

Marital Status and Performance of Women's Family Businesses in Burkina Faso

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to understand the influence of the marital status of female promoters of family businesses in Burkina Faso on the performance of their businesses. A quantitative approach involving a sample of 331 family businesses was adopted under the prism of contingency theory. Analysis of variance and logistic regression yielded two main results. Being married or single has no influence on the performance of family businesses. However, when the promoter lives in a monogamous household, her business is 3.47 times more likely to perform well than when she lives in a polygamous household. The originality of this study is that it highlights the influence of polygamy on the performance of family businesses in Burkina Faso. From a managerial point of view, this variable can therefore be taken into account in policies to support female entrepreneurship in Burkina Faso.

Keywords : marital status, polygamy, monogamy, performance, family business

Résumé

Cette recherche a pour objectif d'appréhender l'influence du statut matrimonial des promotrices d'entreprises familiales au Burkina Faso sur la performance de leurs entreprises. Une démarche quantitative portant sur un échantillon de 331 entreprises familiales a été adoptée sous le prisme de la théorie de la contingence. L'analyse de la variance et la régression logistique ont donné deux principaux résultats. Le fait d'être mariée ou célibataire n'a aucune influence sur la performance des entreprises familiales. Par contre lorsque la promotrice vit dans un foyer monogame, son entreprise à 3,47 fois plus de chance d'être performante que lorsqu'elle vit dans un foyer polygame. L'originalité de cette étude est qu'elle met en lumière l'influence de la polygamie sur la performance des entreprises familiales au Burkina Faso. Sur le plan managérial, cette variable peut donc être prise en compte dans les politiques d'appui à l'entrepreneuriat féminin au Burkina Faso.

Mots clés : statut matrimonial, polygamie, monogamie, performance, entreprise familiale

Introduction

The development of countries, especially developing ones, depends on the vitality of private sector enterprises (Benazzi and Benazzi, 2016 ; Doubogan, 2016 ; Fofana et al., 2020 ; Hupeno, 2021 ; Makhoul and Souidi, 2019). These include family businesses (FBs). In terms of numbers, they dominate the economic world in the European, American and Asian context (Neubauer and Lank, 1998). In Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, FBs represent 95% of the economic landscape (Gupta et al, 2009). In addition to their numerical superiority, several studies argue that FBs are more successful than other types of enterprises (Villalonga and Amit, 2004 ; Allouche and Aman, 1995 ; Kargougou, 2020 ; Happershon and Williams, 1999).

Firm performance is a multidimensional social construct (the social dimension, the economic dimension, the political dimension and the systemic dimension), according to Morin et al. (1994). However, there is still no consensus on the choice of indicators to measure performance (Tsambou and Kamga, 2016). Thus, to measure economic and financial performance, one can consider revenue growth (Gauzente, 2011), value added, earnings before interts and taxes depreciation and amortization, earnings before interts and taxes, net operating income and net profit (Nawang, 2009).

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Indeed, in a 1986 US News and World Report study, Jaffe (1990) reported that out of 47 family firms analysed, 31 outperformed the Dow-Jones. Gallo and Vilaseca (1996) showed that Spanish FBs had a higher return on equity than all the companies monitored by the Bank of Spain. These FBs are owned by both men and women. Some work has highlighted the differences that may exist between the two sexes by examining the obstacles and disincentives to entrepreneurship and the performance of their enterprises (Attar and Bouabdallah, 2018 ; Constantinidis et al., 2017). Most studies note that women entrepreneurship is generally driven by necessity (Makhlouf and Souidi, 2019) and face many difficulties in making their businesses successful (Louhab and Tighilt, 2016). In this sense, Schindehutte, et al. (2003), Watson and Robinson (2003), Badia et al (2013) in studies conducted respectively in the USA and South Africa, Australia and France, estimate that the performance of women-owned firms would be lower than that of male-owned firms. In Congo, Kosolo Hupeno (2021) notes that women's businesses do not seem to thrive over time like men's businesses. In the Moroccan context, for example, Rachdi (2006) notes that the 5-year survival rate was 45.4% for male founders versus 41% for female founders. This particular situation of women's businesses could be explained by several factors linked to the socio-economic environment and also to characteristics specific to women, which have been widely discussed in the literature. The low level of training, the difficulties in accessing financing, the difficulty in reconciling family and professional life, but also the marital status (Benazzi and Benazzi, 2016 ; Ponson, 2002 ; Rachdi, 2006).

