

REVIEW OPEN ACCESS

Women Entrepreneurship of Necessity: A Literature Review for the Analysis of Push and Pull Factors

Valeria Amata Giannella¹  | Claudia Manzi²  | Silvia Donato²  | Jie Li³ 

¹Department of Management Engineering, Politecnico di Milano, Milan, Italy | ²Claudia Manzi, Department of Psychology, Catholic University of Milan, Milan, Italy | ³Department of Management, Economics and Industrial Engineering, Politecnico di Milano, Milan, Italy

Correspondence: Valeria Amata Giannella (valeriaamata.giannella@polimi.it)

Received: 16 September 2024 | **Revised:** 5 August 2025 | **Accepted:** 8 August 2025

Funding: This work was supported by the Fondazione Cariplo e Unione Europea-Next Generation EU, Missione 4 Componente 1 CUP 2022-1699.

Keywords: necessity entrepreneurship | pull and push factors | reviewfemale entrepreneurship

ABSTRACT

This review investigates the pull and push factors that drive women towards necessity entrepreneurship, that is, starting a business out of necessity, as an alternative to adverse conditions (e.g., job loss, financial hardship, lack of autonomy). A literature review was conducted using the SPAR-4-SLR protocol to identify the main variables examined in existing research. Sixty-eight articles published on this topic were selected and analysed through the lens of the Ecological Systems Theory. The results revealed a predominance of studies analysing macro-level factors, such as national poverty conditions and structural gender inequalities. At the meso-level, the literature highlighted the importance of social capital that supports women as they embark on entrepreneurial paths. At the micro-level, studies focused on motivation and self-efficacy, while gender and entrepreneurial identity received little attention. Additionally, the literature devoted substantial interest to the analysis of this topic in emerging countries, while there was little analysis in stronger economic contexts. This review aimed to map the existing literature by identifying relevant strengths and gaps, proposing directions for future research and considerations for intervention.

1 | Introduction

There is consensus among scholars that entrepreneurs contribute to economic development, job creation and various dimensions of well-being and that women can play a key role in the entrepreneurial phenomenon (Revenge and Dooley 2020). There is ample evidence that female entrepreneurship significantly contributes to the economy and society. In fact, women's entrepreneurship has been defined as the backbone of economic growth and stability for nations around the world, especially as a means of reacting to the consequences of moments of crisis, such as COVID-19 or the war in Ukraine (GEM, Women's Entrepreneurship 2021).

Although women's entrepreneurial activity has increased to the point where it is catching up with men's in some countries (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2018), women around the world still face significant barriers to entrepreneurship.

The gender gap in accessing essential resources is a major obstacle, but 'reducing this gap by 25% by 2025 could result in a \$5.8 trillion increase in global GDP' (International Labour Organisation [ILO] 2017). These findings suggest that increasing the number of women entrepreneurs would be beneficial. Thus, a better understanding of the factors that may contribute to promoting (pull factors) or impeding (push factors) women's entrepreneurship and a literature review on these factors, is crucial to identifying effective interventions and promoting economic advancement in many countries where a gender gap in this phenomenon is still present.

Cardella et al. (2020) and Deng et al. (2021) have recently advanced the field by conducting qualitative and bibliometric analyses of the literature on this topic, albeit using a different methodology than the one used in the review of this literature. Other authors have also provided systematic literature reviews on this topic, but they exclusively analysed studies in specific geographic areas,

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2025 The Author(s). *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

such as Asia (Franzke et al. 2022), developing countries (Corrêa et al. 2022) or specific business sectors, such as digital factories (e.g., Alhajri and Aloud 2024). Moreover, although these studies offer valuable insights into women's entrepreneurship, they do not adequately address the intersection of necessity-driven entrepreneurship, poverty and technology. In particular, dimensions such as push and pull factors pertaining to different ecological systems remain largely overlooked. This analysis seeks to fill these gaps by providing a systematic literature review of women entrepreneurs driven by necessity, highlighting multi-level factors (i.e., macro-, meso-, micro-levels) associated with it, especially in environments characterised by scarce economic resources and insufficient social and political support.

