“The strange thing about business is that you can’t stop”

A qualitative study of the internationalization initiation of female-owned SMEs in Uganda

Authors: Victoria Beica, Lisa Eklöf
Supervisor: Richard Owusu
Examiner: Clarinda Rodrigues
Semester: Spring, 2018
Subject: International Business
Level: Bachelor
Course code: 2FE51E
Abstract
During the past decade, entrepreneurship and its implications in a developing country context has gained increased attention in research. In Uganda, women in business are leading the way in the entrepreneurial development. In addition, the internationalization of small entrepreneurial firms has lately been given more attention within international business research. The purpose of this thesis is to combine these two emerging phenomena within international business in order to investigate how the female entrepreneur’s means at hand influence the internationalization initiation of her small and medium-sized enterprise in Uganda. By investigating the subjects in the matter, important components of the entrepreneur’s means have been identified and a deeper understanding of the implications of individual means has been examined. To ensure a deeper understanding, a qualitative research method has been followed. This thesis derives from an abductive approach. Due to the lack of previous research on the subject, it benefitted from a combination of inductive empirical research combined with theoretical insights. The literature review takes off from the concept of entrepreneurship and thereafter explores the concept of opportunity, means and internationalization. A conceptual framework concludes the literature review by illustrating the relations between the concepts. The conceptual framework provided themes for collecting and analyzing was used to analyse the empirical data gathered in Uganda by adopting a multi-case approach.

The analysis discusses theoretical concepts and empirical findings in contrast and relation to each other, structured by the conceptual framework. This is followed by a concluding chapter stating implications, limitations and suggestions for future research. The outcome of this study has provided a deeper understanding of who the entrepreneur is, what she knows and how she uses her networks and personal ties to go abroad. The findings have resulted in the main theoretical implication of filling the research gap of female entrepreneurship in developing countries as well as providing an example of how the effectual approach can be used when studying entrepreneurship within international business. We suggest that entrepreneurs and their SMEs benefit from engaging in business networks at an early stage of the internationalization process. Within networks, effectual means are working together to develop market knowledge and find opportunity for international activities.

Keywords: female entrepreneurship; developing country; Uganda; International Business; SMEs; export; import Effectuation; traits; capabilities; networks
Acknowledgements
First, we would like to take the opportunity to express how grateful we are for the opportunity to conduct our study at the scene in Uganda. We truly believe that the meetings with inspiring women and the experience from a developing country context has enriched our study. Kampala has put our patience to test several times, in hourly traffic-jams, unreasonably long small-talks and in “African time”. However, we leave Kampala and Uganda with nothing but love for the country and people therein.

Foremost, we would like to express our gratitude to everyone we met along the way who has contributed to the establishment of this thesis. A special thanks to Moses Mwebembezi and Ugandan Women Entrepreneurs Association Ltd for identifying and introducing us to the female entrepreneurs, we could not have done this without your help. We want to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to our respondents; Hope Jemina Kasimbazi, Lillian Aero, Alice Karugaba, Rusia Orikiriza and Fosca (who wished to remain anonymous). Our respondents contributed with their time and decisive insights even though they are very busy and for that we are truly thankful.

Furthermore, we want to thank our supervisor Richard Owusu for valuable feedback and guidance. Thank you for always being available to answer our questions when we needed it. In addition, we would like to thank our examiner, Clarinda Rodrigues, and our opponents for constructive feedback during the course of our work as well as patience when the Wi-Fi connection was not at its best.

Kampala, May 20th, 2018

______________________________________________  ____________________________________________
Lisa Eklöf                                           Victoria Beica
# Table of Contents

1 **INTRODUCTION** ................................................................. 1

1.1 **BACKGROUND** ........................................................................ 1

1.2 **PROBLEM DISCUSSION** ......................................................... 4

1.2.1 **PROBLEM DEFINITION** ..................................................... 7

1.3 **RESEARCH QUESTION** ......................................................... 8

1.4 **PURPOSE** .............................................................................. 8

1.5 **DELIMITATIONS** ................................................................. 8

1.6 **OUTLINE** .............................................................................. 9

2 **LITERATURE REVIEW** .......................................................... 10

2.1 **ENTREPRENEURSHIP** ......................................................... 10

2.1.1 **FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP** ........................................ 10

2.1.2 **IDENTITY** .......................................................................... 11

2.1.3 **OPPORTUNITY MEETS THE ENTREPRENEUR** ..................... 12

2.2 **MEANS** ................................................................................. 13

2.2.1 **TRAITS** ............................................................................. 13

2.2.2 **CAPABILITIES** ................................................................. 14

2.2.3 **NETWORKS** ....................................................................... 15

2.3 **INTERNATIONALIZATION** ................................................... 16

2.3.1 **IMPORT AND EXPORT OF SMES** ..................................... 17

2.3.2 **INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP** ......................... 17

2.3.3 **PSYCHIC DISTANCE** ......................................................... 19

2.3.4 **MEANS AFFECTING THE DECISION TO INTERNATIONALIZE** 19

2.4 **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK** ............................................. 23

3 **METHODOLOGY** .................................................................... 24

3.1 **RESEARCH APPROACH** ..................................................... 24

3.2 **RESEARCH METHOD** ........................................................ 25

3.3 **RESEARCH DESIGN** .......................................................... 26

3.3.1 **PURPOSE IN RESEARCH** ................................................ 26

3.3.2 **RESEARCH STRATEGY** .................................................... 26

3.4 **DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES** .................................... 27

3.4.1 **PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION** ....................................... 27

3.4.2 **SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION** .................................... 27

3.5 **CASE-STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN** ...................................... 28

3.5.1 **PURPOSIVE SAMPLING STRATEGY** .................................. 28

3.5.2 **CASES** ............................................................................... 29

3.5.3 **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS** ................................... 31

3.5.4 **OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS** ............................................. 32

3.5.5 **OPERATIONALIZATION** .................................................. 33
3.5.6 CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS ................................................................. 34
3.6 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS ................................................................. 34
3.7 QUALITY OF RESEARCH ........................................................................ 35
  3.7.1 VALIDITY ......................................................................................... 36
  3.7.2 RELIABILITY .................................................................................... 36
3.8 RESEARCH ETHICS ............................................................................... 37

4 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS .............................................................................. 39
  4.1 CASE INTRODUCTION ........................................................................ 39
  4.2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP ................................................................ ......... 42
  4.3 MEANS .............................................................................................. 43
    4.3.1 TRAITS ....................................................................................... 43
    4.3.2 CAPABILITIES ............................................................................ 45
    4.3.3 NETWORKS ............................................................................... 46
  4.4 INTERNATIONALIZATION .................................................................... 48

5 ANALYSIS .................................................................................................. 50
  5.1 ENTREPRENEURSHIP ................................................................ ......... 50
    5.1.1 ENTREPRENEURIAL MEANS ....................................................... 51
  5.2 INTERNATIONALIZATION .................................................................... 55

6 CONCLUSION ............................................................................................. 59
  6.1 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS ..................................... 59
  6.2 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS ......................................................... 61
  6.3 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS ............................................................... 63
  6.4 LIMITATIONS .................................................................................... 64
  6.5 FUTURE RESEARCH .......................................................................... 64

7 REFERENCES ............................................................................................ 66
APPENDICES ................................................................................................. I
Figure and Table Index

Figure 2.1 The Effectuation process

Figure 2.2 The Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.3 Revised Conceptual Framework

Table 3.1 Operationalization Summary

List of Abbreviations

*Boda Boda* Motorbike taxi

*East African Region* Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya

*LSE* Large-sized Enterprise > 250 employees

*Matatu* Mini-van taxi

*McE* Micro-sized Enterprise < 10 employees\(^1\)

*SME* Small and medium-sized Enterprise > 10 employees

*UIA* Uganda Investment Authority

*UWEAL* Ugandan Women Entrepreneurs Association Limited

\(^1\) Definitions from European Commission (2018)
Prologue

On the back of a Boda Boda, I cross through crazy Kampala traffic. I’ve read somewhere that there are more Boda’s than people in Kampala which undoubtedly could be accurate information. A mix of honking Matatus, shouting street vendors and rhythmic music fills the air which by the way has an everlasting smell of gasoline. Back at our house the air smell of fried bread and corn but here, downtown, the pollution is terrible. The scenery however is beautiful, the banana plantations on the surrounding hills contributes to the green vegetation that truly makes Uganda the pearl of Africa.

It is easy to be blinded by the beauty of it all, however, as I get off the Boda the reality of people’s destiny’s strikes me.

A girl and her baby sister approach me. Their naked feet are covered in dirt but their thorn dresses are almost perfectly ironed. At the blink of an eye, the older girl snatches the water bottle I am holding and runs off. Restrained by my own privilege, I will never be able to understand the fight for survival that is life for those girls.

Though, that is all I have time to think of since downtown there is not much room for reflection. You constantly have to watch out for traffic and people walking in all kinds of directions. Enterprising people along the road are seen selling vegetables, fruits, clothing and internet bundles. Some are making shoes out of tires and some offers assistance to get the most out of your smartphone.

As I travel a couple of minutes in the other direction, gracious malls and incredibly well-dressed women are seen having lunch or sipping tea at one of the many fancy places around. I look around and my eyes rests on a woman wearing a beautiful dress, perfectly ironed and I wonder:

have you’ve ever had to steal water for survival?
1 INTRODUCTION

In the initiating chapter, an introduction will be given to present the field of study. In the following section, the characteristics of female entrepreneurship in developing countries will be highlighted. Later on, the subject will be put in an international context and the degree of which ability the entrepreneur herself has to affect the internationalization decision of the SME will be discussed. This results in the research question, which aims to fulfil the purpose of this study.

1.1 Background

Globalization has led to an increased interaction between emerging markets and developed markets considering both political, social and economic matters (Hoskisson, Eden, Lau and Wright, 2000). Furthermore, Sandberg (2012) and Gjellerup (2000), argue that rapid globalization has created a newness in the international business environment; internationalization opportunities for not only large, but for small enterprises as well.

The interface between the emerging markets and developed markets has resulted in acknowledging the emerging markets growth, which Kujala (2015) explains is one aspect of the globalization today. The experience of emerging economies such as South Africa, demonstrates how important the integration with the global market is for further development in the private sector for such emerging economies. Moreover, the international trade can enhance opportunities for both parts, thus the emerging countries have to make a greater effort when it comes to creating jobs and identifying international opportunities (World Bank, 2018).

A key to job creation and growth in modern society is the creation of new organizations along with the renewal of existing firms (Nielsen, Klyver, Rostgaard Evald and Bager 2012). Hence entrepreneurship is a crucial factor for the economic growth in emerging economies today. Nielsen et al., (2012) explain that the entrepreneurial process is realized when new opportunities are created, evaluated and organized. However, despite the recent increased globalization, a large number of small-size business owners in developing countries still face additional challenges and thus, not have the courage to take the opportunity to cross national borders (Kujala, 2015; Leonidou, 2004).

Nevertheless, the advancement of an economy is not necessarily a factor that drive or restrain entrepreneurship. The Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs (MIWE, 2017 p 8) report found that “irrespective of the wealth and advancement of an economy, there are unique internal market dynamics within each economy that draw out explicit
entrepreneurial traits”. Nielsen et al. (2012) argue further that entrepreneurship can develop in both national, regional and local contexts. Moreover, it is influenced by the cultural norms and social values therein.

Since both the developed and developing nations play a big role of the globalization, achieving global sustainable growth concerns both parts equally. Thus, previous research has focused mainly on the internationalization of firms from developed markets, rather than from emerging countries (Kujala and Törnroos, 2018).

Africa is considered to be the most underdeveloped and backward region of the world. The continent economy grew by roughly 4 per cent in 2014 and that was the start of the longest uninterrupted positive economic expansion in Africa’s history (UN, 2018). Furthermore, a World Bank (2015) report confirmed a promising improvement of the business environment in Sub-Saharan Africa but also recognizes risk and challenges for the development of African economies. According to Naudé (2010 p 1), entrepreneurship is claimed to be “the main vehicle of economic development” and “the more entrepreneurs there are in an economy the faster it will grow” (Naudé 2010 p 2). It is therefore interesting to present the fact what seem to be a contributing factor behind this growth. The region of the Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest regional women entrepreneurship activity rate in the world, with nearly a third of business including some kind of female entrepreneurship (UN, 2018). Additionally, Uganda and Botswana rank the highest when it comes to women business owners (as % of total business owners) (MIWE, 2017).

A study carried out in 57 countries around the world, established that Ugandan women are among the most entrepreneurial in the world (Bitature, 2018). Moreover, the female entrepreneurial environment in especially Uganda is interesting in many ways, firstly, the average entrepreneur is a female between the age of 18-34 years old (MIWE, 2017). Secondly, Uganda has a population with high entrepreneurial intentions, believing that there are good business opportunities. Thirdly, the entrepreneurial activities in Uganda is a highly dynamic process in which closing of business is considered more of a routine than a failure (Balunga, Rosa, Dawa, Namatovu, Kyejjusa and Ntnu, 2012). Furthermore, Uganda has characteristics that are different from other countries in the global south (Guma, 2015). It is said that the years of civil wars and rough regimes in the 70’s and 80’s has left a negative legacy affecting women and their participation in business activities through e.g. discriminatory laws and policies and socio-cultural
disregard. Women with children to nurture have borne the brunt of the hard times, and somehow now they did not only manage to survive, they flourished (Bitature, 2018). In recent years’ developments to socio-cultural and legislative practice under the administration of president Yoweri Kaguta Museveni has enhanced the potential for women’s entrepreneurship. It is today valued as a unique and rich resource and both the private sector and the government is working on sweeping away the barriers that prevent women to reach their full potential (Bitature, 2018). The development has, as mentioned above, demonstrated a remarkably high involvement of women in business activities (Guma, 2015).

Overall, African women in business are mainly found in the micro enterprise sector (hereafter McEs). They own and operate a high degree of the informal sector. This entrepreneurial spirit has as in many other parts of the world contributed to job creation, family sustainability and poverty reduction. While there are only a minor group of women engaging in small and medium-sized enterprises, this has however impacted positively on employment and trade in Africa (Stevenson and St-Onge, 2005). Although the women entrepreneurship has a positive impact on the trade of Africa, Kujala (2015) continues to argue that the African SMEs face additional challenges in their quest to internationalize. What could enable the internationalization for SMEs can be a broad business network that includes a set of knowledge, capabilities and resources. Assets that show significance and to be considerable important in an internationalization process of an SME (Halineen, Törnroos and Elo, 2013; Kujala 2015). However, these assets can be challenging for an African SME to establish by themselves (Kujala, 2015).

As earlier mentioned, we can see that globalization facilitates global interaction between developing and developed countries which favors the economic growth for both parts. Furthermore, it enhances the internationalization opportunities for firms in emerging markets (Hollensen, 2011). Certainly, in developing countries, entrepreneurship has been vital resulting in a positive factor for a country’s wealth and welfare. However, no matter the development level, Nielsen et al., (2012) enlightens that entrepreneurship as such does not conform to country boarders, which creates a truly interesting field of research. Moreover, whether it concerns African SMEs or McEs activities, the women entrepreneurs contribute to industrial development and economic survival of the African economies, which contributes to the statistical increase of women entrepreneurship globally (MIWE, 2017). Combining the fact that globalization facilitates internationalization for firms from emerging economies and the escalation of
female entrepreneurs especially in the African context leads us to investigating the internationalization process of female-owned Ugandan SMEs.