In Burkina Faso, the weight of FBs in the economy is not precisely known (Kargougou, 2020). Women represent less than 20% of the promoters of formal businesses (CEFORE, 2018), whereas they represent nearly 52% of the population. Their businesses also represent less than 20% of the FBs (Kargougou, 2020). Then, businesses created by men are 30% more likely to survive compared to businesses created by women (Bayala, 2015). Several criteria can explain the difference in performance of FBs according to the gender of the owners. The cultural context has a strong influence on FBs according to the conception of traditions and families, in terms of strategic decisions (Steier et al, 2009) and even performance. Marriage has an important place in Burkinabe culture. This marriage can be contracted under monogamy or polygamy. And, depending on the case, the organisation of the family may change. This organisation is linked to that of the FBs and can influence their performance, hence the following research question : What is the influence of women's marital status on the performance of their FBs in Burkina Faso ?

This topic does not seem to be addressed yet in the Burkinabe context. The results could enrich knowledge on female entrepreneurship in Burkina Faso in general and the influence of the marital status of female entrepreneurs on the performance of their FBs in particular. From a managerial point of view, these results can be used as levers to develop support policies that are well adapted to the promotion of female entrepreneurship in Burkina Faso.

Theoretically, the study is based on contingency theory. As we are looking for relationships between two variables, the quantitative approach was used through an analysis of variances and logistic regressions. The study sample consists of 331 family businesses. This sample was drawn from the data of the survey conducted by the CCI-BF in 2020 on FBs in Burkina Faso.

The regression results show that marital status (single/married) does not explain the performance of family businesses in Burkina Faso, but, in the married group, if the promoter is in a monogamous household, she is 3.47 times more likely to have an upward trend in net income than if she is in a polygamous household. The article is organized into three parts. The first part presents the contingency theory and the links between the marital status of female promoters and the performance of FBs. The second section discusses the research methodology adopted. The third part presents the research results and their discussion.

I. From contingency theory to the links between marital status and women's FBs performance

This section discusses the contribution of contingency theory in explaining the performance of women's FBs in Burkina Faso and the relationship between the marital status (MS) of the promoter and the performance of the FBs, leading to the choice of hypotheses.

I.1 Contributions of contingency theory in explaining women's FBs performance

Several definitions of FB appear in the literature, which explains the lack of consensus in the definition of this concept (Poulain-Rehm, 2006). In the African context, the FB is not distinguished by size or by a particular legal form (Boungou, 2005). He considers the FB as 'a unit responsible for producing and selling goods and services on the market, a unit belonging to people united by direct or indirect ties of consanguinity using non-formalised contracts whose primary objective is to obtain a minimum profit to secure the capital invested and the survival of family members'.

From this definition, all the criteria generally used in the literature to define the FB emerge: ownership, control and the willingness to pass the business on to the next generation. Some authors use them, individually, others concomitantly.

In the context of Burkina Faso, the FB will be understood under the prism of two dominant criteria: ownership and control. Thus, any economic organisation in which the control of ownership and effective management is in the hands of one or more families is considered to be a FB (Kargougou, 2020). In this study, this definition is used as our sample is drawn from this database.

In terms of performance, Bourguignon (1995) from the perspective of researching its definition, defines it as the achievement of organisational objectives, regardless of their nature and variety. (Lorino, 2013) perceives it as the balance between wealth creation and resource destruction.

It is therefore clear that performance is a polysemous, multiform, multidimensional and contingent notion in organisations in general (Cadiou, 2008) and particularly when it comes to women's FBs ((Binwa et al., 2020 ; Hilali, 2022). Despite this conceptual complexity of performance, Sakola Djika and Sako (2022) emphasise that it is nevertheless necessary to ensure the sustainability of the enterprise. In the context of FB, several criteria, both objective and subjective, have been developed and used to judge this performance. For example, Nabli (2009) uses family culture, Arrègle and Mari (2010) propose the individual character of authority and the protection of resources to judge it, Tagiuri and Davis (1992) used family loyalty, Daumas (2012) the willingness to give long-term direction to the company and Binwa et al (2020) used financial, personal and family traits.