Entrepreneurship of 'necessity' is conceptually contrasted with entrepreneurship of 'opportunity': the key distinction is that some entrepreneurs start businesses when they see a business opportunity, while others are forced to start a business out of necessity, as an alternative to adverse situations (e.g., job loss, financial issues; Fairlie and Fossen 2020). Focusing on necessity entrepreneurship is particularly critical, as it can be a valuable option for women. Entrepreneurship of necessity, in fact, may allow them to exit unemployment and poverty, counter economic dependency (a proxy of economic violence), express their identity, improve work-family balance, increase well-being and overcome stigma and negative stereotypes. Besides being important to women, necessity entrepreneurship has positive impacts on society at large: it fosters job creation, innovation and ultimately economic development, reduces income inequality and promotes social justice (e.g., Gupta 2013; Carrasco 2019).

Moreover, women often encounter a complex interplay of multi-layered push and pull factors that drive necessity entrepreneurship. According to the Ecological Systems Theory (EST; Bronfenbrenner 2000), human beings develop within a series of nested systems that are intercorrelated (e.g., from the micro-level, which describes the immediate surroundings of a person, to the meso-level, which describes people's social networks and relationships and to the macro-level, which refers to cultural and social values and orientations characterising populations and cultures). All these systems are interrelated, such that changes in one system (e.g., work) impact the other systems at different levels. This framework is particularly relevant to entrepreneurship research. For instance, Neumeyer et al. (2019) highlight how micro- and meso-level characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, prior experiences and venture type, collectively shape entrepreneurs' access to social capital and networks; therefore, they should not be studied in isolation. Other studies focus on the relationships between micro- and macro-levels. For example, women entrepreneurs' motivations for business venturing can be significantly influenced by the characteristics of their country, such as resource-constrained environments (Atarah et al. 2023), economic institutions, social welfare systems and socio-cultural attitudes (Deng et al. 2024). Therefore, EST may capture the multi-level and contextual influences that shape the drivers and pull-push factors of necessity entrepreneurship. By expanding traditional models centred on socio-economic trends and gender dynamics, which focus exclusively on institutional or individual variables, EST allows for a nuanced exploration of the interactions between personal, social and structural systems and enables the identification of gaps in the scientific

understanding of the phenomenon and the development of effective interventions to promote female entrepreneurship.

On the premises of the EST, we considered three levels of investigation in the literature on this topic and distinguished: (1) macro-level factors, related to socio-cultural context (such as cultural beliefs, stereotypes in relation to women's entrepreneurship of necessity, supportive policies and socio-economic factors); (2) meso-level factors, related to women's immediate environment (such as their family environment and social capital); (3) micro-level factors, related to the individual characteristics of women entrepreneurs of necessity (e.g., stereotype threat or stereotype endorsement, gender identity, gender-entrepreneurial identity integration).

This paper aimed to map the existing literature to gain a clearer picture of the evidence emerging in the study of female entrepreneurship of necessity. The objectives of our literature review were (1) to investigate the factors that prevent women from considering necessity entrepreneurship as a possible way to improve their socio-economic status or, on the contrary, the factors that drive women towards this type of activity (i.e., push and pull factors); (2) to advance scientific knowledge on female entrepreneurship by systematising the existing literature on necessity entrepreneurship among women according to the levels of analysis highlighted by the EST (Bronfenbrenner 2000).

2 | Methodology

A systematic literature review is a methodology that assembles, organises and evaluates existing literature in a specific domain (Paul and Criado 2020). Among the different types of existing reviews (Paul and Criado 2020), systematic literature reviews are currently considered the most reliable if they are conducted rigorously and are well justified (Paul et al. 2021). Hulland and Houston (2020), as well as Paul and Criado (2020) suggest that systematic literature reviews are valuable because, when conducted with rigour, they integrate and synthesise existing knowledge on a given topic to provide state-of-the-art understanding, identify gaps and inconsistencies in knowledge and allow for the identification of avenues for future research.