1.2 Problem Discussion

During the past decades, the research-field of entrepreneurship has expressed two emerging trends. First, the increased interest of female entrepreneurship and second, the blooming of small business owners who seek cross-border market opportunities (Madsen and Servais, 1997; Oviatt and McDougall, 1994; Rosenbaum, 2016). As off today, most research in both fields focuses on developed countries. What do we really know about small business taking off from developing markets? And further, what do we really know about the internationalization of female-owned business in developing countries? Limited research has been done on small business taking off from developing markets (Kujala and Törnroos, 2018). Moreover, Santos, Marques and Ferrira (2018) found that the interest in the topic of female entrepreneurship on an international level is related to the higher rate of female entrepreneurs in developing countries.

The internationalization of small business (hereafter SMEs) has accelerated during the past 20 years. Due to the rapid changes, the fact that a company affected by some sort of international challenge also concerns SMEs. These challenges could incorporate international sales, marketing and joint ventures to give some examples (Kalinic and Forza, 2011). The increasing relevance of SMEs in the global economy also points at the relevance of female-owned SMEs in a developing country context. Not only because of the fact that female entrepreneurship has lately gained interest in literature (and due to the scarcity of research in the matter) but also due to the link of female entrepreneurship and poverty reduction in developing countries (Guma, 2015; OECD, 2004). Women account for an important share of private sector activity and thereby reduction of poverty, therefor, enhancing women’s participation in SME development is truly beneficial in a developing country context (Guma, 2015; OECD, 2004). In developing countries, women engaging in SMEs is also seen as appropriate opportunities for women entrepreneurs as they demonstrate a flexibility towards entry, change and innovation. However, the number of female entrepreneurs engaging in SMEs in developing countries has not reached optimal potential, that is due to women’s limited access to enabling resources such as market access and initial capital (Kapinga and Montero, 2017; Ulusay de Groot, 2001).
Looking at the context of Uganda, the division of micro, small and medium enterprises is to a high extent over representing micro-sized enterprises (hereafter McEs). McEs are characterized by very restrained resources and struggles to gain access to financial means to expand (UWEAL, 2018). While 70% of Ugandan businesses falls under the category of micro, 20% are considered small and 10% medium (COBE, 2011). Within the high numbers of McEs, the business process it is more likely to end with failure rather than business development into SMEs (Balunga et al., 2012).

Initially, all entrepreneurs encounter challenges, however, researchers have concluded that the obstacles experienced by women are as a rule larger than by men (Santos et al., 2018). Moreover, as argued by Guma (2015), female entrepreneurs in Uganda do face more barriers to engaging in formal enterprises than women in developed countries. As mentioned, Kapinga and Montero (2017) identified barriers such as lack of market access and capital, which Guma (2015) highlights as even more challenging for women in Sub-Saharan African countries. For SMEs taking off from a developing economy, being constrained by a lack of internal resources does hamper a firm’s decision to enter an export market (Okpara and Koumbiadis, 2009). Another major aspect of hindrance is the limitations for Ugandan women in owning land and inherit business (Guma, 2015; Spring 2009). It is common that women are evicted of their rights to matrimonial land (upon death or divorce from husband) which creates a gender imbalance affecting entrepreneurship (Guma, 2015).

Not to be forgotten is also the difficulties for women to establish a work-life-balance. These difficulties are experienced by women all over the world, however, in Uganda and other East African countries, the societal expectations and norms of mothers are more difficult to overcome (Guma, 2015). The struggles of balancing both work life and family creates a situation where the female entrepreneur lacks the time to engage in capacity-building such as skills training which affects the potential entrepreneurial success (Guma, 2015).

The answer to how the entrepreneur internationalize emphasises how the entrepreneur herself perceives, recognize and exploit opportunities in the early stage of internationalization (Mitgwe, 2006; Sarasvathy, Kumar, York and Bhagavatula, 2013). The role of the individual is visible in effectuation theory which strives to highlight the importance of the individual and how she utilises resources within her control to construct new products together with self-selected actors that either commit or restrain (Sarasvathy et al., 2013). The effectual logic emphasises the role of human action in the decision
process rather than responding to inevitable opportunity in the entrepreneur’s environment (Sarasvathy et al., 2013). The relevance of effectuation theory within the internationalization process is there for explained through how the entrepreneurial decision maker plays an important role when entering new markets, relying on means rather than ends (Sarasvathy et al., 2013). The important role of the individual within the internationalization process of SMEs is also highlighted by Mtigwe (2005), who argues that in order to fully understand the behaviour of a small firm, it is needed to start with the entrepreneur herself.

The internationalization of firms is usually focused on the process as a whole. However, looking at the early stage of the process, the initiation, can reveal interesting facts on the entrepreneurs means within the internationalization process. Sarasvathy et al., (2013) argues that means-variables are the entrepreneurs answer to the question of who I am, what do I know and whom do I know. In line with Sarasvathy et al., (2013) argumentation this study aims at focusing on the means behind the initiative to internationalize rather than the process as a whole.

As argued by Chandler, DeTienne and Mumford (2007), there are no universal way of what the concept of means incorporates. Sarasvathy (2001) refers to a study where means was measured trough identity, knowledge and networks which has served as a guideline for setting the concept of means for this study (see figure 2.3). Moreover, “Who I am” strives at highlighting important personal traits of the female entrepreneur, which according to Omri and Becuwe (2014) affects the entrepreneur’s ability to seize opportunities in foreign markets. “What do I know” highlights the entrepreneurs’ capabilities and knowledge, a way of overcoming resource and experience limitations crucial for early internationalization (Cavusgil and Knight, 2015). At last, “whom do I know” includes the entrepreneurs’ involvement in networks which is said to enable acquiring knowledge about foreign markets, a need that has been highly recognized as crucial for the internationalization process within the stage-model approach to internationalization (Blomstermo, Eriksson, Lindstrand and Sharma, 2004; Harris and Wheeler, 2005; Mtigwe, 2006).

By integrating traits, capabilities/knowledge and networks, this study strives at shedding a light on what components of these three categories influences the internationalization initiation of a female-owned SME in a developing country context. Our aspiration is that by focusing on the early stage of internationalization, important means can be identified and thereby contribute to the knowledge of the yet unexplored
field of internationalization of female-owned SMEs taking off from a developing market. This study also acknowledges the higher relevance of focusing on the first stages of internationalization, rather than the process as a whole, since the internationalization of female-owned SMEs is still constrained by lack of resources and thereby struggles in the process as a whole (Guma, 2015; Kapinga and Montero, 2017; Okpara and Koumiadis, 2009).

1.2.1 Problem definition

Uganda is a developing country that is struggling with poverty and hardships. Thus, Uganda has been awarded the most entrepreneurial country in the world. We have learnt how entrepreneurship does not conform to country borders nor to living conditions and we have seen how entrepreneurship can contribute to poverty reduction. But first and foremost, we have seen how women are leading the way in this development.

As pointed out by previous research, internationalization of firms is no longer limited to large multinational firms taking off from developed counties. Moreover, the opportunity is based on the decision-maker’s ability to perceive opportunity rather than firm size or country context. We are of the opinion that the insights from female-owned firms taking off from Uganda can contribute positively to the field of international business which has lately turned eyes to the interesting emerging continent of Africa.

Interested in the individual, the decision-maker or in this case the entrepreneur, led this study to take an effectual approach towards internationalization. The effectual approach and the decision to internationalize is based on the concept of individual means, the traits, capabilities and networks of the entrepreneur. In order to fully investigate the entrepreneurial means, the study derives from one main research question supported by three sub-questions.
1.3 Research Question

How does the means of the female entrepreneur influence the internationalization initiation of her Small and Medium sized Enterprise in Uganda?

Sub-Question A

- How do the traits of the female entrepreneur influence the internationalization initiation of her SME in Uganda?

Sub-Question B

- How do the capabilities of the female entrepreneur influence the internationalization initiation of her SME in Uganda?

Sub-Question C

- How does the female entrepreneur’s involvement in networks influence the internationalization initiation of her SME in Uganda?

1.4 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the traits, capabilities and networks of an entrepreneur herself influence the initiation to internationalize her SME. Furthermore, the purpose of this thesis is to identify the entrepreneurial means which are important in the decision to internationalize the female-owned Ugandan SME. Moreover, the thesis aims to provide a more comprehensive and holistic view on the entrepreneurial incentive to internationalize a SME taking off from an emerging market. Our results should provide implications for entrepreneurs with the intention to go abroad. We study the subject by adopting an effectual approach and aim to investigate how this affect the entrepreneurial means in an initiation of the internationalization process in a female-owned SME in Uganda.

1.5 Delimitations

This study will focus on how the means of the entrepreneur herself affect the internationalization of her SME. Since the research is conducted through a minor field study in Uganda, the research will exclusively investigate Ugandan SMEs owned by women and is therefore not able to examine the topic from another country’s perspective.
1.6 Outline

**Introduction**
- In the introduction chapter, the topic of the research is presented, followed by a problem discussion which highlights the research gap which finally leads to the research questions and the purpose of the paper.

**Literature Review**
- In this chapter, the reader is provided with relevant theories for the research topic, which further will be used to analyze the empirical data. Later on, the theoretical basis is motivated by presenting a conceptual framework.

**Methodology**
- This chapter presents and motivates the methodology chosen for this paper. The strategic choice of methodology has the purpose to enable the data sampling for the thesis and obtain the necessary data for this study.

**Empirical Findings**
- This chapter will present the data that has been collected through in-depth interviews with the correspondents who counterparts the criterias which are described in the purposive sampling.

**Analysis**
- This chapter interlinks the empirical findings together with the theoretical framework. This chapter aims to create a valuable analysis which underlines the conceptual framework.

**Conclusion**
- This chapter concludes the thesis and presents a summary of the main arguments based on the assumptions from the analysis. Moreover, the conclusion of this paper will answer the research question and fill the identified research gap. Additionally, recommendations for further research on the topic are proposed.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review will take off from the field of entrepreneurship where the question of “Who is the entrepreneur?” is discussed. Next, the decision and process of entrepreneurship will be introduced followed by effectuation theory. From there, the foundational concept of means will be presented and put in an international context. The review will be finalized by presenting the concept of internationalization and international entrepreneurship. A conceptual framework will then be presented to conclude the literature review.

2.1 Entrepreneurship
Entrepreneurship is surrounding us all the time and takes a greater place in popular speech today. Therefore, defining entrepreneurship may seem an easy task but it certainly is not (Nielsen et al., 2012). Additionally, Shane and Venkataraman (2000) argue that defining entrepreneurship has been the biggest obstacle when creating a conceptual framework for the phenomenon. This results in questioning what exactly entrepreneurship is and furthermore, who can actually be named an entrepreneur. However, this study will along with the modern entrepreneurship research follow the definition that has been stated by Shane (2000) with inspiration from Venkataraman (1997). Shane (2000, p 9) enlightens “that entrepreneurship can be explained by considering the nexus of enterprising individuals and valuable opportunities... and by using that nexus to understand the processes of discovery and exploitation of opportunities; the acquisition of resources; entrepreneurial strategy; and the organizing process”. The entrepreneur bears no uncertainty about the economy. Instead, the entrepreneur as an innovator who is the main source of the economic development, by combining both existing and new opportunities which results in new ways of organizing the economy (Nielsen et al., 2012). Furthermore, Carter and Jones-Evans (2006) argue that the act of entrepreneurship involves a process of actions which create employment opportunities, increases productivity and provide a path out of poverty.

2.1.1 Female entrepreneurship
The first studies of female entrepreneurship sought to highlight differences between men and women in regard to psychological and sociological characteristics (Santos et al., 2018). Prior to that entrepreneurship was studied from a male perspective, focusing on characteristics and behaviors that were typically considered masculine, e.g. rationality, risk propensity, the desire for anatomy and the capacity to identify business opportunities.
To date, when entrepreneurship is analyzed from a gender perspective, Santos et al., (2018) argue that female entrepreneurship emerges from women’s entrepreneurial attitudes, shaped by experiences due to gender stereotypes and inter-gender relations continue to persist along with practices of discrimination. What does these stereotypes tell us then? Santos et al., (2018) argue that recent studies emphasize that women are more cooperative, has higher relational and empathy skills that are forged within family relationships. However, the source of such relational skills is not necessarily simply family-based but complex and plural (Santos et al., 2018).

Moreover, simply highlighting characteristics within the field of female entrepreneurship is not enough to create an understanding of the multifaceted concept. The country-specific and socio-cultural environment has a primary role in determining women’s opportunities, especially in a developing country context (De Vita, Mari and Poggesi, 2013). In the context of Uganda, the country is historically patriarchal, men have always been dominant in decision-making while women have the reproductive responsibilities (Guma, 2015). Guma (2015) argues that women entrepreneurs are portrayed by media as engaging in entrepreneurship to desperately find opportunity to make money in order to provide for their family’s survival.

2.1.2 Identity
Identity could be seen as a rather stable unit of the individual, which serves the entrepreneur well in the unpredictable environment of entrepreneurship (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005). Emerging from effectuation theory, in this way, the field of study suggest that from the beginning of the process the individual hold a relatively clear and consistent insight of who they are (Nielsen and Lassen, 2012).

Identity research can furthermore be divided into two branches, identity as a stable core (modernist view) or ever changing within the social and environmental context (constructivist view) (Nielsen and Lassen, 2012). Since the entrepreneur operates in an environment that is unpredictable and the outcome of actions are unknown, effectuation logic fits more into the modernist view since the constructivist approach requires a causal link between action and outcome (Nielsen and Lassen, 2012; Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005).

Warren (2004) problematizes the particular societal challenges facing female entrepreneurs. Such challenges could involve creating space for child/elderly relative care
or women reaching the “glass ceiling” which could benefit from the opportunities found in self-employment. Warren (2004) touches on a dilemma further explained by Nielsen et al., (2012), namely that individuals have multiple identities which will play a part in how individuals understand and perform the entrepreneurial identity. Hence, it cannot be expected that the entrepreneur abandons all other identities e.g. the traditional social norms of the women as mothers.

2.1.3 Opportunity meets the entrepreneur
Entrepreneurship has two parts: opportunities and individuals who strive to take advantage of them (Oviatt and McDougall, 2005; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). In order to have entrepreneurship and initiation of an entrepreneurial process, Shane and Venkataraman (2000) argue that entrepreneurial opportunities have to exist. As opposed to the pre-existing view of how opportunity occur, the so-called creation view advocates that opportunities are not something that are pre-existing in the market. They are a part of the entrepreneurial process and therefore also created by the entrepreneur herself (Fletcher, 2006; Korsgaard, 2011; Sarasvathy, 2008).