Contingency theory, unlike Taylor's "one best way", postulates that the characteristics of the context explain the differences in performance between companies with the same endowments. Thus, the environment plays a predominant role in the success of an organisation according to the contingency school. For Mintzberg (1994), there are several contingency factors that can result from the environment as well as from the size, age, technical system or power distribution of the company. He states that the efficiency of the company is closely linked to its organisation in its environment and to the internal coherence between the design parameters. The cultural dimension is then an important contingency factor in achieving this performance especially in the African context (Kamdem, 2017). Sakola Djika and Sako (2022) believe that taking this cultural dimension into account makes it possible to propose organisational systems adapted for greater performance, especially in women's FBs where business-family interaction is very strong. Marriage, especially in the African context, has a highly cultural aspect and is therefore a contingency factor. It is in this sense that we have focused our interest on marital status.

Without neglecting the importance and necessity of subjective criteria, the majority of empirical studies use objective criteria because of their ease of modelling. However, Lorino (2003) specifies the fundamental characteristics of a performance indicator. According to him, it must have operational and strategic relevance and cognitive effectiveness (be easily read, understood and interpreted by users). Rational indicators for measuring the performance of FBs refer to criteria related to increase in revenue, increase of sales, increase in net income, debt/capital ratio, increase in rate of return on assets, increase in rate of return on capital as well as increase in dividends paid (Azoury et al., 2010). Thus, the importance of productivity (Alves, 1978), the importance of productivity (Alves, 1978), profitability and sales growth are the most widely used in the literature on FBs (Agbim, 2019). Therefore, we use as a proxy for performance, the change in net profit which estimates profitability, in our study.

I.2 Relationship between women's marital status and FBs performance

Ndongo (2013), points out that in the African context, attempts to explain business inefficiency are more oriented towards problems related to the external environment of the business than to factors that condition its functioning at the organisational level. Indeed, according to the definition of the FB, it is characterised by the active participation of the family in the management, in the control of the capital and in the transmission of the business to the next generation within the family. This active participation of the family, referred to as the family effect in business management, is generally manifested in the reflection of family values by the business, especially in the African context. In Burkina Faso, marital status is an important element of organisation within the family.

Mendy and Diop (2018) view the use of family governance mechanisms positively, as it allows for the administration of appropriate behaviours in the family circle conducive to the development of affectio-familiaris to deal with so-called family conflicts (Caillie and Onana, 2012). These family governance mechanisms have a positive effect on the performance of the family business, since they allow conflicts to be resolved (Abouzaid, 2008 ; Caillie and Onana, 2012). Furthermore, Viénot et al (2007) point out that the prospects of profitability of the enterprise and the maximum risk threshold are defined in a consensual manner within the family. It is noted that important decisions are taken at the level of non-formal family governance structures.

Diene et al (2015) point out that social norms have a significant influence on the management of businesses, especially family businesses, because a business is not just a technical system or a simple production site, but also a social body. It is, in fact, closely linked to the social and cultural environment in which it evolves. According to these authors, the social norms in force in the society in which the enterprise evolves determine the management and performance of the enterprise. In the African context, these norms are generally perceived as constraints on the managerial capacities of managers and negatively influence the performance of African companies, whether they are large, medium or small, formal or informal.