In conducting the present systematic literature review, we adopted the *Scientific Procedures and Rationales for Systematic Literature Reviews* (SPAR-4-SLR) protocol, developed by Paul et al. (2021), which uses an interrogative approach, explaining the 'what', 'why', 'when', 'where', 'who' and 'how' of the domain of literature investigated (Figure 1). This protocol guides researchers in systematically reviewing the literature and in justifying review decisions. It involves three main steps: (1) assembly, which involves (1a) identification and (1b) acquisition of literature that has not been synthesised; (2) arrangement, which involves (2a) organisation and (2b) purification of literature that is being synthesised; (3) evaluation, which involves (3a) assessment and (3b) reporting of literature that has been synthesised.

We relied on the database Scopus (www.scopus.com) to search for articles to include in our literature review. We searched for articles focusing on female entrepreneurship of necessity and limited the boundaries of our word search to the title, abstract and keywords of the articles.

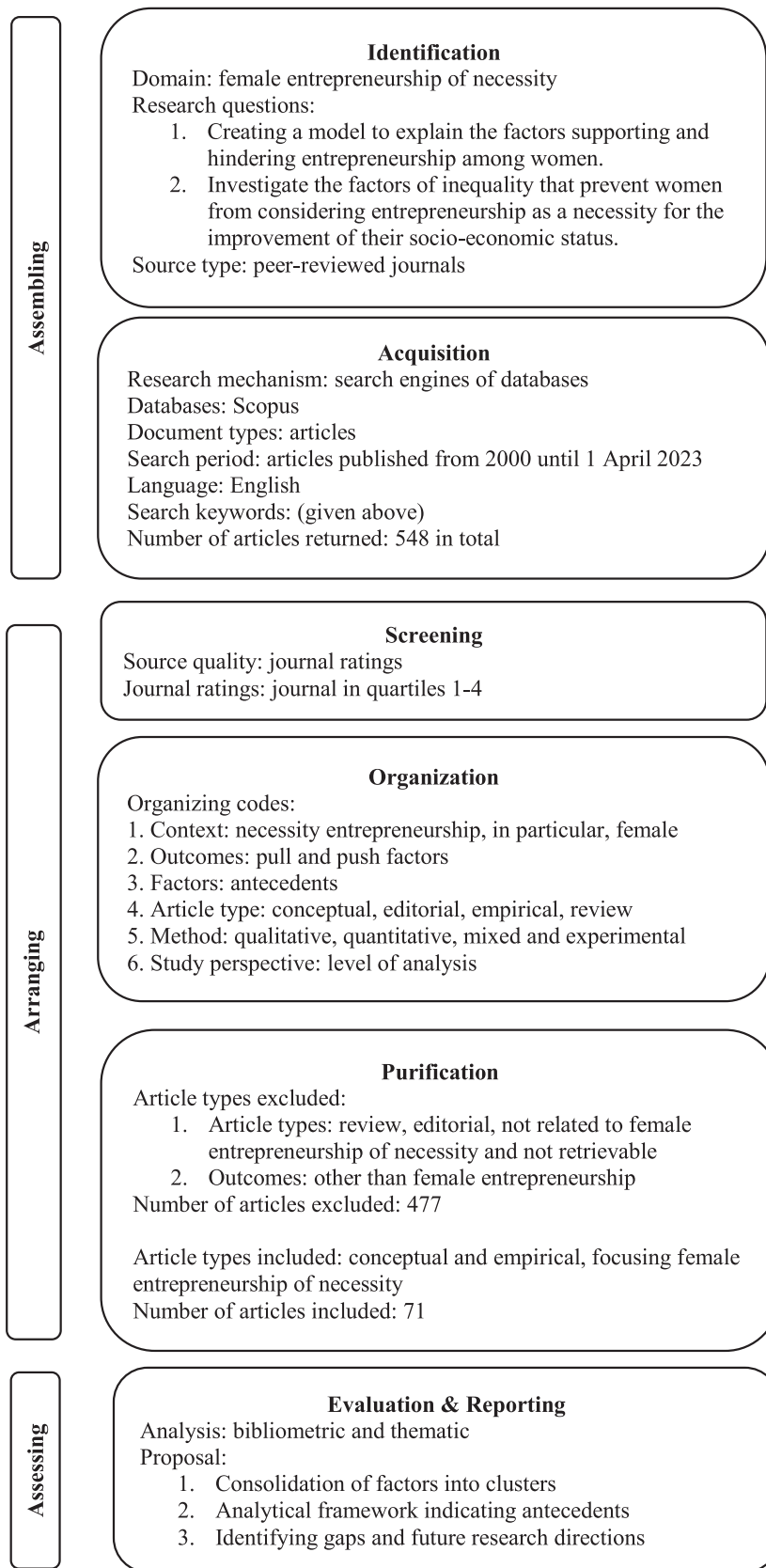


FIGURE 1 | Methodology of the review based on SPAR-4-SLR.