Lately, entrepreneurship has strongly been connected to economic growth for developing countries (Vivarelli, 2013). As cited previously, entrepreneurship is claimed to be “the main vehicle of economic development” (Naudé, 2010 p 1). For many entrepreneurs in developing countries, the discovery/creation of opportunity is not the main reason behind the entrepreneurial decision, the reason is rather necessity driven. The survival-driven entrepreneurship in developing countries emerges from poverty and a lack of formal employment which is said to push people into informal entrepreneurial activity (Naudé, 2010; Vivarelli, 2013). Moreover, Vivarelli (2013) suggest that due to the very high level of entrepreneurship in very poor countries, entrepreneurship is a multifaceted concept. Hence, not solely related to innovation, productivity growth and economic development.

In 2001, Sarasvathy presented an alternative entrepreneurial process which she calls effectuation. She defines the process of causation as selecting possible means based on a given effect while effectuation takes a given set of means to select possible effects (Sarasvathy, 2001). Since human life often includes unexpected events, and also contains contingencies that can be challenging to predict and analyze, the effectuation process is far more frequent and also creates a more useful understanding when analyzing the human action (Sarasvathy, 2001). As entrepreneurs seldom face a predictable future, the effectual thinking includes an improvisational approach when organizing (Nielsen et al., 2012).
Additionally, the effectual strategies are useful when the future in a business environment is unpredictable. Conducting cross-border business often increases the level of uncertainty into a firm’s environment no matter the firm’s level of establishment or the level of the markets its operates within (Sarasvathy et al, 2013).

2.2 Means
Central for the concept of effectuation is that the entrepreneur acts from a set of means at hand (Sarasvathy, 2001). Sarasvathy (2001) suggests that the entrepreneur should begin with the particular set of means that are available to her; Who I am, What do I know, Whom do I know? These questions represent, according to Sarasvathy (2001, p 250) “their own traits, tastes, and abilities; the knowledge corridors they are in; and the social networks they are a part of”.

Sarasvathy (2008) further argues that the effectual cycle progresses around the improvisational act of the entrepreneur, where the process starts with the entrepreneur evaluating her personal means. Continues with the entrepreneur who interacts and commits to the networks available and later on results in new individual means, which will affect future goals and furthermore the creation of new products and markets.

2.2.1 Traits
Entrepreneurship research has for a long time focused on the entrepreneur as a person with a particular set of traits. The logic behind trait research is that some people have certain attributes that make them more likely to find, create and pursue opportunity (Nielsen et al., 2012). Traits are defined as “constructs to explain regularities in people’s behavior, and help to explain why different people react differently to the same situation” (Llewellyn and Wilson, 2003 p 342). When presenting trait research one need to take into consideration the criticism it has been given. Critics argue that by focusing on traits, the entrepreneur easily becomes an extraordinary super-human who acquired these traits more or less at birth which is not a picture of the entrepreneur that reflects the “real-world” entrepreneur (Nielsen et al., 2012). Throughout history some traits have gained more attention than others. Clustered together under the name, the entrepreneurs big five, are the traits risk-taking propensity, need for achievement, need for autonomy, self-efficacy and internal locus of control (Vecchio, 2003).
Need for achievement
The need for achievement has through classic conceptions of basic needs studies shown to be associated with venture performance. Studies have also shown that entrepreneurs have a higher need for achievement than managers (Vecchio, 2003).

Need for autonomy
Need for autonomy is defined as “the desire to be independent and self-directing” (Vecchio, 2003 p 308). This need also explains why entrepreneurs engage in smaller business since large corporations are seen as suppressing personal freedom and entrepreneurial initiatives (Vecchio, 2003).

Risk-taking propensity
Risk-taking propensity is the orientation towards accepting possible loss in relation to the reward (Vecchio, 2003). It is more realistic to think that rather than accepting risk, entrepreneurs see opportunities while other sees risks/low potential (Vecchio, 2003). To add, is the fact that within the effectual theory, entrepreneurs deal with risk in relation to what they can afford to lose rather than in relation to what they can earn (Sarasvathy et al., 2013).

Self-efficacy
Self-efficacy involves a trust in oneself to be able to perform a certain task. Individual prefer situations with high personal control and avoid situations where control is low. Meaning, that those individuals who believe that they are capable of performing the tasks of an entrepreneur will engage in activities related to such tasks (Vecchio, 2003).

Locus of control
Locus of control is closely related to self-efficacy but a broader concept involving more than one’s sense of task-specific efficacy. Interestingly for this study, in a study of locus of control, female potential entrepreneurs held more stable attributions e.g “I have always wanted to be my own boss” than men (Vecchio, 2003 p 309).

2.2.2 Capabilities
Capabilities emerge from resource based-view theory defined by Barney (1991, p 101) as “firm resources include all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge etc. controlled by a firm that enable the firm to conceive of and implement strategies that improve its efficiency and effectiveness”. As stated by Nielsen
et al., (2012) the concept of resources embodies a substantial number of resources that support entrepreneurs in pursuing opportunities. Capabilities can in turn be explained as the processes and mechanisms that enable the entrepreneur to successfully develop and exploit opportunities (De Massis, Kotlar, Wright and Kellermanns, 2018). Experience and knowledge is according to King and Tucci (2002) of the essence for dynamic capabilities since they are built on experience rather than through market transactions. De Massis et al (2018) also highlight experience, knowledge and educational level possessed by the actor which will bring useful insights into the opportunity creation. When studying capabilities from a developing country-context, De Vita et al., (2014) found that women in the poorest countries tend to be more self-confident about their skills and capabilities than women in developed countries.

The identification of capabilities is not an easy task. Given that capabilities are processes and mechanisms that enables the entrepreneur to exploit opportunities, the examples of capabilities are numerous. In a study by Ikebuaku and Dinbabo (2017) entrepreneurial capabilities was measured by looking at:

- entrepreneurial mind-set
- ability of identify business opportunities
- entrepreneurial motivation
- creativity and innovation
- awareness of the market
- ability to acquire new customers
- (...)

2.2.3 Networks
The entrepreneur acquires knowledge in many ways, one being through involvement in networks. Networks help provide knowledge on path to entry, screening of potential partners and reduce exchange risks when entering a foreign market (Pinho and Prange, 2016). During the past 30 years, the research stream of firm business networks has gained a lot of focus resulting in its own approach, the industrial or international marketing and purchasing (IMP) network approach (Ellis 2011; Ford, Gadde, Håkansson and Snehota, 2011; Harris and Wheeler, 2005). Ford et al., (2011) continue by describing the characteristics of business networks as actors without a common goal but shared beliefs of activity patterns and resource constellation, with no clear boundaries and an organizational logic.

Networks can take many different forms; the abovementioned business networks are in short generally described as “a set of relationships linking one firm with other firms” (Ellis, 2011 p 102) whereas the definition of social networks simply replace the
word “firms” to “persons”. Further, Ellis (2011) argues that in order to fully learn how entrepreneurs come to recognize international opportunities, focus should be put on social networks. To support this argument, Ellis (2011) points out that in line with entrepreneurship theory, opportunities are recognized by individuals, not firms (see also: Nielsen et al., 2012; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000; Sarasvathy, 2001; Venkataraman, 1997). By solely focusing on firm business relationships, important ties held by the entrepreneur and her team could be overlooked (Ellis, 2011).

Social networks represent an important mean to entrepreneurship (Sarasvathy et al., 2013). Sarasvathy et al., (2013) explains that as an entrepreneur, being active in social interaction can trigger insights of the means at hand and the effects these means can create. Both social and business networks are also considered a central method to acquire and expand resources needed. As opposed to this traditional way of engaging in relationships, an effectual approach requires the entrepreneur to quickly engage in conversations with a variety of non-pre-selected people. This means that the social network will involve self-selected actors that see potential or opportunity in engaging in a relationship with the entrepreneur and her venture (Sarasvathy et al., 2013).

2.3 Internationalization
In research, there is no general agreement on how to define the term internationalization. Johanson and Vahlne (1990) define internationalization as a process of increasing international involvement by a firm moving its business abroad using one or more ways of international business. Welch and Luostarinen (1988) further explicate the ingoing and outgoing flows of a firm’s internationalization process where e.g. import and franchisees are exemplified as the ingoing activities and exporting, franchising and FDI are exemplified as the outgoing activities.

Even with globalization and interest in emerging markets, previous research has primarily focused on internationalization of large firms in developed countries (Kujala, 2018). Thus, several researchers have stated that there is a lack of focus on the internationalization of firms with African origin (Kujala, 2018; Owusu and Habiyakare, 2011). Therefore, internationalization models that are suited for firms that have an origin in developed countries, may not applicable to companies which operates within the emerging market context (Kujala, 2018; Ibeh and Kasem, 2011).
2.3.1 Import and Export of SMEs
Export is the most common mode for a first entry into international markets. Export involves domestic production of products which are transferred directly or indirectly to the foreign market. There are differences in the way SMEs and LSEs internationalize mainly due to the different levels of resources acquired by the firm (Carter and Jones-Evans, 2006). Due to differences in resources, SMEs are more likely to engage in indirect and direct export as well sales subsidiaries (Carter and Jones-Evans 2006). Hollensen (2011) suggests a more holistic view of small entrepreneurial firms rather than focusing on distinct entry mode types. Hollensen (2011) further argues that the challenge for most entrepreneurial firms is to establish a viable, competitive and sustainable business by adopting flexible and innovative practices. Internationalization for entrepreneurial firms may therefore be a part of a process, or more likely for very small firms, occur through links and transactions in the external environment. The links could be of both inward and outward nature, as opposed to the traditional way of regarding internationalization as mainly an outward flow. For SMEs, cross-border business activities involve both import and export (Hollensen, 2011). Hollensen (2011) also argues that the internationalization of SMEs is unlikely to come off well unless the firm prepares in advance. Preparation involves international market research, committing human, resources needed and product adaptation.

2.3.2 International Entrepreneurship
As globalization has accelerated, so have the international opportunities for small and young entrepreneurial firms (Gjellerup, 2000; Sandberg 2012). Mainela, Puhakka and Servais (2014) stresses that the combination of entrepreneurship and international business creates the definition international entrepreneurship which has its origin in Oviatt and McDougalls (1994) research concerning the entrepreneurial activity across national borders. Oviatt and McDougall (1994) further argue that international entrepreneurial behavior may occur on different levels, such as organizational, group or individual level.

From a firm perspective, internationalization occurs when the firm expand one or several of their business activities (e.g. R&D, selling) into international markets. Hollensen (2011) argues that the most fundamental reason for exporting is to make money, however, one factor alone seldom accounts for a given action. Motives for internationalization can be reactive e.g. competitive pressures, small and saturated domestic market and
overproduction or proactive e.g. making money, managerial urge, foreign market opportunity or economies of scale (Hollensen, 2011). However, Mtigwe (2006) highlights the international entrepreneurship theory to be the basis of foreign market entry for a firm, through the combination of the individual and firm’s entrepreneurial behavior. Supported by Ellis (2008) when investigating the entrepreneurial methods used for international opportunity recognition by applying the theory of international entrepreneurship.

Mainela, Puhakka and Servais (2015) explains that international entrepreneurship includes a behavior that focuses on opportunities and crossing borders. As opportunities are a part of the entrepreneurial process (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000; Sarasvathy, 2001) and furthermore also perceived as an object with a future orientation, the entrepreneur play a big role in the cross border activity since entrepreneurs are considered to be proactive and brave (Mainela et al., 2015; Murphy, Liao and Welsch., 2006). Hence the importance of acknowledging the origin of the opportunity in this study, since how the international opportunities are recognized and exploited is rarely addressed (Ellis 2008). Furthermore, Ellis (2008) proposes that international opportunities arises because of the entrepreneur’s personal ties. Shane and Venkataraman (2000) further underlines this fact by explaining that the finding and negotiating process of an international opportunity bears all the entrepreneurial trademarks of opportunity discovery, evaluation and exploitation. This theory has its origin in Kirzner’s (1997) statement about the entrepreneurial decision which according to the author results in new means-ends relationships.

Previous research has pointed to the business owners’ knowledge and capabilities prior to their international engagement (Madsen and Servais, 1997; Rostgaard Evald, Klyver and Christensen, 2011). Additionally, Rostgaard Evald et al., (2011) argue that managerial export intentions can be associated both with the human capital and social capital of a firm. The human capital is exemplified by the human skills and knowledge and the social capital by personal networks and relationships. Moreover, studies made by Coviello (2006) and Sharma and Blomstermo (2003) shows that personal networks not only enables the chance for international opportunities, but also contributes to the entrepreneurs’ capabilities.
2.3.3 Psychic distance
Previous research has detected the significance of psychic distance in the internationalization process of an SME (Carter and Jones-Evans, 2008; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009; Johanson and Wiedershiem-Paul, 1975). According to the “stage” theories e.g. Uppsala model, firms are believed to target a close by market first and then follow an incremental process by gradually approach nearby markets and later on subsequently enter foreign markets with larger psychic distance (Carter and Jones-Evans, 2008). Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) explains psychic distance between the home market and host market to extent of proximity in different matters, such as geographic, cultural and business environmental e.g. the industry structure. In 1978, Wiedersheim-Paul added a new dimension to the internationalization model, the pre-export stage. The author argues that the initiation to internationalization of a firm to be an interplay between the decision-maker of the firm and factors surrounding such as the environment and the experience of the pre-determined market. However, the psychic distance that may exist between a home market and a foreign market affects sensitive factors which are important for a firm when approaching a new market. Evans, Mavondo and Bridson (2008) argue that this influences the organizational and strategic performance of a firm and its choices of market and entry strategy in the internationalization process. Nevertheless, Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) stresses that there are ways of reducing the psychic distance between market, and highlights personal relations, experience and market knowledge as the core factors when overcoming this issue.

2.3.4 Means affecting the decision to internationalize
As emphasized by Sarasvathy et al., (2013), the decision to internationalize may occur through two different processes. As figure 2.3 shows; the effectual process starts with the individuals’ means as the first step of the initiation to internationalize. (The red markings were added to highlight which parts are described.)
According to Omri and Becuwe (2014), personal traits can in the context of international business development have a positive impact on the entrepreneur’s ability to seize opportunities in foreign markets. Omri and Becuwe (2014) continue by stating that with support from other studies personality traits are indicators of international success. Such traits involve the ability to be flexible, open and sensitive to others. It should be noted that the line between traits and capabilities is in studies of internationalization is somewhat blurry. Omri and Becuwe (2014) provides a clarification by explaining that the ability to adapt to skills or knowledge (capabilities) is strongly related to the personality traits. The study of Omri and Becuwe (2014) showed that personality traits of entrepreneurs is associated with both high creative achievement and increased export objectives and for that, entrepreneurs need specific skills to manage the e.g. stress that comes from international engagement.

Since this thesis derives from the entrepreneur’s own ability to affect the internationalization process, it is crucial to highlight the factors which the theories believe can be affected by the entrepreneur herself. Oviatt and McDougall (1994) suggest that one of the crucial entrepreneurial capabilities is the entrepreneur’s alertness. Hence, the vital element in why organizations become engaged in activities across borders is explained by the global vision of the founder, the entrepreneur and her means (Gabrielsson and Pelkonen, 2008; Jones, Coviello and Tang, 2011).