Marital status is a contingent factor that may play a role in women's FBs performance and is widely discussed in the literature (Benazzi and Benazzi, 2016 ; Ponson, 2002 ; Rachdi, 2006). The sign of its impact on the performance of women's enterprises is not unanimous, as some authors consider it as a hindrance while others see it as a stimulant (Benazzi and Benazzi, 2016). The latter consider that in Morocco, the fact of being married is a stimulator, because women's businesses are owned in majority by married women with a proportion of 71%. Fofana et al (2020), in a study of women entrepreneurs who are heads of households in Ivory coast, argue that single women are victims of socio-cultural barriers to business performance. Better still, marital status has a considerable influence on the decision to undertake an activity as well as on the development and sustainability of the business created (Doubogan, 2016 ; Rachdi, 2006). She notes that, in general, studies show that marriage plays a stabilising role for entrepreneurs in the conduct of business. However, this is much more controversial when looking only at women entrepreneurs. The stabilising role of marriage seems to be less verified for women, which is why there is so much dispersion. This stabilising and supportive role of marriage seems to be better illustrated by Nikina et al (2012) through this testimony: *'He was happy to help me and I was glad because I could share some business matters with him. We often exchanged, estimated the offer, calculated the cost... I cannot thank my husband enough...'*

Matrimonial status is therefore a determining element of organisation within families. It is central to the formation and evolution of the family (Delaunay and Boyer, 2017). One might think that a female entrepreneur with a 'married' marital status is likely to be more stable and better supported. Hence our following hypothesis 1 :

H1 : FBs with married female heads have a higher performance than those of single women in Burkina Faso.

Furthermore, Mendy and Diop (2018) note that the age of the family business has a positive influence on family size. Indeed, the owner's family grows larger and more complex over the years. Thus, the need for structures to manage this complexity becomes acute. The degree of complexity of family ties, as measured by family size, is more pronounced in polygamous families.

In addition, it is observed that the majority of married people are monogamous, about 78% of unions. Polygamy concerns more women than men, with 37.4% of women and 22% of men living in unions. It is recognised that the degree of complexity of family ties is greater in polygamous families because of the size of the family. This complexity could be explained by a certain instability within the polygamous family, which could lead to the divorce of the first wife (Thiombiano et al., 2007). In their study, Delaunay and Boyer (2017) specify the socioeconomic characteristics of the population according to their marital status. They note that civil servants are characterised by monogamy, with a higher level of education and fewer children. In contrast, traders (entrepreneurs) are mostly polygamous. In order to cope with these instabilities and conflicts, specific mechanisms are needed for women living in polygamous households to ensure the continuity of their FB, as tensions and dissensions within the family can undermine the development of the enterprise and make it less efficient. Indeed, Daily and Döllinger (1992) note that psychological conflicts within the polygamous family can undermine the benefits of reduced supervision within the FBs. They can create feelings of frustration in the woman that can inhibit her ability to make good decisions for the better functioning of her business. Hence our second hypothesis: *H2 : FBs belonging to women living in polygamous households perform worse than those belonging to women living in monogamous households in Burkina Faso.*

2. Methodological approach

In this section, we discuss the presentation of the analysis model, the sample and the data analysis method.

2.1. Specification of the analysis model

The issue of marital status is a real social fact that can be studied in an objective way. To this end, a hypothetico-deductive methodological approach is adopted in this research.

We seek to identify the relationship between the marital status of the promoter and the performance of the FE in Burkina Faso. The dependent variable Y is a binary variable that takes the value 1 if the result (RNET) has increased and 0 if it has decreased. The explanatory variable is also a binary variable. Two laws (logit and probit) are mainly used in this case. In this work, the logistic law was preferred to the probit because of its simplicity. Indeed, logistic regression allows the prediction of the probability that an event will or will not occur based on the optimisation of the regression coefficients.

It also makes it possible to estimate an odd ratio which provides information on the strength and direction of the association between the explanatory variable and the variable to be explained.

Y follows a Bernoulli distribution of parameter p and can thus be written :

$$\begin{aligned} \text{logit}(P) &= \ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) \\ &= \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i1} + \beta_2 x_{i2} + \dots + \beta_p x_{ik} \end{aligned}$$

In our case we have a single binary exogenous variable. Our model thus becomes :

$$\text{Logit} [P(Y_i = 1 | X = x)] = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x$$

We have two levels of regression, X denotes marital status in the first model and takes the values 1 if the sponsor is married and 0 if she is single. In the second model X denotes polygamy and takes the values 1 if the sponsor is polygamous and 0 if she is monogamous.

