal education, 29.59% had primary school certificates, 33.16% were secondary school certificate holders, 19.89% had a first degree and 14.30% had post-graduate qualifications. This implies that a reasonable number of the women entrepreneurs sampled in the study were averagely educated who can read and write to express their views on the concept of the study. In the case of no formal education, the researchers interpret and explained to the women entrepreneurs in a local language. Though, this is just in a very rare case of 6 respondents of about 3.06% of the total sampled.

In terms of marital status, 44.43% are married, 33.16% are single ladies in the business world, 4.08% are divorced or separated and 16.33% are widows. It was observed that a large proportion of women that own businesses in the study area are married women. The implication of this is that the businesses are owned by family women that feel they have responsibilities and are willing to own and grow in their domain. In terms of the age of the business, 22.45% of the businesses have been in operation for 1-5 years, 27.04% for more than 15 years, businesses with 11-15 years of existence made up 14.29% and 36.22% for 6-10 years. It was observed that most businesses had been in operation for quite some time, this means information obtained from these set of people are reliable about the issue of discussion on their businesses. In terms of the number of employees/apprentices, 22.96% have 1-5 employees/apprentices, 26.02% have 6-10 employees/apprentices, 36.22% have 11-15 employees/apprentices

and 14.8% have 16-20 employees/apprentices. This implies that most of the businesses as indicated by 36.22% have enough employees/apprentices of 11-15 to operate their business efficiently and effectively. However, in terms of participating businesses, 36.73% are into hairdressing, 40.31% are into tailoring and 22.96% are bakers. The implication of this is that women are fairly distributed in lines of businesses.

Table 2: Some Characteristics of the Sample

Items	Frequency	Percent
Respondents' age	196	100
Less than 20years	-	-
20-30 years	32	16.3
31-40 years	92	47
41-50 years	51	26
Above 50 years	21	10.7
Respondents' Education	196	100
No formal Education	6	3.06
Primary School	58	29.59
Secondary School	65	33.16
First Degree	39	19.89
Post Graduate	28	14.30
Marital Status	196	100
Single	65	33.16
Married	91	46.43
Divorced/Separated	8	4.08
Widow	32	16.33
Age of the Business	196	100
1-5 years	44	22.45
6-10 years	71	36.22
11-15 years	28	14.29
Above 15 years	53	27.04
Number of Employees/Apprentices	196	100
1-5	45	22.96
6-10	51	26.02
11-15	71	36.22
16-20	29	14.80
Classification of Business	196	100
Hairdressing	72	36.73
Tailoring	79	40.31
Baking	45	22.96

Source: Based on Sample Survey (2019)

Test of Research Hypotheses I

H₀₁: Product/Service innovation does not have a significant influence on a business market share

Table 3 shows R-value of 0.736 which implies a positive and significant relationship between products/services innovation (which is proxies by introducing new products/services; and improving existing products/services) and market share. R²-value of 0.541 implies that the new products/services innovation and continuous improvement on existing products/services contributes about 54.1% to market share, while the remaining 45.9% is due to other variables other than the variables in the model. The implication of this is the fact that the ability of women to introduce new products/services in their line of business or improve on existing ones has a profound influence on the number of customers base in their business enterprise.

The analysis revealed that the probability value (i.e. p-value) of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 level of significant which indicated that, the relationship between the identified variables were highly significant in predicting market share through introduction of new products/services and continuous improvement on the existing products/services. Importantly, the F-ratio value of $0.000 < 0.05$ shows that the identified model is fit for use. The coefficients values show the individual exogeneous variables contribution to the endogenous variable. Market share would increase by 44.1% when there is a unit increase in the introduction of new products and it would also increase by 27.6% when there is a unit increase in product differentiation having the other independent variables held constant for both situations respectively. The implication of this is that, to retain and attract new customers, emphasis should be placed on the new products/services introduction and continuous improvement on the existing ones.