Figure 2.1 The Effectuation process (Sarasvathy, 2008)
The global integration of today has led to firms, no matter their size, being able to operate globally. This has led to a need of a firm to perform agilely which is enabled by dynamic capabilities (Teece, 2014). Entrepreneurial capabilities and strengths have also within the field of international entrepreneurship been described as a way of overcoming resource and experience-limitations (Cavusgil and Knight, 2015). Such dynamic capabilities are associated with the founders and are effective drivers of early internationalization. Emphasized by Cavusgil and Knight (2015) is the benefits of knowledge-based capabilities which allows young firms to internationalize early despite limited resources.

International knowledge is commonly referred to as a key capability for a firm’s international activities (Fletcher, Harris and Richey Jr, 2013; Riviere, Suder and Bass, 2018; Åkerman, 2015). International knowledge represents the learning capability that firms need for successful entry into successive new markets (Fletcher et al., 2013). Sarasvathy et al. (2013) also recognizes knowledge as an antecedent to the internationalization process, and as argued by Sarasvathy et al. (2013) the effectual variable of knowledge (What I Know) will be important to the field of international entrepreneurship. By integrating an effectual approach to the capability of knowledge, a deeper understanding of not only whether different types of knowledge or capabilities internationalize but which types and how firms may internationalize can be found (Sarasvathy et al., 2013).

Networks assist to a large extent to SMEs entering foreign markets. The reason is that networks can provide knowledge, learning, and experience that facilitates utilizing opportunities in foreign markets (Kujala and Törnroos, 2018). Furthermore, the network approach to internationalization explains how firms can link resources to pursue strategic aims, e.g. entering a new market (Ciravegna, Lopez and Kundu, 2013; Ford et al., 2011).

As mentioned, theoretically, it is common to speak of business networks when explaining the prominence of networks within entrepreneurship and internationalization. According to Harris and Wheeler (2005) the most evident function of relationships when internationalizing is to fulfil a sales or marketing purpose for the firm. Others argue that the most important function for smaller businesses of using networks is to overcome resource constraints (Ciravegna et al., 2014; Coviello, 2006; Sarasvathy, 2013). Others emphasize networks for acquiring knowledge about foreign markets, a need that has been
highly recognized as crucial for the internationalization process within the stage-model approach to internationalization (Blomstermo, Eriksson, Lindstrand and Sharma, 2004; Harris and Wheeler, 2005; Mtigwe, 2006).

Furthermore, the fulfilment of such purposes is not only dependent on business networks but highly dependent on inter-personal contacts and social exchange as well, especially for the entrepreneur (Harris and Wheeler, 2005). Harris and Wheeler (2005) argue that export initiations particularly are based on social relationships for smaller and entrepreneurial firms. Kujala and Törnroos (2018) argue that for SMEs in particular, the decision-making entrepreneurs who aim at connecting to relevant networks play an important role. Supported by Ellis (2011), who argues that exploitation of international opportunities is a subjective process, formed by entrepreneurs in ties with others. As brought up by Sarasvathy et al., (2013), the role of the individual is again highlighted since networks as such are not the component that matters but what the entrepreneur actually does with those networks that matters for internationalization (Coviello, 2006).
2.4 Conceptual framework

Through the literature review we have learnt that entrepreneurship involves a focus on the individual and her way of handling opportunity. The importance of the individual has lately gained more attention in literature. In addition, since human life often includes unexpected events and cannot be predicted, the effectual approach is relevant when studying human action. Opportunity can be created, discovered or serve as a mean for survival. Opportunity can be found at home or it is found abroad, which allows the individual to engage in international activities. When given international opportunity, the individual starts by evaluating the means at hand. As figure 2.4 shows, the means at hand includes personal traits that can have a positive effect on the ability to seize international opportunity, capabilities and knowledge which can help the individual to overcome barriers to internationalization and networks which can help enable international activity.

Figure 2.2 The Conceptual Framework (Beica and Eklöf, 2018)
3 METHODOLOGY

In the following chapter, the different methods used when conducting this minor field study will be explained. Firstly, the research approach and method of this study will be presented. Secondly, the techniques of gathering data will be exemplified and argued for. Later on, a presentation of the operationalization and method of data analysis will follow. The chapter will then be concluded with a discussion of quality and criticism regarding the study.

3.1 Research approach

Traditionally, there are two different approaches to use when deciding how to connect theory and research; deduction and induction (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The deductive approach derives from logic and the inductive approach from empirical evidence. Thus this, the validity of the inductive research can be questioned (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010). The deductive approach is the option that is mainly used. In the deductive approach, the theory has the role to guide and drive the process of collecting empirical data and is therefore associated with less risk (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009).

However, another way of conducting scientific research is using the abductive approach. This method is kind of a combination between induction and deduction. An important fact to keep in mind is that the abductive approach cannot be reduced into either deduction or induction, but rather present new perspectives of the research process (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009). The abductive approach allows the researcher to go back and forth from theory and the real world (empirical data). By going back and forth, the researcher is able to develop a deeper understanding of both empirical data and theory. Since this paper is grounded in both empirical observations among Ugandan female entrepreneurs and their SMEs, and theoretical explanations assessing the phenomenon through the theory of Effectuation which includes the different entrepreneurial means affecting the internationalization process, the abductive research method is considered to be the most suitable for this study.

By conducting case studies with an abductive approach, also known as systematic combining, utilizes in-depth insights of an empirical phenomenon and serve as a mean of developing theory and theoretical frameworks (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). Theory is, as a starting point considered as “preconceptions” and will later evolve as empirical data is gathered throughout the field work. This minor field study is therefore favored by the
abductive research approach since the main logic behind systematic combining is that theory cannot be understood without what is observed in empirical data and vice versa. The logic also concludes that it is necessary to go back and forth since unanticipated issues in the field work might surface (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). The process of systematic combining involves matching theory and reality. This matching process has according to Dubois and Gadde (2002) no obvious patterns and is highly dependent on the researcher’s way of thinking.

### 3.2 Research method

There are two different paths to choose from in research method, depending on the manner of which the study is conducted to find answers to a research question. Traditionally, a study is conducted through either a quantitative method or a qualitative method. The quantitative method aims to test and build theory through describing, explaining and predicting a certain topic. Moreover, the researcher has a limited involvement considering the large amount of empirical data that is gathered (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). The qualitative method on the other hand includes the researcher on another level. When gathering qualitative data, the researcher is involved in both collecting and interpreting the empirical facts and can therefore reach a more in-depth understanding of the data-collection. Maxwell (2013) describes one of the strengths of qualitative research is that it focuses on specific situations or people and emphasizes descriptions rather than numbers. Using a qualitative approach enables the researcher ability to reach a deeper understanding and to delve more into people’s hidden motivations and interpretations (Cooper and Schindler, 2006).

The qualitative approach is developed to help the researcher to get into the deep regarding the issue and by using this approach you study the phenomenon closely as you also focus on a small group of respondents (Malterud, 2009). As this thesis strives to study which factors that affect the internationalization process of a Ugandan female-owned SME, it will be conducted by using the qualitative approach method, since a deeper knowledge and understanding aims to be reached. Furthermore, the qualitative method is considered to enable the process of providing information that is required in order to be able to answer the research question of this thesis.

A disadvantage of using the qualitative research method is the ability of generalizing. The quantitative data is collected from a larger number of cases and has therefore also a higher representative power, compared to the qualitative data which is
collected from a smaller number of cases where the generalizability can be questioned (Yin, 2014). Thus this, there are two different generalizations in research, statistical and analytical. The analytical generalization allows a smaller sampling of different data, and is therefore preferred only in the qualitative research (Yin, 2014). Results from this study cannot be considered as a general interpretation for all women entrepreneurs in Uganda, since the generalization of the study derives from a relatively limited sampling of empirical data. This thesis can rather create a better understanding of which factors might impact the internationalization process of female-owned businesses in Uganda.

3.3 Research design

3.3.1 Purpose in research
The classification of the purpose in research is divided into three categories, exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007). It is important to note that the purpose in research is not set in stone and the study can involve more than one purpose. The exploratory study focuses on assessing a phenomenon from a new light and is useful when clarifying an understanding of the nature of a phenomenon that you are not sure of. The exploratory study involves flexibility and an ability to adapt to change and can be seen as initially broad but progressively it narrows as the research progresses (Saunders et al., 2009).

Since this study takes an abductive approach, the purpose of an exploratory nature where the phenomenon is not clear is the most suitable. That is also why the exploratory purpose is more suitable than the descriptive research which involves a need for a clear understanding of the phenomena to create an accurate profile of e.g. persons or events. The explanatory research is more interested in studies of relationships between variables which is not the aim of this study. Going back to the link to the abductive approach and exploratory research, abduction includes empirical data and theory to be evaluated along the progression of this study and the purpose of this research therefore needs to be flexible.

3.3.2 Research strategy
Most used in exploratory and explanatory research is the case study strategy. Case studies put emphasis on context and a particular ongoing phenomena which truly are the characteristics of this study (Saunders et al., 2007). Highlighted by Yin (1994) the
contextual conditions are within case studies believed to be relevant to the phenomenon of the study, moreover it is also what distinguishes cases studies from other strategies.

3.4 Data collection techniques
The sampling of data may range from a simple observation at one location to a massive survey including global corporations in different parts of the world. Cooper and Schindler (2006) argue that the research method selected will largely determine how the data are collected. Furthermore, Yin (2009) explains that the choice of technique depends on which type of research questions the study is based on. Information that is collected can further be divided into measurable or intangible data. The measurable data is concrete in that matter that it shows a specific number, in comparison to the intangible data which can be exemplified by feelings (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010).

The collecting of data for a research can be done in two different types of procedures, primary data collection and secondary data collection. As stated above, the way of sampling the data is decided by the researcher, which also considers if all of the data is of use or if only a part should be included. Furthermore, the data collected should be relevant and able to provide the thesis a conclusion (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010).

3.4.1 Primary data collection
The primary data is information collected by the researcher himself and is considered to provide more relevant information regarding a specific research problem (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010). The primary data is considered to be new data gathered especially for the purpose for a certain study (Saunder et al., 2007). Within the qualitative research approach, the primary data often is gathered through interviews, observations or participations. When conducting interviews, a flexible interview guide is preferred. This in order to reach a deeper understanding of an issue (Yin, 2014). In this thesis, it is an intentional choice to use the face-to-face interviews with the correspondents. In order to receive an understanding of behaviors and feelings, which later on will result in a deeper knowledge about the subject, the face-to-face interviews are conducted “at the scene” in Uganda.

3.4.2 Secondary data collection
The secondary data consists of data that has been collected by others than the researcher himself, and compared to the primary data, the secondary data is gathered for some other purpose (Saunder et al., 2007). The secondary data includes books, journal articles and
online data sources. Thus, a combination of the primary sources and the secondary sources enhances the researcher to answer a certain research question (Kumar, 2014). This study is favored by journal articles, since the previous research in this field is limited.

3.5 Case-study research design
There are different paths to take considering how many cases the research should focus on. The single-case study includes a research of one case and the multi-case study which is based on two cases or more. Yin (2009) discuss the importance of choosing the multi-case study since the researcher receives a more valuable data considering that the evidence is supported by several cases. Furthermore, Merriam (2009) argues that the multiple case study design often results in being more compelling and robust, since several both similar and contrasting cases are put together and create a stronger foundation. The conclusion is that a multi-case research design enriches the study by enhancing the generalizability or transferability of the findings.

A case study is anchored in real-life situation which results in holistic and rich explanation (Merriam, 2009). The multi-case research design is therefore suitable for this study, for the reason that it enriches the study with valuable data supported by numerous cases, the outcome from having single case design would in this situation be rather limited.

3.5.1 Purposive sampling strategy
Kumar (2014) explains that the purpose of sampling in qualitative research method is designed either to gain an in-depth knowledge about a situation, or to learn as much as possible about one individual in order to provide an insight for the researcher into a specific group. Furthermore, the sample size does not play any significant role in qualitative research, since the aim is to study only one or few cases in order to identify the spread of variety and not its magnitude (Cooper and Schlinder, 2006).

In sampling, there are two different methods that can be used, probability and nonprobability sampling. The major difference between the two methods is generally how the samples are selected. Qualitative research involves nonprobability sampling, since it entitles the researcher to choose the participants after certain criteria and subjectively after their unique characteristics (Saunders et al., 2007). Furthermore, the purposive sampling strategy is a type of nonprobability sampling, which enables the researcher to use his judgement in order to select the respondents that will enhance the chance of answering the research question. Finally, both Kumar (2014) and Cooper and Schlinder (2006) argue
that there is a certain data saturation point when sampling data in a qualitative research. This point is grasped, when the researcher no longer is getting new information, receives new knowledge or obtains new insights.

In the qualitative research the sampling is guided by the researcher’s judgement and is provided to complete the information needed (Kumar, 2014). Hence, the respondents of the interviews are chosen after certain criteria which reflects the purpose of the study and are best suited to answer the research question;

The companies must…
1. Be Ugandan
2. Be an SME
3. Involved in import/export activity

Furthermore, the respondents from these companies must…
1. Be the founder/entrepreneur of the company
2. Be a woman
3. Have knowledge about operations of import/export activities of the company

3.5.2 Cases

1. **Pivot Hospitality Services**
Pivot Hospitality Services, founded by Hope Jeminah Kasimbazi, offers essential items at the shops located in luxury hotels such as Hotel Africana and Hotel Fairview in Uganda. The essential items include soap, snacks, toothpaste and other items that the guests might have forgotten to bring. The shops also offer arts & crafts and other souvenirs for the guests to bring back home. Pivot Hospitality Services strives to promote domestic production, therefore many of the items sold are of Ugandan origin. However, some products cannot be found and are therefore imported from around the world. Pivot Hospitality Services currently employs 11 employees, many of them women.

2. **Oribags Innovation**
Oribags Innovations, founded by Rusia Orakiriza and Davis Bariho, ecologically recovers agricultural waste, waste paper and natural fibres to transform them into products useful for the local market. The business innovatively meets current market needs for environmentally friendly and sustainable packaging alternative to the polluting and non-biodegradable polyethylene bags and empowers women and youth through hands on skills training and employment generation. Oribags Innovation find international
opportunity through exhibitions and social media. Oribags currently supplies numerous retailers in the East African region including 40 supermarkets in Uganda. The company employs 25 staff (14 females and 11 males).

3. **Circle of Hands**

Circle of Hands, founded by Lillian Aero, offers Ugandan hand crafts such as purses, jewellery and baskets made out of natural fibres and recycled paper. The company is connected to the Namugongo Good Samaritan Project which employs and empowers women around Uganda, victims of the HIV/AIDS crisis, to make the products. The company mainly exports to U.S, the Netherlands and Australia due to a low demand for African crafts on the domestic market. The company has been engaged in export since the inception, the first client was in the U.S. Today, the company operates a network of 250 women around different regions of Uganda. However, all women are not employed at the same time, the women are asked to produce based on orders.

4. **Nina Interiors Ltd**

Nina Interiors was founded 1991 by Alice Karugaba, a highly recognized Ugandan entrepreneur awarded The Annual MTN Women in Business Awards in 2016. Nina Interior sells luxury furniture imported from Malaysia, China, Thailand, Indonesia and Egypt. The company currently employs 88 employees, more women than men since Alice identifies herself with the hardships of the many single mothers in Uganda. Up until last year, Nina Interiors also had a branch in Rwanda due to high demand, however, due to losses in profit they had to close it. Alice herself believes that “Rwanda has a secret policy, to only buy from their own”.