2.2. Sample

The data for our study come from the database of the survey conducted by Kargougou (2020). This survey covered a sample of 2035 family businesses. For this purpose, 2,541 enterprises were drawn from the NERE file of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Burkina Faso (CCI-BF). The study sample covers all thirteen (13) regions of Burkina Faso. It is a stratified sample representative of the business population of Burkina Faso. A total of 2,343 enterprises responded to the questionnaire, of which 2,035 were family businesses, of which 9.29% were in the craft sector, 46.29% in commerce, 15.09% in industry and 29.34% in services. Similarly, 83.8% are sole proprietorships, 13.8% are limited companies, 1.1% are joint stock companies, 0.7% are EIGs and 0.5% are other forms not detailed by the author.

As we seek to measure the influence of marital status on the performance of women's FBs, we excluded those belonging to men from the sample. Thus, our final sample consists of 331 FBs distributed as follows according to the promoter's marital status.

Table 1 : Characteristics of the sample

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Other	34	10,27%	10,27%
Single	108	32,63%	42,90%
Monogamous married	174	52,57%	95,47%
Married polygamist	15	4,53%	100%
Grand total	331		

Source : Authors based on data (Kargougou, 2020)

2.3. Analysis of the data

The objective of our research is to verify the influence of marital status on the company's net income. Two types of data analysis were then carried out, namely analysis of variance (ANOVA) and logistic regression. A first logistic regression to test the influence of marital status on performance was conducted on married and single women promoters. A second logistic regression to test the influence of polygamy on performance was carried out on the FBs held by the married women (223 FBs). The Stata SE 15 software was used for the various data processing and analysis.

To interpret the results of the regressions we used odds ratios.

This section is devoted to the analysis of the data from the above-mentioned database and the discussion of the results. Thus, it is organised in two sub-sections which are respectively the analysis of the data by descriptive statistics and logistic regression followed by the discussion of the results obtained.

3. Research results and discussion

This section will firstly discuss the research results and secondly the discussions.

3.1. Search results

For the presentation of the results, an analysis of variance will be done in a first step before moving on to a logistic regression in a second step.

3.1.1. Analysis of variance

This analysis will consist of assessing the variations in results according to marital status (married, single never married, single already married) on the one hand, and the variations in results according to the union status (monogamy or polygamy) on the other. Table 2 below presents the results of the analysis of variance of the net result according to the union status.

Table 2: ANOVA RNET and Marital Status

Analysis of Variance						
Source	SS	df	MS	F	Prob > F	
Between groups	.035132048	2	.017566024	0.08	0.9204	
Within groups	58.1842924	275	.211579245			
Total	58.2194245	277	.210178428			

Bartlett's test for equal variances : $\chi^2(2) = 0.0865$ Prob> $\chi^2 = 0.958$
Sources : Authors

The analysis of variance shows that the promoter's marital status does not seem to have an effect on her business performance. The probability associated with the Fisher statistic is well above the critical threshold of 0.05 (Prob F=0.9204>0.05). Heterogeneity independent of marital status is the main source that would explain the variance in the firm's net income (99.94%).

Those in union in our sample include both those living in monogamous and polygamous households. Table 2 presents the analysis of variance on the relationship between polygamy and women's FBs performance through the evolution of the net result.

Table 3 : ANOVA- RNET and Status of Union.

Analysis of Variance						
Source	SS	df	MS	F	Prob > F	
Between groups	.847750925	1	.847750925	4.29	0.0401	
Within groups	29.4701299	149	.197786107			
Total	30.3178808	150	.202119205			

Bartlett's test for equal variances : $\chi^2(1) = 0.6084$ Prob> $\chi^2 = 0.435$
Sources : Authors

The analysis of variance suggests that union status (monogamy or polygamy) does not have a significant influence on women's FBs performance. The Fisher statistic emerges with a probability below the 5% threshold (Prob F= 0.0401<0.05). Domestic heterogeneity specific to the union situation is the main source that would explain the variance in the firm's net income (97.20%).

The results of these descriptive statistics will be further investigated by a logistic regression between each of the two explanatory variables and performance before drawing conclusions.

3.1.2. Logistic regression

The first seeks to verify the relationship between marital status and the performance of FBs in Burkina Faso. We considered that the promoter who had celebrated either a religious or customary marriage or who was living in concubinage was married (married = 1). All promoters living alone were considered single (single = 0). Table 3 below presents the results of the logistic regression.

