

CALL FOR PAPERS

International Small Business Journal

Richness in Diversity: Towards more contemporary research conceptualisations of women's entrepreneurship

Guest Editors:

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(Full Paper Submission Deadline: 31st March 2020)

Contemporary reviews of the women's entrepreneurship literature have identified gaps with respect to theoretical development, methodological approaches, and embedded gender biases that tend to signal female underperformance comparative to male entrepreneurs (Foss, Henry & Ahl 2018; Henry, Foss & Ahl 2016; Jennings & Brush 2013; Leitch, Welter & Henry 2018). These research biases often serve to marginalize the experiences and contributions of women entrepreneurs, positioning them as 'lacking', 'lesser than' or 'other' in comparison to male counterparts. While our understanding of how these research biases matter is under-explored, calls for new approaches and perspectives to address these concerns have not been fully addressed (Welter 2011; Foss et al. 2018). As such, our understanding of the diversity and heterogeneity of women entrepreneurs and their enterprises using novel methodological approaches and gender theory is lacking in published scholarship.

There also appears to be an increasing focus within entrepreneurship scholarship on growth-oriented firms and their job-creating potential (Coleman et al. 2017; Mason & Brown 2013; Mitchell 2011; Stangler 2010; Tracy 2011; Brush, de Bruin, Gatewood & Henry 2010; Hechavarría, Bullough, Brush & Edelman 2019). This neoliberal perspective may have the unintended consequence of minimizing the legitimacy and importance of the majority of women-owned enterprises in developed and developing economies (Brush et al. 2018; Coleman et al. 2017; Welter et al. 2017). In light of these observations, our proposed special issue would aim to provide scholars with an opportunity to take a broader view of gender and women's entrepreneurship by not only exploring motivations, goals, measures of success and the different contexts in which they launch and strategically manage their firms, but also considering the heterogeneity of women entrepreneurs generally. With particular regard to the latter, such contexts can include but are not necessarily limited to family business, corporate settings and non-profit sectors.

As scholars we acknowledge that women's entrepreneurship is a rich and multi-colored tapestry, and thus we would invite researchers to engage with its complexity, durability, and strength. The aim is to recognize gender identities and to celebrate the global diversity of women's entrepreneurship by encouraging new and novel research conceptualisations that reflect the *actual* rather than the *assumed* status quo. Women entrepreneurs are not a homogenous group. Gender across all aspects of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including

individual identities, in organizations and institutions, are rarely considered within the entrepreneurship literature (Brush et al. 2018; Greene & Brush 2018; de Bruin, Brush & Welter 2007). As such, when it comes to policies and programs to support them, 'one size' instruments and training initiatives do not fit all (Coleman & Robb 2012; Orser et al. 2018; Brush & Greene 2018). Simply put, women entrepreneurs are not lesser than, subordinate to, or other; they just *do* entrepreneurship differently and, in the process, make significant and valuable contributions to the global economy. Better understanding and conceptualising this diversity of gender and women's entrepreneurship will also contribute novel insights to entrepreneurship research in general.

For this special issue we invite conceptual and empirical papers that help illuminate the diversity and heterogeneity of gender and women's entrepreneurship in the global context. We are particularly interested in novel methodologies, and conceptualisations of women's entrepreneurship; studies that explore women's entrepreneurship in new contexts (i.e. by geography, industry or sector, culturally or within different institutional settings). Studies that employ theoretical underpinnings from disciplines outside of the traditional entrepreneurship, business and management fields - for example, sociology, psychology, economics, political science, strategy - or that apply macro and micro perspectives to study how women 'do' entrepreneurship are particularly welcome. We also seek research contributions that look toward the future of how women's entrepreneurship research should be 'done' as opposed to criticising how it has been done in the past, and research contributions that show how our knowledge on women's entrepreneurship can inform the debate on entrepreneurship and gender in general.

Potential topics and research questions can include but are not limited to:

- How do different organisational and sectoral contexts - such as family, corporate, non-profit, high-tech, social and sustainable or manufacturing settings, as well as different cultural settings - impact women's entrepreneurial endeavours and entrepreneurial management strategies? How do women entrepreneurs 'do' entrepreneurship in such contexts? Are different theoretical frameworks needed to fully understand these contexts?
- Why do entrepreneurship policy and support instruments continue to focus on 'fixing the women' while often failing to recognise the support needs and differences of women? How can we change this approach?
- How can theories adopted from outside the entrepreneurship/small business fields shed light on women's entrepreneurship and their management strategies, illuminating opportunities for women's entrepreneurial endeavours? How can feminist theories assist us in better understanding the diversity of women's entrepreneurship?
- What is the role of gender and gender identity in the venture creation and management process of new and small businesses?
- What role does gender and other contexts play in women's entrepreneurship? Which new theoretical lenses help explain the influence of context on women's entrepreneurial endeavours?
- How should women's entrepreneurship be better conceptualised so as to better understand the diversity, strategic management and growth dimensions of venture creation?

- Which theoretical, conceptual or methodological lessons can we take from the research on women's entrepreneurship and bring to the small business and entrepreneurship field in general?

Those interested in submitting a paper may contact any of the guest editorial team to discuss their paper idea ahead of submission. Some of the guest editorial team will also be attending the Diana Conference (June 2019), the RENT Conference (November 2019) and the ISBE Conference (November 2019) and will be available to discuss ideas with prospective authors.

Summary Deadlines

Full papers due	By 31st March 2020
1 st feedback	By end June 2020
Revised submissions	By end October 2020
2 nd feedback	By end January 2021
Editors final comments / Final revision period	1 st February 2021 – 1 st May 2021
Expected publication	Winter 2021/2022

When ready to submit their full papers, authors will be required to submit their manuscripts according to the journal guidelines, available at: <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/journal/international-small-business-journal#submission-guidelines>

Please note: The SI portal for this 'Richness in Diversity' special issue is not yet open on the journal website but will open up about three weeks before the submission deadline.

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