5. **Health Products AB**

Health Products AB offers a wide collection of products ranging from herbal medicine such as cough syrup to cosmetics. The company manufactures products, they do research as well as employ and empower women and youth through providing them with seeds, training and later purchase the harvests. The company export their products to the East African region, recently awarded by the East African Business Council in the category of female-owned enterprises for their success in the region. Health Products AB employs 180 employees in total, however, 24 of them are full-time employees.
3.5.3 Semi-structured interviews

When conducting interviews in a study, the interviews can differ in formality. Either, interviews can be formalized and structured or informal and unstructured conversations. Interviews can be held on a face-to-face basis or conducted by telephone, electronically via the internet or on a group-basis. Typologies usually overlap, but can be divided as structured, semi-structured and unstructured or in-depth interviews (Saunders et al., 2007).

Furthermore, Saunders et al., (2007) explains that structured interviews are based on a predetermined and set list of questions and are commonly referred to as questionnaires. Each question should be read exactly as written and tone and interaction between the interviewer and the respondent should be kept at minimum to avoid any bias. These types of interviews are more common in quantitative studies. Semi-structured interviews however, are more usually referred to as qualitative research interviews. This type of interview allows the interviewer to have a varied list of questions and themes to be used to the different respondents. In practice, this means that depending on e.g. organizational or environmental context, the interviewer can adjust the questions to fit the specific respondent. Even new questions might occur during the conversation given the nature of organizational-specific events, which could help explore the research question. In-depth interviews are informal and used to explore a specific area of interest. In this case, the aspect of what you want to explore is important for there are no predetermined list of questions and the respondent is allowed to speak freely within the area of interest (Saunders et al., 2007).

The link between the exploratory purpose of this study and the appropriate interview strategy is according to Saunders et al., (2007) to use an in-depth or semi-structured interview to seek new insights when the nature of the phenomenon evolves throughout the proses.

This study aims at conducting semi-structured interviews which will give the opportunity to ask the respondent to explain or build on their responses. The semi-structured conversation may also lead to areas that were not previously considered but which could help answer the research question, the opportunity to “probe” is therefore of great importance when having an abductive approach which is undertaken by this study. The semi-structured interviews will mainly be face-to-face interviews in order to acquire the abovementioned benefits. However, due to unexpected events, one of our respondent could not make it to the appointment therefore the interview questions were sent by
email. Even though face-to-face interviews are preferred, the study will not consider interviews by email as less resourceful. The answers of which it provided were of great importance for developing an initial understanding for both the phenomena as such but also as a guideline for coming interviews.

3.5.4 Open-ended questions
In line with the previous section, open-ended questions are important for this study since it encourages the respondent to give an extensive answer. Therefore, the interview questions (to be found in the interview guide) of this study started by one of the following words: “what”, “how” or “why” as recommended by Saunders et al., (2007) when asking open-ended questions. As interviews proceed, it will be necessary to ask probing questions to seek an explanation if the respondent answers in a way that is not clear or does not reveal reasoning (Saunders et al., 2007).
3.5.5 Operationalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Interview questions</th>
<th>Reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General background</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>The first questions are asked to get a understanding of who the interviewee actually is and her position and background in the company. Furthermore, we asked the respondent to describe the company and which markets it is operating in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Asking questions about entrepreneurship strives to investigate who the entrepreneur is, what she knows and whom she knows in accordance with the theory that the study focuses on. Moreover, we want to understand what the entrepreneurship itself means to the interviewee and how it could have an effect on the internationalization of the firm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship TRAITS</td>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>Following questions concentrates on the individual traits of the entrepreneur herself. By asking these questions we want to get to know the interviewee and her entrepreneurial characteristics to later on be able to identify the key traits for the internationalization process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship CAPABILITY</td>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>These questions strive at answering” What do I know” by examining the entrepreneur’s skills. Again, we want to be able to connect the key capabilities into the internationalization process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship NETWORK</td>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>To investigate the role of the entrepreneur’s networks, these questions were asked to answer whom the entrepreneur knows and if the relationships can be a crucial component in the internationalization process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalization</td>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>To connect the above-mentioned concepts and key factor to the internationalization process, we asked questions about the firm’s international activities and what the process looked like. In this section, the entrepreneur herself was asked to explain whether she thought any characteristics could have enabled the internationalization process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>20-22</td>
<td>To conclude the interview, we wanted to ask the entrepreneur herself what role women in business have in Uganda. We want to explore if the entrepreneur herself believe that her knowledge can be useful for female entrepreneurs in Uganda. The purpose of these questions is mainly informative and which aims at getting the interviewee to feel empowered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1 Operationalization summary (Beica and Eklöf, 2018)
3.5.6 Conducting Interviews
Sending out an interview guide to the respondents is one way of preparing the respondent on which questions the interviewee will ask and validate that the respondent is able to answer all of the questions during the interview. Our aim was to prepare our respondents with the interview questions, we therefore send the interview guide to our contact person which was the one arranging the interviews. When conducting the interviews, we realized that the interview guide had not reached out to our respondents. Afterwards, this ended up in having the interviews slightly more unstructured than we wished for, furthermore it complicated both the transcriptions and the summarize of the empirical data. However, we still do believe that this enriched the empirical sampling with a more holistic view and also was a more suitable way of interviewing for the respondents, since we noticed that our interviewees were more comfortable telling their story uninterrupted.

The majority of the interviews were conducted face to face, however one of the interviews were conducted by email, since the correspondents could not find any time to meet us. The face to face interviews were recorded and as one of us asked the questions and the other one took notes. The transcription afterwards was favored by both recording and taking notes, since we agreed to take notes on answers which we believe were extra important in the sampling. Conducting the interviews face to face in comparison by conducting them thorough email gave us the chance to connect with the respondents on a more personal level. Therefore, it is important to highlight that the interviews conducted by email can be less reliable. In order to prevent any misunderstandings and misinterpretations, we send the interviewees a draft of the transcription for approval.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis
Merriam (2009) argues that the researcher stands an analytical challenge when it concerns qualitative data analysis. Furthermore, the author explain that the objective of data analysis is to make sense of the collected data. The challenge is to reduce data, identify connections and linkages, and in the end offer well-reasoned reflective conclusions. When conducting the interviews, our respondents explained their story from the initiation of starting their business until day. This enriches the holistic view, however it resulted in having long interviews to transcribe and furthermore a lot of empirical data to reduce and analyze.

The qualitative and quantitative research method differentiates in the process of data analysis. The quantitative data examines organized data, such as numbers, whereas the qualitative data aims to create a more in-depth understanding of a phenomenon with
a mass of data gathered with from a more subjective point of view (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010). When transcribing the interviews, we aimed to summarize and organize them in so the most essential parts were easy to pinpoint. In this way, it was easier for us to reformulate the most important parts to the chapter of empirical findings. Since the study derives from an abductive approach, we kept in mind to always return to the theory and tried to interlink the theories with the primary empirical data.

The two methods also differ when it comes to generalization. Qualitative data analysis is not intended to generalize a large-scale in comparison to the quantitative method where a massive survey often is used. Although, Merriam (2009 p 353) argues that ideas generated from minor qualitative case studies may be broadly applicable, since “a single memorable quote in context, as we know from history, can have a powerful influence”. We are aware of the fact that qualitative data is not intended to generalize, however our results of this study should provide as a guideline with implications that are useful for entrepreneurs with the intention to internationalize their business.

Ghauri and Gronhaug (2010) argue that there is no universal technique when analyzing qualitative data. The foundation of qualitative data analysis, is that the researcher works actively with the data, organizes it, summarizes it and aims to find underlying patterns (Fejes and Thornberg, 2009). When analyzing our empirical findings, we aimed to find reduce the most important empirical data and find patterns to interlink with our chosen theoretical framework in order to create a suitable conceptual framework.

3.7 Quality of research
The process of data collection involves several steps that all can affect the accuracy and quality of the conclusions drawn from data, depending on how it is done. To establish quality in data collection, the concept of validity and reliability is used. Explained by Kumar (2011 p 166) the concept of validity involves answering: “Are we measuring what we think we are measuring?”. Furthermore, the concept of reliability involves whether a research tool is consistent, stable (hence predictable and accurate).

As mentioned, the collection of data involves several steps (e.g. sample, processing, application of information). However, the collection of data emerges from the questions asked which also are the basis of the findings and conclusion. The following analysis of validity and reliability will therefore involve all stages that might influence the data collection and not only the questions as such to fully cover the process.
The application of validity and reliability in qualitative research can seem difficult since the standardization of research tools is not common due to the flexible and changing nature of the research strategy (Kumar, 2011). Therefore, an alternative set of criteria judging qualitative research will be used below as opposed to traditional criterions for judging quantitative research (Kumar, 2011).

3.7.1 Validity

Creditability
According to Kumar (2011), creditability (synonymous to internal validity in qualitative research) should be judged by the level of agreement of whether the findings reflect the respondent’s opinions and feelings. To meet this requirement, the findings of this study were sent back to the respondent for confirmation, congruence and approval in order to ensure higher validity of the study (Kumar, 2011).

Transferability
Transferability, or external validity within quantitative research, involves to what degree the results can be transferred to other contexts and is usually difficult (Kumar, 2011). This study acknowledges these difficulties due to the extensive focus on one context mainly because of the case study design. In order to overcome these difficulties, this study strives to thoroughly describe the process as thorough as possible for others to replicate in line with Kumar’s (2011) recommendations.

3.7.2 Reliability

Dependability
Dependability, similar to reliability in quantitative research, includes whether the same results could be obtained twice (Kumar, 2011). To ensure high dependability, a split-half technique means that a question is actually divided into two questions intended to measure the same aspect. The flexibility in this study’s interview strategy will allow us to ask questions in accordance with the split-half technique to test the dependability of a statement. When conducting the interviews, we tried to seize the opportunity as often as possible to use the split-half technique. However, afterwards we do believe, do be able to fully use the split-half technique, we should have prepared such questions in advance.
Conformability
Conformability refers to whether the result could be confirmed by others and can according to Kumar (2011) only be possible when two researchers follows an identical manner. Conformability will therefore be hard to obtain in this particular study.

3.8 Research Ethics
Conducting interviews enables the researcher to connect with the respondents on a personal level. However, during the process of collecting and analyzing qualitative data several ethical considerations may occur (Merriam, 2009). Ethics considers moral values and principles which affects the researcher during a study. It is the researcher’s responsibility to provide a detailed methodology chapter and furthermore, to establish research questions that can be answered as transparent, honest and accurate as possible. Ghauri and Gronhaug (2010) highlights that moral dilemmas can especially be apparent in research that touches sensitive subjects, and explains that is the researchers’ responsibility to avoid embarrassment or other discomfort when conducting interviews.

Except for having a professional image and act with integrity, Denscombe (2010 p 7) argues for four principles that the researcher should conform to in order to conduct a research ethically. These are following:

1. “Participants will remain anonymous”
2. “Data will be treated as confidential”
3. “Participants understand the nature of the research and their involvement”
4. “Participants voluntarily consent to being involved”

When conducting a study in a foreign country, there are several factors that can affect the research ethically. However, we have been careful when creating the methodological outline for our study and considered both pros and cons with the methods we have selected, which ensures the transparency of the study as well. When we arrived in Uganda, we made sure to “acclimatize” ourselves to the country and culture for a time before we started our research properly, this helped us overcome the cultural barriers that exist between Sweden and Uganda. We learnt for example the importance of properly introduce yourself, ask the person you are taking to how they are doing today and engage in some small talk before getting to the matter. When contacting different organizations, we informed both the contact person and later on the respondent about the purpose of our study and about which way we believe that they can contribute to our research. This
information gave the respondents a brief understanding of the topic we are studying and also a choice of whether they wanted to participate in the study or not. Furthermore, we offered the respondents anonymity and if so the make sure that the data cannot be traced back to them in person. One of our respondents chose to be anonymous, hence Fosca and Health Products AB are fictional names.
4 Empirical Findings

This chapter will present the empirical data that has been collected through the interviews conducted in this study. Firstly, the chapter is introduced with a brief presentation of every respondent and will later on be followed by a presentation of the interview findings which goes in line with the theory of entrepreneurship, effectuation and internationalization.

4.1 Case Introduction
The respondents in this study goes align with the criteria presented in the purposive sampling strategy. The companies are SMEs with their foundation in Uganda, all founded by female entrepreneurs. The companies are all involved in some kind of import or export activity and the respondents have therefore experienced an internationalization process of their companies. Four of the interviews were conducted face to face and one through email. The interviews took place in Kampala, Uganda between 12th – 22nd of April 2018.

**Hope Jeminah Kasimbazi - Pivot Hospitality Services**
Hope Jeminah Kasimbazi (further referred to as Hope) is a Ugandan entrepreneur engaged in several projects. She comes from an academic background of International Business. She is the chief executive officer and founder of Pivot Hospitality Services. The company offers essential items at hotels that are easily forgotten among the guests such as toothpaste and a toothbrush. Within the hospitality service sector, that’s where her heart and passion is found. Besides her own business, Hope is an employee at Private Sector Foundation Uganda where she is responsible for partnerships and networking. Hope is also a board member of Ugandan Women Entrepreneurs Association (UWEAL) as the publicity secretary. Hope is truly the spider in the web when it comes to connecting people, her engagement and experience of international business has made Hope a key actor for many women within the network. However, her engagement does not end there, 45 minutes into our conversation she laughs and says, “Oh! I forgot to tell you! I am also pursuing a master’s degree in arts and gender”. We also learn, as our conversation goes on, that Hope is involved in a new project promoting export of agricultural commodities which she refers to as “the food basket”.


**Rusia Orikirza – Oribags Innovation**

Rusia Orikirza (further referred to as Rusia) was born in a remote village in South Western Uganda, her parents worked as commercial farmers and she explains how her mother is the back bone of her entrepreneurial skills. She taught Rusia how to make beads and jewellery which she did not reap much from until Rusia realized that it could make a potential lucrative business. Rusia also explains how her mother taught her business principals while they worked together brewing and selling Tonto (a local brew), the profit helped raise school’s fees for Rusia. Rusia later pursued a bachelor’s degree in Library and Information Science, at the same time she started a small business selling jewellery which gave her a good profit. Giving back to the society and showing respect and responsibility for one’s family and larger community has always been important for Rusia, that is why she would teach practical hand skills to women in her home-district on the weekends besides her studies. Today, Rusia is the co-founder of Oribags Innovations, the company ecologically recovers agricultural waste (waste paper and natural fibres) to make environmentally friendly and sustainable packaging. Rusia founded the company in 2007 after the Government of Uganda issued a ban on the importation, sale and manufacture of plastic bags.