Table 4: Relationship between marital status and NER of women's FS

Logistic regression						
	Number of obs = 273					
	LR $\chi^2(1) = 0.04$					
	Prob > $\chi^2 = 0.8439$					
	Log likelihood = -165.97692					
	Pseudo R2 = 0.0001					
RNET	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Statut_Matrimonial_Mariée	1.056604	.2951307	0.20	0.844	.6111594	1.826711
_cons	2.285714	.5179011	3.65	0.000	1.466072	3.563598

Note : _cons estimates baseline odds.

Sources : Authors

The results of this regression are not significant, as the associated probabilities are well above the critical 5% threshold. (0,844). Our first hypothesis, which postulates that FBs with married female heads have a higher performance than those headed by single women FBs, is therefore invalidated. To test our second hypothesis, we recoded our variables, this time excluding singles, widows, divorcees and "other" status, which did not indicate whether the person was monogamous or polygamous. Table 4 below presents the results of the regression on the relationship between marital status (1 if polygamous and 0 if monogamous).

Table 5: Relationship between union status and RNET of women's FBs

RNET	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Régime_Matrimonial	.2884615	.1833626	-1.96	0.050	.0829881	1.002675
Polygamie						
_cons	2.888889	.5586334	5.49	0.000	1.977568	4.220174

Note : _cons estimates baseline odds.

Sources : Authors

Table 4 shows that the regression results are significant at the 5% level. They indicate that female promoters living in polygamous households are about 3.47 times less likely to see their net score increase than those in monogamous households. In view of these results, our second hypothesis, which postulates that FBs belonging to women living in a polygamous household are less successful than those belonging to those living in a monogamous household in Burkina Faso is confirmed.

3.2. Discussions

The analysis of our results is in line with more work in the literature. Our results highlight the role of marital status as a contingent factor in explaining the performance of women's FBs in Burkina Faso. They therefore reaffirm the relevance of contingency theory in the search for organisational performance.

Our analysis shows a non-significant relationship between the marital status of women FBs promoters and the performance (increase in net income) of their firms. This result is contrary to the work of Nikina et al (2012), Bourgain and Chaudat, (2015) ; Doubogan, (2016) ; Fofana et al (2020) ; as well as those of Sakola Djika and Sako (2022) which focused on the case of men.

In contrast, our results show a significant relationship between the status of their union (monogamy or polygamy) and the performance of their FBs. Those in polygamous unions are less likely to have better performing FBs. These results are in line with those of Daily and Döllinger (1992) and to some extent the results of Mendy and Diop (2018). However, they are contrary to the results of Sakola Djika and Sako (2022) who addressed this link but for male owned firms. These results could also be explained by the fact that the woman in a polygamous union is said to bear more family burdens and is more prone to emotional instability that can inhibit the performance of her FB. This situation is more glaring when the promoter is the first wife. Indeed, when the husband convents again he tends to neglect the first wife who is forced to take care of herself and her children.

Conclusion

Our investigation focused on the possible links between the marital status of female FBs promoters and their performance in Burkina Faso. To do this, a statistical analysis followed by a logistic regression was carried out. Thus, the recoding of the variables gave us two main variables. The first is marital status, which allowed us to see whether being in a union (married), single never married (single) or single already married (divorced or widowed) had an impact on the performance of FBs in Burkina Faso. The second is the status of the union (resulting from the decomposition of the first), which made it possible to see whether being polygamous or monogamous among the married women influenced the performance of the FBs.

The study found that when the female promoter is married in a monogamous household, her business is about 3.47 times more likely to have an upward trend in net income. In contrast, being married or not appears to have no significant effect on the performance of women's FBs.

This study therefore highlights the contribution of social norms in explaining the performance of FBs in Burkina Faso. Thus, from a managerial point of view, the situation of the union of women promoters of FBs can be taken into account in the policies for supporting and promoting entrepreneurship in Burkina Faso.

However, this study focused on female FBs promoters. A comparative study between female and male entrepreneurs would highlight the particularities of each group and better target entrepreneurship support policies.

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