Table 3: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.893	.180		4.543	.009
	Introducing New Products/Serv.	.441	.055	.499	4.231	.000
	Improving Existing Products/Ser.	.276	.046	.326	3.511	.000

R = .736^a
R Square = .541
Adjusted R Square = .533
Durbin-Watson = .148
F ratio = 12.696
Sig. = .009

a. Dependent Variable: Market Share

b. Predictors: (Constant), Introducing new products/services; and Continuous improvement of existing products/services

Source: *Printout from SPSS, 2019*

Test of Research Hypotheses II

H₀₂: Process innovation does not significantly influence the reputation of the business

The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.719 in Table 4 shows a positive and strong relationship between variables used to measure process innovation and business reputation. The R²-value of 0.517 implies that the use of modern equipment, as well as improvements of techniques, contributes about 51.7% to the reputation of business while the remaining 48.3% is due to other variables other than the variables in the model. The implication of this is that the availability of modern equipment that ensures speed, ease, as well as the presence of well-trained employees with necessary skills influences the reputation built by a business to a very large extent. However, the F-distribution with the p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 significant level shows the model goodness of fit i.e. the identified variables are significant in predicting how the use of modern equipment and improvement in techniques influences business reputation.

The information on the latent variables as affect the endogenous variable are represented by the coefficient values. Business Reputation would increase by 0.241 when there is a unit increase in the use of modern equipment while the other independent variables are held constant, and a unit increase in improvement in techniques would lead to a 0.196 increase in business reputation with both having a p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. The implication of this is that, for businesses to be able to build a good reputation then, the use of modern equipment, as well as the availability of well-trained employees with the necessary skills, are needed.

Table 4: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.766	.172		4.441	.001
	Improvement in Techniques	.241	.058	.281	4.192	.000
	Use of Modern Equipment	.196	.055	.242	3.601	.000

R = 0.719^a
R² = 0.517
Adjusted R² = 0.510
Durbin-Watson = 0.155
F ratio = 18.953
Sig. = .001

a. Dependent Variable: Business Reputation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Improvement in Techniques, Use of Modern Equipment

Source: Printout from SPSS, 2019

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study show the effect of product/service innovation on the market share. It was revealed that new products/services introduction and continuous improvement on the existing products/services are crucial to increase the market share of a business enterprise. The study found out that businesses that are known for providing new or improved products/services are usually competitive and always gained customers loyalty which usually enhanced customers' retention and continuous patronage by existing and prospective customers. This result is in tandem with the work of Rosli and Sidek (2013) which affirm that the competitiveness of a firm depends on its innovative abilities to design, produce and market its products/services effectively to gain competitive edge.

Also, the findings revealed that the use of modern equipment to ensures speed, ease of work, reduction of waste and cost, as well as the availability of well-trained employees with the appropriate skills to perform effectively is necessary to build a good reputation for the business. This finding was in agreement with the study of Mwangi and Namusonge (2014) whose study affirm that process innovation is crucial in quality designs of products to meet and satisfy customers' needs and wants.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, it was concluded that products/services innovation has a significant effect on the market share of a business. For women-owned businesses to be able to maintain and attract new customers, then, the introduction of new products/services as at when due must be embraced to meet the market trend. Also, continuous improvement of products/services must be given priority. Businesses with products/services innovative abilities of introduction and continuous improvement of existing products/services are always gain customers patronage and increase their market share which is necessary for survival. Besides, the study also concluded that process innovation significantly influences business reputation. The availability of new equipment that makes work faster, easier, and the availability of well-trained employees with the necessary skills help to create a good image for the business. Thus, the study concluded that innovative behaviour has a significant effect on the survival of women-owned businesses.

Therefore, the study made the following recommendations:

- i. It is expedient for women-owned businesses to increase their market share for survival. Therefore, to maintain and increase customer size (market share), introduction and continuous improvement of existing products/services should be embraced by women-owned businesses.
- ii. To build a good business reputation, women entrepreneurs should ensure the availability of modern equipment that makes work faster, easier, reduce cost and wastes, and ensure the availability of well-trained employees to build, maintain and sustain the enterprise reputation.
- iii. Women entrepreneurs should embrace innovative behaviour to adapt, grow, and survive in their dynamic business environment.

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