**Lillian Aero – Circle of Hands**

Lillian Aero (further referred to as Lillian) is a Ugandan entrepreneur who fresh out of High School started her exporting business Circle of Hands. The company offers Ugandan hand crafts to markets such as Australia and the US, due to the low demand for such products on the domestic market. The mission of Circle of Hands is not solely commercial, the company strives at partner with and empower women affected by Africa’s HIV/AIDS crises. The road to where Lilian is at today has not been an easy one, by the age of 14 Lillian had lost her both parents, cause of death was never reviled. At the age of 20, Lillian returned to school and finished 9th grade, she just knew she had to for a chance of a stable future. Today, Lillian has earned a bachelor’s degree in social work and community development and a postgraduate degree in project management. Her background has led her to combine both purpose and profit in her business.

**Alice Karugaba – Nina Interiors Ltd**

Alice Karugaba is the founder of Nina Interiors, incorporated in 1991, the company is today one of Uganda’s best-known luxury goods businesses. Alice Karugaba started her
entrepreneurial journey by making bread, a bun, and sold to locals. At that time, the shortages of food in Uganda led to a black-market of foods sold to a very high price which created difficulties of providing food on the table. Alice, a single mother, had two kids back then and truly struggled financially. She explains how the guilt of not being able to feed her children was the main driving force of changing the situation for her family. The business later evolved into a grocery shop which she managed at the same time as her employment at a bank. One day she received and offer of partnering up with a hardwood furniture company (McCrae’s) which she accepted. The furniture company later closed and led to the opening of Nina Interiors which she operated independently from the McCrae’s. Today, Alice Karugaba has reached an age of 74 but still comes in to the office every day, “to make myself relevant” she says and smiles when we meet her at the flagship store in Kampala (Alice, 2018).

**Fosca – Health Products AB**

Fosca (further referred to as Fosca) is a health practitioner (Psychotherapist) with over 15 years of experience in treating patients with herbal medicine. Fosca is also the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Health Products AB Natural Health Products, undertaking manufacturing and research of herbal medicines, nutritional food supplements and cosmetics. Fosca was introduced to medical plants by her mother at a young age, a fascination that stimulated her to pursue a career and business in the field. Fosca obtained the title psychotherapist in 2008 after training at the Plaskett International College in the United Kingdom. Back in Uganda, she started giving consultations but learned that people needed help in identifying the herbs they could use, that is why she started blending and selling the herbs herself using the herbs from her mother’s garden. Her great passion of helping others led to that for her first three years in practice, she had no commercial gain for herself. Later however, she understood that she had stumbled upon a concept that could be a profitable business and help others at the same time. During our interviews with other female entrepreneurs in Uganda we have learnt that Fosca serves as a great source of inspiration and always offers a helping hand to other female entrepreneurs.
4.2 Entrepreneurship
Entrepreneurship could be described as a constant innovation and creativity process. As stated by both Hope and Fosca, entrepreneurship is also about having an idea that you are willing to take further into action and to share with others.

For the respondents, entrepreneurship is about exploiting opportunities. Rusia explains how the ban of plastic bags in 2007 resulted in frequent demonstrations due to the lack of an alternative to plastic bags. For Rusia, this led to the discovery that the waste paper she was using in her jewellery-production could as well be transformed into paper bags.

One day when traveling, Hope found that she had forgotten her toothbrush and toothpaste and she could not buy a new one at the hotel which led to that she had to go through the struggle of finding a new toothbrush in a city she knew little of. Later, back in Uganda she discovered an unutilized room at the Fairview hotel in Kampala and asked if she could use that room, of course the management team asked her what she wanted to do with it and she answered, “there is an opportunity here, just give it to me!” Situated in that room is now Pivot Hospitality Services, solving the need of forgotten toothbrushes (and more). For Fosca, she found that there was a very big gap in people’s knowledge about herbal medicine, she learned that people needed to know how to mix the herbs and use it in the right way to benefit out of it. For both Lillian and Alice, opportunity needed a little push from someone who knew them. When writing business plans in school, Lillian was told she had a talent for making necklaces and her passion for helping rural women could be combined into something valuable. Alice had a friend who recognized the business-woman in her and introduced her to the furniture industry.

When talking about how it all started, both Rusia and Hope argue that it has not always been easy especially due to the fact that they are women. Hope explains that generally, women in Uganda get married and start a family very early before they have had a chance of obtaining financial assets which leads to that they lack collateral and therefore struggles to get loans. Hope also to explain that “Uganda is experiencing a shift from women as non-workers to being the one that perform the labour in the family while men collects the reward from the harvest.” In addition, she proudly speaks of Uganda being in the forefront in regard to having women in high-positions (e.g. ministers) within society.
4.3 Means
4.3.1 Traits
As explained by Lillian, engaging in business is not always easy and the stress it causes sometimes makes you question the value of it all. However, emphasised by all respondents is the importance of being goal-oriented and to have a strong-minded focus. For both Rusia and Lillian, these traits made them hold on to their idea in times of struggle.

“I must admit starting Oribags was not an easy journey, for over 2 years I was operating with no profits but had to struggle to maintain the business. This was a very trying time, but I felt manufacturing environmentally packaging materials from waste was untapped venture and nothing in the world was going to stop me from taking hold of this opportunity.”

Another trait emphasised by the respondents is passion, for Fosca, it is the passion of helping others that drives her. Hope explains how passion is what gets her involved in her different projects and Lillian explains that without the love for what she does and the women she empowers; she would not be engaged in it today. She loves the freedom and time her business provides for her and she loves traveling and experiencing new things and meeting new people. For Alice, you could tell that the love for her children and people around her has been the main driving force. Alice is a very warm and loving person. Being the oldest of the respondents, she has experienced the hardships of war and poverty and being able to provide for her children has always been the number one priority. Alice also highlights that the driving force behind her business somewhat changes along the way as basic needs where fulfilled.

“I started because of a need and I met it, but I think, the strange thing about business is that you can’t stop. You give yourself more target and more target, that is what happened”

Hope highlights the fact that an entrepreneur must be a go-getter. She emphasises how “it has always been in me”. Rusia explains how even at a young age, she learned that making money comes from hard work and that she needed to start as early as possible. She
explains how her mother taught her African crafts but it was not until Rusia made her realize that it could be a lucrative business that they started making good profit.

Both Hope, Rusia, Lillian and Fosca unveil a positive attitude towards multi-tasking. Rusia explains that through life she has been engaged in a number of activities besides her studies and business. Fosca is involved in her core business, in research, being a practitioner as well as several projects empowering women and youth. Lillian mentor’s other women entrepreneurs and Hope operates her business, she is employed at PSFU, she runs different projects and is currently pursuing a master of art and gender.

Hope’s employment at the PSFU is a way for her to spread the risks, she acknowledges that being involved in business is risky and she does not take her business for granted. She explains that her employment is also a way of preparing for the future.

“You never put all your eggs in one basket. What if your business is not there tomorrow? Which has been the case, not once but twice.”

Fosca highlights that even though she is the CEO, she is still an employee of the company which is important for her as a role model in the company.

When asked about risks the respondents usually go to other for advice when taking crucial decisions. Fosca explains how the company has a risk management policy, Hope turns to other organizations that she is involved and Rusia take on well calculated risks built on internal expertise of the market. Alice on the other hand, has always been comfortable in taking decisions on her own, due to her high age she now has to consult before taking crucial decision which she is not very fond of.

“Before I used to take them myself, it is now frustrating that I have consult, it is very frustrating (...) most of my achievements I would make the decision I would invite my daughters, because it was me and them when they were young and I would say “I have bought this piece of land!””
Both Alice and Rusia explained that there were times when they had to be brave to overcome the risk. When the opportunity of being involved in furniture presented itself, Alice had a stable economy from the grocery shop as well as a full-time employment at a bank which provided crucial benefits such as insurance for her and her daughters. The involvement in furniture meant that she had to quit her job at the bank (which she knew she would not be able to get back) and leave her grocery shop. Rusia took a risk when investing her savings into Oribags Innovations.

The respondents all claim that the business environment is very hard to control. Alice emphasise that you have to be watchful, read and look around. For Hope, it is all about trying to balance e.g. supply and demand and Fosca emphasises the involvement in partnerships which will make you well informed and knowledgeable about trends.

### 4.3.2 Capabilities

Four of the five respondents come from an academic background which they all agree of in one way or another has enabled their process of becoming entrepreneurs and later on internationalized their companies. When it considers entrepreneurial capabilities, all of the respondents were also all agreed on that creativity is one of their most important skills in this process. Hope underlines her innovativeness and that she has studied entrepreneurship as an important factor, Hope explains that being a business person is not a problem without an education, however with an academic background it ensures your performance in business to be more successful. Alice highlights the importance of being able to work hard and that is supported by both Rusia, Fosca and Lillian which further argue that their ability to have a focus on their goal and be prepared to work hard, that has enabled their process.

Lillian highlights her marketing skills as very important and which has been the key to going international with her company. Furthermore, Lillian emphasizes her passion about the products she is selling and explains that she need to be able to describe the products with passion and enthusiasm if she wants her products to be attractive. Fosca agrees and believes that passion and knowledge about the products you are selling is essential in a successful business.

> “I need to be able to explain the product that I am selling and I need to be passionate about my products, if you are not passionate or enthusiastic about your products, your customers will be suspicious and no one will buy them”
Both Alice and Lillian enlightens that there is no need for a financial education to have in order to have a profitable business. Alice and Lillian describes how their business has slowly grown by their personal ability to carefully recording every single coin that has passed the revenue stream in their companies.

Moreover, Fosca pinpoints that is really important to be well-informed and well-equipped when entering a new market. Lillian agrees and emphasizes that foreign market knowledge is vital if you want to succeed on another market. Lillian further stresses the meaning of having knowledge about the seasons on the different markets, she explain that it depends on which industry, but that her production is reliant on natural resources and she needs to have the skill to coordinate customer demand with the products she can offer.

4.3.3 Networks
All of the respondents are in one way or another connected through the network UWEAL (Ugandan Women Entrepreneurs Association Limited). However, during the interviews all of the respondents explained that they somehow have a personal connection to each other. Lillian stresses the importance of the UWEAL network between female entrepreneurs in Uganda, since it has enabled international business of her company. She describes a scenario when Fosca traveled to the US, and always offers her help with delivering products from Uganda, and explains that she has UWEAL to thank for her relationship with Fosca.

“The networks between us female entrepreneurs have meetings and every time I attend, I get to know new things from different women, then I know, whom can help me with what”

Furthermore, Lillian and Alice explains that UWEAL has helped them with training in how to run a business both financially and practically. Rusia supports this by describing that she has been able to receive mentorship and create relationships that has even developed to partnerships in her company. Rusia further emphasizes the cooperation between her company and UIRI (Ugandan Industrial Research Institute), which has enriched her business, by conducting research, developing and carry out her environmental friendly bags.
The organizations have not only helped the entrepreneurs practically but also financially. Lillian explains that UWEAL has a Women Investment Club, where the members can take micro-loans with lower interest rates. Rusia further argues that UIA (Uganda Investment Authority) has played a big role in the development of her company and that the institutions have a positive impact on her company ORIBAGS.

Although the respondents have been facilitated by the institutions in many ways, all of them stress the fact that it is personal relationships that has enabled their growth and internationalization process for their companies the most. Alice describes that it was a close friend to her that lend her money and encouraged her to do what she is good at; business. Fosca argues further that her key partnerships started on a personal level, with someone who tried using her products and which later on developed to important cooperation. Rusia also emphasizes that it has been close friends who later turned out to be long term customers and partners.

Lillian and Hope highlights that it is their communication and networking skill that has been the key to internationalize their companies. Hope describes a situation when there was a woman at a UWEAL meeting who wanted to started export her products, they exchanged contacts and the following day Hope received a message from this woman that deal was sealed. Hope believes that her talent to communicate and networking is essential factor behind her successful business. Alice also highlights her social skill as helpful, she explains how “I love people and people love me back”.

“My ability to network and to outreach. That’s my area! I am a really good networker, a fantastic networker! And that is nothing I am ashamed to say. I am really good at connecting people!”

Lillian highlights the importance of personal relationships but also explain the difficulties with establishing a personal interaction with someone in another country. Her business has reached out to Australia and the U.S. because of her personal contacts, but in the initiation of the relationships she experienced cultural difficulties establishing her business on new markets. Her clients could get mad because of the bad communication, and also because they were not aware of Lillian’s production circumstances, she explains that hand-craft products are different from machine products, and that design and quality
can differ from day to day. Furthermore, Lillian has suffered not only problems with her external relationships but also internally in the firm. Since she is working with single mothers, widows and teenage mothers which some of them are below the line of poverty, and thus delivering on time can be a big challenge. Therefore, Lillian explain that she has learned her lesson, and always make sure that she only promises a delivery time she is a hundred percent sure of she will fulfill.

A pervading agreement through the interviews was that the networking has been a vital part in their internationalization process and that the respondents believe that it is not only the networks on the firm level but on the personal level that has enabled them to take their business abroad. Lillian explains that her relationship with her client in the U.S. has really given her new insights and that they have grown both individually and as business partners.

4.4 Internationalization
For Alice, the decision to internationalize was based upon an opportunity which she thought of herself. She explains that there was a gap in her supply and demand. She had the customers, but the producers which she was supplying from did not produce enough. She was truly frustrated because she was not the one running the factories and she could not do it at her speed so she started to look around for alternatives. Alice found an Indian guy close by so she went there to buy from him. He produced locally made sofas and she had a showroom so she believed that this could be a beneficial relationship for the both of them. However, the relationship did not get that far. As she was waiting for him to finish his lunch, she started going through the yellow pages and found an advert for Malaysian furniture-companies and instantly rushed home because she had decided to go to Malaysia. Alice then went to Malaysia and personally established relationships with the suppliers.

“I sat there and waiting for him to finish his food, and as I sat there, it was an old book, yellow pages, it was old and thorn but because I was waiting I started looking and I saw pictures of furniture and I saw an advert in Malaysia, so I thought, “why don’t I go to this country?” (...) So, I went! And I never told the Indian guy anything, it was stupid I never took any address, if I had taken an address it would have been easier but I just went there.”
Lillian started exporting her products at the same year as she started her business. She knew that there was no demand for her products (African hand craft) at the domestic market, her customers live abroad. She had established a contact with a woman in the U.S which became her first client and way in. The same reasoning applies for Fosca, she explains how herbal medicine was not given priority in Uganda as people were embracing the beauty of nature abroad. She does however acknowledge that her products are doing very well domestically as well, but that there is a bigger market if you take in the other countries in the East African region. When entering new markets, Fosca emphasises partnerships as key. For Rusia, international activities are a result of a world that moving towards being a global village. She explains how she has no reason to resist waves of change due to technological discoveries and social media. At the beginning, Rusia would personally approach supermarket owner’s trough her business network. Today, Oribags mainly enter new markets through exhibitions, and social media. Hope is engaged in international business for the purpose of being able to provide the customers of what they require. Hope is very keen on promoting and supporting domestic production, she learned however that there are products that her customers’ demands that cannot be found in Uganda and has to be imported. Due to Hope’s knowledge and expertise, she consults firms going abroad. She explains how the opportunities for female-owned firms are there, it is just a matter of forming themselves to a group and to learn what is required. She further explains how women are not ready to internationalize in terms of quality, quantity and packaging. Hope explains how she has seen that cross-border activity needs preparation.

Lillian also explains the struggle of delivering quality, quantity and on time, challenges that originates from cultural differences. She explains how the western countries has a perception towards Africa that affects her negatively, she needs to be there to connect in person for the best result. She enlightens the big difference between working with machines and mobilizing rural women working with their hands which sometimes makes it challenging to meet delivery times and quantity.
5 Analysis

This chapter will link together the empirical findings together with the theoretical framework. This chapter aims to create a valuable analysis which underlines the conceptual framework. As suggested in the conceptual framework, we will deliberate on the concept of means from two perspectives; the entrepreneurial and the international with the purpose of providing an understanding of how the means of the entrepreneur influenced the internationalization initiative of her SME.

5.1 Entrepreneurship
Shane and Venkataraman (2000) stress that entrepreneurship is about the combination of enterprising individuals and existing valuable opportunities. All of our respondents are truly enterprising individuals, however, differences are apparent in the origin of how they utilize opportunities. Both Alice and Lillian needed a push into what someone else considered a valuable opportunity. Contrary to Hope who saw an opportunity and asked for it to be given to her.

Carter and Jones-Evans (2006) explain further that entrepreneurship also contributes to the creation of employment and can be of great importance in poverty-reduction. Moreover, Vivarelli (2013) suggests that entrepreneurship is a multifaceted concept, since in less developed countries it is not related to only innovation or productivity growth, but rather is seen as a connection to economic growth by pushing people to informal entrepreneurial activity. When studying entrepreneurship in an emerging context, it is notable that entrepreneurship has a greater meaning than only new innovation. When Alice first started her business, her driving force was out of her own necessity, to put food on the table for her family. As Guma (2015) argues, this is the view by media of why women engage in entrepreneurship. Looking at the findings however, we can see that most of the women were driven by other factors such as passion and growth goals. Rusia realized that she had found a potentially new market and Hope identified a gap. In addition, Alice stressed that the need to put food on the table was the driving force at first, but once the need was met, she found it difficult to stop.

Today, all of our respondent’s businesses has some kind of social purpose, the driving force is now interlinked with a necessity for other people in the society. Lillian exemplifies this by employing 250 women that barely make it above the line of poverty. Furthermore, Rusia discovered the opportunity for Oribags when the government banned
all usage of plastic bags, and believed it was necessary to create a business with a sustainable future. Fosca stresses that it is her passion for helping other people, that was the main driving force in her start-up of Health Products AB. Hence, we argue that this type of entrepreneurial behavior is somehow connected to the entrepreneurs’ identity.

Sarasvathy and Dew (2008) deliberates, that the entrepreneurial identity is a stable unit of the individual no matter the surrounding context, and by studying the empirical data we can observe this stable type of identity within all of our respondents, no matter which environment they are in or reason they have behind their business. Warren (2004) highlights the barriers female entrepreneurs suffer in society when discussing the entrepreneurial identity, and argues that women can benefit from opportunities found in self-employment. We do recognize these barriers when Hope explains that female entrepreneurs in Uganda struggle to get loans and Alice witness about her struggle as a single mother, which she underlines is the situation for many women. However, when listening to our respondents and most certainly Hope which explains that the entrepreneurial identity always has “been in her”, we do argue that there are some characteristics within these women that has created this type of entrepreneurial identity, who can not only be successful in international business, but also overcome those barriers that are existing in the developing society of Uganda.

5.1.1 Entrepreneurial Means
Nielsen et al. (2012) explains that some people do have certain characteristics that make them more likely to find, create and pursue opportunities. Sarasvathy (2001) argues further that what makes entrepreneurs is the individuals ability to have an effectual mindset. She explains that the effectual cycle initiates with the entrepreneur’s three means; Who am I? What do I know? Whom do I know? Since all of our respondents have utilized their traits, resources and networks, we see a clear effectual reasoning throughout all of our cases. Moreover, Sarasvathy (2001) emphasizes the effectual approach when analyzing the human action, since it often includes unexpected events and underlines this by explaining that the effectual process is actor dependent and is a process towards the effects that can be created with these certain means. The stories of our respondents truly differentiate, but in one way or another they have all struggled through life events that has occurred unpredicted. Therefore, we do argue that the effectual logic is suitable when analyzing our cases. The effectual logic also proved to be applicable to the internationalization initiative which will be deliberated upon later in the analysis.
Traits

Vecchio (2003) emphasizes five certain traits that are recognized more than others. Both Lillian and Fosca stresses their ability to focus on settled goals to be the main reason behind their successful business. Alice further explains that when certain goals are reached, new ones arises. Hence, we can acknowledge the respondents need for achievement. Although all of the respondents literally do not express that they are goal-oriented, we still can observe this when they express their passion for their occupation. Alice explains how entrepreneurship is a constant setting of new targets which makes it nearly impossible to stop. Involved in different industries, they all make sure to have a passion for what they are doing and for the purpose that their business can fulfill. Lillian expresses her love for both her business and the women she is helping when creating employment. Fosca further emphasizes her passion for helping others and for the herbal medicine, which she was thought by her mother can cure sickness. Hope explains that she is passionate about being involved in different projects. However, Rusia literally explains her passion, goal-orientation and strong-minded focus to be the traits that made her hold on to her business in times of struggle. Interestingly, we find the five traits similar to what researchers in the old days referred to as typical masculine, a stereotype that has proven to be inaccurate, supported by the findings of this study.

Furthermore, Vecchio (2003) highlights the need for autonomy and locus of control to be a part of the “big five” traits. Although Hope stresses the fact the entrepreneur has to be a “go-getter”, and Lillian explains that she runs her business to achieve freedom in everyday life, we do argue that the need for autonomy is more of a trait that can be recognized among entrepreneurs in developing countries, that in an emerging market context. Thus the fact that we consider the entrepreneurial decision to be is more necessity driven than opportunity driven among our respondents. The respondents are all agreed on that the business environment is hard to control, but all of them have found ways to overcome these issues. Fosca explains that it is important to be well-informed and well-equipped when running a successful business. Alice is still the one visiting all of the interior-exhibitions and further enlightens that it is important to read as much as possible, in this way we can argue for that the respondents aim to have a locus of control.

Lastly, Vecchio (2003) emphasizes self-efficacy and risk-taking propensity to be a part of the “big five” traits. From the empirical data gathered, these are two of the characteristics that none of the respondents could express that they had. Fosca explain that her company has a risk management policy, furthermore both Rusia and Hope ask
for advice to take on well calculated risks. Contrary to Alice who always has always been comfortable with taking risky decisions on her own. Throughout all of our four cases, our respondents want to make sure that they are not risk-takers, but afterwards when analyzing our empirical data, we do see that all of our respondents have taken big risks to be where they are today. Mostly because of the fact that they have seen opportunities when most other people would only see risks. Additionally, we connect this to the respondent’s self-efficacy and self-confidence. We argue that these are traits, that has been the key for success in their businesses.

The effectual process suggests individuals to start with their three means, who they are, what they have and whom they know but afterwards we can argue that the individuals interest, passion and belief in oneself should be acknowledged as important means. Not to be forgotten, Nielsen et al (2012) problematizes the discussion about certain female entrepreneurial activities and stresses that it can be risky to romanticize their traits since it can reach a point that is unhuman and closely associated with “superhero’s”. We can agree to a certain level and we do take distance from the romanticize of certain female entrepreneurial traits, however, we do believe that these women are truly role-models and contribute a lot to Uganda as an emerging market with their ability to run an international business.

Capabilities
Ikebuaku and Dinbabao (2017) argue there are numerous capabilities that enables the entrepreneur to exploit opportunities. However, they have chosen some capabilities to measure the entrepreneurial capabilities. Among these we see that all of our respondent’s highlights creativity as their number one entrepreneurial capability. Furthermore, Hope stresses her ability to acquire new customers through her networking and Lillian explain that she has marketing skills which she believes has been vital in her business. In line with the findings by De Vita et al. (2014) we found a self-confidence among several of the respondents when talking about their skills. De Massis et al. (2018) discuss the importance of integration skills and suggests that it can give the entrepreneur new useful insights which will lead to new opportunity creation. Lillian emphasizes her relationship to her client in the U.S. to be essential in the development for her international business and that is has contributed to the relationships she has established in Australia. Furthermore, she explains that her client in the U.S. has helped to re-organize her business to be more efficient. De Massis et al. (2018) and Sarasvathy (2013) further highlight
education as an important skill. Four of our five respondents come from an academic background, and all of them have been trained by UWEAL in both practical and financial matters. Hope pinpoints her education as a key factor behind her ability to be successful in business, further she explains, that there is no problem doing business without a business education. However, she underlines that it ensures her performance to be more successful. Since all of our respondents in one way or another have an academic background, we go align with De Massis (2018) and Sarasvathy (2013) and emphasize that the education skill a vital capability. To be noted, the lack of formal training is said to be one of the barriers for female entrepreneurs (Guma, 2015). Since the majority of our respondents come from an academic background and are connected to UWEAL which provides training we are limited to speculation on whether this is a barrier characteristically for female entrepreneurs. In addition, we can discuss whether the assumed characteristics of the female entrepreneurs, explained by Santos et al. (2018) as relational and empathy skills, has been beneficial for the willingness to establish personal relations with others. Looking at Lillian, her empathy for rural women and her need of helping others was successfully combined with her craft talent and turned into her business idea.

Networks
Pinho and Prange (2016) argue that business networks can help the entrepreneur to acquire knowledge but is also a way of screening partners. Ford et al. (2011) argue further that business networks do not necessarily have a common goal, they rather just follow the same activity patterns. All of our respondents are somehow connected to networks that they all agree on have enhanced their businesses. By being a part of UWEAL, our respondents believe they can acquire new knowledge by every new meeting they attend even though the members are in different industries and have different goals. We stress, that the relational skills are not simply family-based (Santos et al., 2018) but developed in contexts with others. Lillian explains that every time she attends a meeting, she learns something new from someone new, and in that way she expands her network and obtains new knowledge. We can therefore argue, that these types of networks can be a central method to acquire knowledge and expand the resources needed, which Sarasvathy (2014) highlights can very important for an entrepreneur in order to trigger the means at hand and the effects these means can create.
Although our respondents underline the importance of being part of the business networks, they all do argue that it has been the personal relationships that has enabled their process in building a successful international business. Hence we can conclude that the entrepreneur’s ability of networking and creating personal relations that has been one of the key means which enabled their process.

Furthermore, looking at the empirical findings we are of the opinion that the context of a developing country and its implications cannot be found to the extent that previous research suggests (Guma, 2015; De Vita et al, 2013; Naudé, 2009; Santos et al 2018; Vivarelli, 2013; Warren, 2004). We found that none of the respondents spoke about men either when being asked about enabling personal relationships nor when asked about how it started. We find these findings surprising due to the mentioned barriers for women to e.g. access credit, receiving help from a male relative, husband or boyfriend is one way of overcoming such barrier. A consequence of being a mother in a developing country is also claimed to be that the woman will not have the time to engage in capacity-building and training (Guma, 2015), which all of our respondents had accessed from UWEAL. A possible answer to why the implications of the socio-cultural context is not as prominent as expected, is due to that UWEAL provides the necessary resources and tools. In addition, the empowerment of women in UWEAL could possibly be why the respondents spoke about their relations to other women as opposed to men.

5.2 Internationalization
From the literature review we learned about the prominence of the entrepreneur within the internationalization activities of a firm (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005; Mainela et al., 2015; Murphy et al., 2006; Ellis, 2008). In line with theory, we found that the individual was the driving force behind the internationalization of the firm. The story of how Alice first came across international opportunity highlights the importance of the individual and her ability to discover, evaluate and exploit opportunity, to be added, in an unstructured and unpredictable way. The entrepreneurial environment of which Alice engage in shows a high level of unpredictability which is why we agree with Sarasvathy (2001) that applying an effectual approach has been beneficial for the analysis.

From a firm perspective, the reason behind the decision to internationalize was a majority of the respondents based upon the will to solve an unbalance between supply and demand. The cases represent both reactive and proactive reasons for international activities as explained by Hollensen (2011) as a categorization of motives. Alice
explained how she was frustrated because her supplier could not deliver accordingly to her demand. Lillian had to go abroad due to low demand on the domestic market and Hope realized she had to engage in import to fulfil the needs of her customers. In Fosca’s case, the motive for going abroad can be interpreted as a way of making money. She did not perform poorly on the domestic market, however, going abroad enabled more sales. Rusia enlightens the managerial urge, the global mind-set of the entrepreneur, as a reason for internationalization. The global mind-set is emphasised by several authors as a vital element in why organizations become engaged in international activities (Gabrielsson and Pelkonen, 2008; Jones, Coviello and Tang, 2011). While looking at firm level, the size and international activities of the studied firms supports the statement that internationalization concerns small entrepreneurial firms as well and not solely large firm’s rich on resources (Gjellerup, 2000; Sandberg, 2012). However, Hope and Lillian expressed a challenge within international business of delivering quality and quantity and on time. A challenge that may be represented to a higher degree among SMEs than LSEs due to differences in resources (Carter and Jones-Evans, 2006).

The motive was later triggered by the entrepreneur’s encounter with opportunity. The respondents emphasise personal ties as basis for international opportunity which is in line with Ellis (2008) who proposes that international opportunities do arise because of the entrepreneur’s personal ties. For all respondents, the opportunity to go abroad started because of personal connections in other countries, thus acquired in different ways but always one thing in common, the entrepreneur herself established the connections on a social level.

We sought to find in what way the means at hand effects the first stage of the internationalization process and looking at the empirical findings we found some interesting observations which will be deliberated upon below.

This study derives from the individual and her identity as a rather stable unit which involves a relatively clear and consistent insight of who they are. Therefore, when the entrepreneur encounters internationalization opportunity she possesses the same traits as prior to internationalization. Hence, the entrepreneur has high level of achievement, self-efficacy, risk-taking while a low need for autonomy. We argue that based on the empirical findings, we cannot determine the level of perceived locus of control. We found that they all agree to that the business environment is hard to control, yet they have found ways of trying to predict the unpredictable.
Moreover, during the critical moment when the entrepreneur encounters international opportunity, we are of the opinion that we found indicators saying that certain traits are of more importance than others. Omri and Becuwe (2014) found in their study that being involved in international business requires certain personality traits to be able to deal with the stress it causes. Lillian explicitly said that the stress causes her to rethink her involvement in her business, however, she always comes back to that the love and passion for her work and the people involved outplays the stressful parts. Passion has, as highlighted previously, been key to the entrepreneur’s business involvement.

We also want to highlight the “go-getter” within the entrepreneurs as crucial for initiating international business. In other words, the ability to have a strong-minded focus and to be goal oriented was identified by the respondents. Rusia explains that her first international activity meant that she personally had to approach supermarkets in other markets which was demanding, however, she did not give up because she knew that nothing could stop her from pursuing her dream. The same focus enabled Lillian to keep on going at times when she experienced challenges due to cultural differences.

Furthermore, we found two major capabilities which we believe has played an important role for the first stage of the internationalization process First, we want to highlight the internationalization knowledge stressed by Fletcher et al. (2013, see also; Åkerman, 2015) as a key capability for a firm’s international activities. Emphasized by all respondents as key for their entering to new markets, international knowledge is considered a key capability for this study as well. Looking at Lillian who engaged in export from inception, she explains how she knew that opportunity could only be found elsewhere and not on the domestic market, a knowledge we believe derives from cultural understanding of the domestic market but can as well derive from her academic background. Lillian is also a good example of what Cavusgil and Knight (2015) stresses, that knowledge-based capabilities allows young firms to internationalize early despite limited resources.

Second, we found that social skills have been key for initiating international activities. Explained by Alice as “I love people and people love me back” which we can truly vouch for after getting to know Alice as a warm and loving person. Hope underlines her talent for networking which has besides served as a success factor for her own business been helpful for women in her network. Lillian expresses a love for the women she works with and explains that her social skill has enabled her to break through negative perceptions towards Africa from the western world where she has her business. There is
a possible explanation to the mentioned perceptions to be found within Johansson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) theory of psychic distance. The negative perceptions then originate from a perceived distance regarding geographic, cultural and business environmental matters. Lillian and her business partner overcame the psychic distance as the personal relations, market knowledge and experience grew as the relationship evolved.

The social skill goes hand-in-hand with the importance of networks as an enabling factor for international activities. As argued by Kujala and Törnroos (2018) we found that networks provide knowledge and experience which helped the entrepreneurs overcome difficulties and facilitated for the utilizing of opportunities abroad. We found that the female entrepreneurs we met with all are connected to the network UWEAL which has truly been important for the above-mentioned by creating a platform to share experience, exchange contacts and learn from each other. We are of the opinion that acquiring the key capability of knowledge is enabled by the entrepreneur’s involvement in networks. As stated by Pinho and Prange (2016) this study supports the fact that networks help provide knowledge, screening of potential partners and reduce risk when entering a foreign market. In line with Harris and Wheeler (2005) who claim that export initiatives for SMEs in particular, are based on social relationships. We found that in the gathered data, the respondents turned to their networks when looking for advice to reduce risk, finding partnerships and/or contact persons of other nature.

However, the distinction between business networks and social networks proved to be important for the analysis in these cases as well (Ellis 2011). Even though entrepreneurs met within institutions, a relationship is developed by individuals and based on personal ties hence the importance of social skill. The empirical findings also suggest that relationships are not established through planning and based on a pre-selected goal but developed between two individuals who happen to meet and realize that there is potential for both actors. A situation more in line with an effectual approach to networks (Sarasvathy et al., 2013). We also want to highlight the tendency among the entrepreneurs to value the power of networks. Explained by Hope as key to overcome the un-preparedness (to internationalize) by “forming themselves to a group and to learn what is required”. Lillian emphasizes that when meeting the other women in business “I get to know new things from different women, then I know, whom can help me with what”.

58
6 Conclusion
6.1 Answering the research questions
Female entrepreneurship in developing economies has lately gained a lot of interest from research (Guma, 2015; Rosenbaum, 2016). The international level of interest in the matter is emerging from the growing number of female entrepreneurs in developing country contexts (Santos et al, 2018; MIWE, 2017). Previous research has stressed how female entrepreneurs in developing countries escape poverty by necessity-based entrepreneurship rather than opportunity-based (Naudé, 2010; Vivarelli, 2013). In addition, there is a growing interest in research of internationalization of small entrepreneurial firms which are crossing country borders not restrained by limited resources (Kujala and Törnroos, 2018; Kalinic and Forza, 2011; Oviatt and McDougall, 1994; Madsen and Servais, 1997). The purpose of this study was to put these two interesting phenomena within international business together to investigate (RQ) *How does the means of the female entrepreneur influence the internationalization initiation of her small and medium sized enterprise in Uganda?* In order to properly be able to answer the research question in regard to the concept of means, the main question was divided into three sub-questions (A) How do the traits of the female entrepreneur influence the internationalization initiation of her SME in Uganda, (B) How do the capabilities of the female entrepreneur influence the internationalization initiation of her SME in Uganda and (C) How does the female entrepreneur’s involvement in networks influence the internationalization decision of her SME in Uganda?

The first sub-question (A) addresses the first effectual means with which the entrepreneur initiates the entrepreneurial process towards new international opportunities. Literature suggest that individuals enter the entrepreneurial process with a rather stable unit of identity and that there are universal traits connected to the entrepreneur (Sarasvathy, 2001). Previous research implies that women face difficulties in balancing professional and family identities which the empirical findings supports (Warren, 2004). Furthermore, we argue that the women’s knowledge about who they are hence, their identity, has fostered their entrepreneurial activities. We also want to highlight the embeddedness of social responsibility within the women’s identities. We suggest that the identity interlinks to the entrepreneurs set of traits which has proven to concord to some extent to the universal big five. In context of Uganda, we suggest that need for autonomy is to a larger extent connected to opportunity-based entrepreneurship more common in developing country context. Moreover, the empirical findings suggested that passion and
focus facilitates for the need for achievement and self-efficacy as well as the main driving force of entrepreneurial activities. We can conclude that the entrepreneurs have found ways to some extent control the uncontrollable, indicating locus of control. As opposed to the entrepreneurs own perception of risk propensity, we found that to get where they are today, the women had to see opportunities where others would see risks. We found that, as literature implies, personal traits facilitate for international activities. We highlight the ability to have a strong-minded focus and to be goal-oriented as key for international activities.

(B) The second effectual mean explored is capabilities. The literature does not provide a consensus to what capabilities incorporates but suggest that capability falls under the category of resources which facilitates for internationalization (Barney, 1991). The empirical findings indicate that creation, education and social skills enables entrepreneurial activity. For international opportunity specifically, the empirical findings highlight two capabilities as key, social skill and (internationalization) knowledge. We suggest that the social skill is facilitated by the relational and empathy skills highlighted in literature as characteristic for female entrepreneurs. The empirical findings also emphasize the relation between the importance of social skills and the importance of networks. (C) Networks proved to be vital for internationalization and networks also created an important platform of acquiring international knowledge. Previous research stresses that personal ties should not be overlooked when studying entrepreneurial firms (Ellis, 2011). The empirical findings state that personal ties were the enabling factor for international activities in all five cases. We also suggest that personal ties help reduce the psychic distance which in turn is enabled by personal traits and social skills. Furthermore, we would argue that this indicates a more circular view of the means at hand as opposed to the linear view found in the conceptual framework (See Figure 2.4). However, we do not want to overlook the importance business networks, in this case UWEAL. We found that in business networks the female entrepreneurs learn, share knowledge and acquire crucial training which enabled international activity.

The main research question (RQ) aimed at identifying how entrepreneurial means are influencing the internationalization initiation of a female-owned SME taking off from a developing country context. The empirical findings show that the forming of the business as well as international opportunity was not necessity based as previous research implies when looking at entrepreneurship in developing country contexts. We found that in the case where necessity was outspoken as the main driving force behind the
entrepreneurial activity, the entrepreneurial activity did not end when basic needs were met but developed further. Furthermore, we wish to highlight the prominence of the entrepreneur and her means at hand within the internationalization initiation. We concur with previous authors emphasizing the relevance of studying the individual by proving that the individual was prominent in discovering, evaluating and exploiting international opportunity (Sarasvathy, 2001; Sarasvathy, 2008; Nielsen and Lassen, 2012). The goal-oriented and focused female entrepreneur uses her social skills and knowledge that she develops through networks of personal ties when initiating international activity.

We can conclude that their motives for international activities can be explained by the same motives used in a developed country context, mainly related to supply and demand. The empirical findings state that the main challenge for female entrepreneurs on the international arena is the ability to deliver quality, quantity and on time which we suggest is due to limited resources, a challenge experienced by SMEs in both an developed and developing country context.

We wish to highlight the prominence of the entrepreneur and her means within the internationalization initiation. We concur with previous authors emphasizing the relevance of studying the individual and we argue that the traits of the entrepreneur and her involvement with others was significant for internationalization. We also want to highlight the importance of market knowledge.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

Previous research has focused on large firms internationalizing from developing countries. We could therefore identify a research gap, when we recognized the lack of research in how SMEs take off from emerging markets and furthermore, that the female entrepreneur has the ability to affect the internationalization process of her SME. Hence, we chose to study how the means of the entrepreneur herself could affect the initiation of an internationalization process of an SME in Uganda. Literature has previously stated that the effectual approach is suitable when studying entrepreneurship in developed countries. However, we argue that the results from our findings can contribute by highlighting the relevance of adopting the effectual approach to emerging contexts as well, since the entrepreneur in a developing country acts in an unpredictable and unstructured environment and with limited resources. Further, we argue when studying female entrepreneurship in an emerging context, the effectual approach; when the entrepreneur utilizes her means at hand, is not necessarily only suitable in necessity-based
entrepreneurship. Thus our empirical findings show that it is applicable when the entrepreneurial act is opportunity-based as well.

This thesis has furthermore contributed to the phenomena of female entrepreneurship in the field of international business, by identifying the entrepreneurial means that have an impact in the initiation of an internationalization process in an emerging context. For a female entrepreneur in an emerging country, the importance of having focus and goal-orientation as personal traits enables going abroad. Moreover, capabilities such as social skills and internationalization knowledge are keys for international activities and finally, the personal networks are vital in order to gain internationalization knowledge but also reduce the psychic distance which both are factors that enable an SME in an emerging country to enter a new market. In addition, our findings can conclude that networks removes socio-cultural barriers for women in Uganda. We were surprised by the fact that few of the characteristics of female entrepreneurship in developing contexts from previous literature was found in this study and we concluded that the women’s involvement in networks helped reduce such unbeneficial characteristics.

The findings of this thesis have reinforced the usage of the effectual approach in an emerging market context. We have updated our conceptual framework in order to be able present new concepts and definitions that we believe are important to consider when doing further research in this topic. Figure 2.3 shows the revised conceptual model which has been updated with the specific means that are prominent in the internationalization initiation of a female-owned SME in Uganda. We found that the entrepreneurial activity can be triggered by necessity but will not stop once basic needs are met which indicates that entrepreneurship in emerging markets does not solely emerge from necessity but also by being opportunity-based. The female entrepreneur enters the effectual process with a relatively stable identity, incorporated by a social responsibility. As business evolves, the international opportunity arises and as our evidence shows, mainly based on supply and demand. Furthermore, the model presents a more composited view of the means, thus our empirical findings show that the means are working together, rather than being utilized step by step when initiating internationalization. Finally, the conceptual framework has proven to incorporate crucial components and concepts when analyzing female entrepreneurship on an international level. We are of the opinion that the individual, her means and way of encountering opportunity are concepts that should be
analyzed to get a holistic understanding of the subject, especially for developing country contexts.

6.3 Practical Implications

Our empirical findings suggest that the entrepreneur of an SME in an emerging context can follow the process of effectuation when she initiates to enter a new market by using her means at hand. We further argue that the entrepreneur enables the internationalization process by having a strong-minded focus and being goal-oriented. In order to obtain internationalization knowledge, we recommend the entrepreneur to engage in networks and establish personal ties, which has been proved to be essential for a SME taking off from an emerging market. Accessing capabilities and networks as mentioned above, will reduce the psychic distance that may exist between the markets and enables the initiation of the internationalization process.

Figure 2.3 The Revised Conceptual Framework (Beica and Eklöf, 2018)
Moreover, we do believe it is essential for entrepreneurs to have knowledge about the market they are entering, in order to overcome the psychic distance that may exist between the markets. Additionally, limited resources are often the biggest obstacle for SMEs when going abroad, therefore we argue that it is relevant for the entrepreneur to start by looking at the means at hand, rather than seeking resources externally.

6.4 Limitations
During the process, we identified hindrances to the quality of the findings. Since we were visiting Uganda for the first time, we had limited contacts in the country and therefore struggled to find appropriate respondents. To overcome such difficulties, we chose to turn to UWEAL for help. Hence, the respondents are all connected to the network of female entrepreneurs in some way which can have possible effect on the findings implying the prominence of networks. Looking for respondents outside of UWEAL could have made it possible to avoid such effects of the findings, however, it would have complicated the process of finding respondents, it would have been time-consuming and the risk of not finding suitable respondents matching the sampling criterions would have been higher. To be added, is the limitation in finding respondents with equal level of international activities. The respondents differ from simply engage in import to being engaged in export since inception. Ideally, we would have preferred respondents who all are engaged in international activities as the core of their business to capture their experience and knowledge.

Further the study is limited by the relatively small number of interviewees. However, the empirical data was collected through qualitative interviews in Uganda, which we believe has enabled us to connect with our respondents in a more personal way and further enrich the study with a more holistic point of view.

6.5 Future research
The purpose of this study was to put two trends in research together to fill the research gap of how female-owned SMEs initiates internationalization from a developing country context. Furthermore, the study unveiled interesting topics for further research stated below. The empirical findings imply that the gender perspective can be deliberated further, as touched upon, it looks like Uganda is experiencing a shift in improved representation of women in the business environment as opposed to the socio-cultural expectation of women simply being mothers. A study of how socio-cultural expectations
impact the female entrepreneurship in a developing country context would therefore be interesting to study.

Identified in the empirical findings are the prominence of networks for international business, and furthermore the importance of personal ties. This study touches upon personal ties as an enabling factor for shortening the psychic distance between cultures which could be deliberated on further in; what role does personal ties play in shortening psychic distance in international business?
7 References

Interview Respondents:

1. **Hope Jeminah Kasimbazi** – Pivot Hospitality Services, face-to-face interview 2018-04-20
2. **Rusia Orikirza** – Oribags Innovation, e-mail interview 2018-03-03
3. **Lillian Aero** – Circle of Hands, face-to-face interview 2018-04-18
4. **Alice Karaguba** – Nina Interiors Ltd, face-to-face interview 2018-04-18
5. **Fosca** – Health Products AB, face-to-face interview 2018-04-18

References:


Gjellerup, P. 2000. SME support services in the face of globalization, concerted action


Kujala, I. 2015. *SME internationalization from an emerging market to a developed market: A case study from Ghana*. Doctoral dissertation, Åbo Akademi i University


Appendices

Appendix A Interview Guide

General Background

- Could you please start by presenting yourself?
- I would like to know who you are, your position and background in the company
- Can you do a brief description of your company (Which industry it is operating in, on which markets is the company active? How many employees?
- Do you wish to be anonymous?

Entrepreneurship

TRAITS

- What is entrepreneurship for you?
  How do you explain yourself as an entrepreneur?
- What led you to start your company?
  Do you have a need for achievement?
  Would you consider to be an employee?
- How do you deal with risks when doing business?
- Do you ask for advice when taking crucial decisions?
- Do you believe that you can control your business environment or does the business environment control you?

CAPABILITIES

- What are your entrepreneurial skills?
- Which skills has been the most important when entering xxx market?

NETWORK

- What individuals, companies/organizations or institutions have had a key role when you entered a new market?
- How have you developed your key business relationships?

Internationalization

- Why international activities?
- Did you find an opportunity to go abroad or did you create it yourself?
- How did you enter the new market?
  Why did you choose that mode of entry?
  If you had done it today, would you do it differently?
- Can you identify any personal characteristics that enabled when entering the new market?
Conclusion

- Can you please explain how female entrepreneurs play an important role for Uganda as a developing economy?
- Do you believe that you are a role model for other women in business in Uganda?