We used 'AND' to combine three sets of keywords: (1) For gender, we searched for the terms 'gender', 'female*', 'femini*' and 'wom?n'; (2) for entrepreneurship, we searched for 'entrepreneur*'

and 'new business'; (3) to define the type of entrepreneurship, we searched for 'crisis' and 'necessity'. Our search returned 548 articles that were published from 2000 until the 1 April 2023.

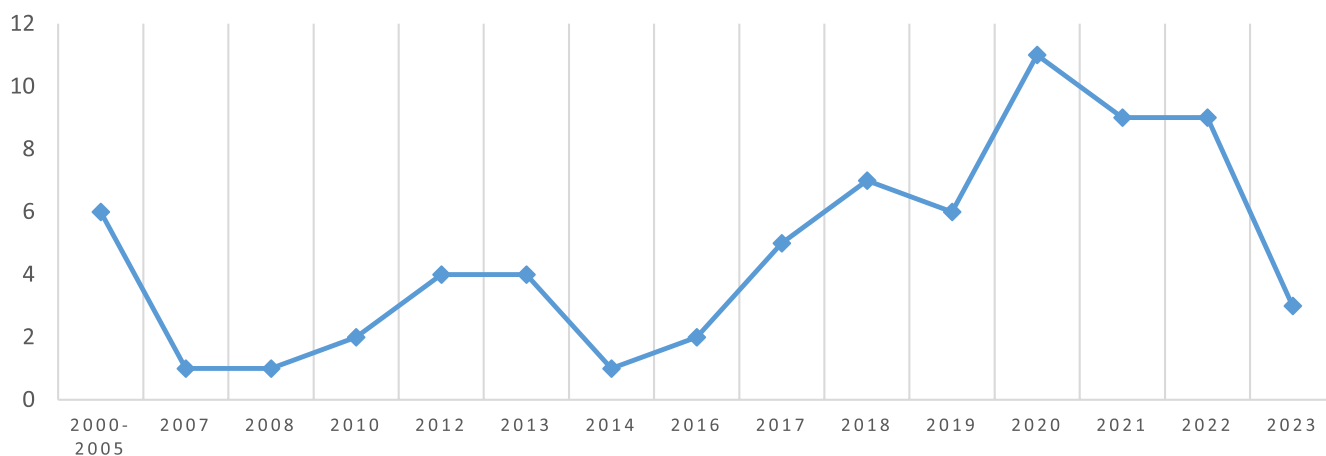


FIGURE 2 | Publication trend.

We defined content-related inclusion/exclusion criteria in line with the research objectives to determine which articles should be included in the literature review. The screening was completed by analysing the titles and abstracts to exclude articles that did not meet the eligibility criteria and were not relevant to the research question. The articles that were excluded were mainly about the strategies adopted by women who were already entrepreneurs during times of crisis or they concerned gender differences in accessing finance for men and women who already owned a business. Instead, our research objective is to investigate the pull and push factors that drive women to, or hold them back from necessity entrepreneurship.

Articles that met this criterion were retrieved for full-text analyses. A final set of 71 articles fulfilled the above criteria and were included in the following analyses.

In particular, we organised the results according to the level at which the studies focused their attention, distinguishing between macro-, meso- and micro-levels (Dopfer et al. 2004; Baumann et al. 2019). See Figures 4–6 for the division of factors across the various levels of analysis.

2.1 | Findings of Bibliometric Analysis

2.1.1 | Number of Publications

The year-on-year distribution of the literature on female necessity entrepreneurship shows a general upward trend in the number of articles published, especially during times of crisis. A significant body of literature (50.70%) is attributed to periods of severe economic crises (2018) and socio-economic crises associated with the COVID-19 pandemic (2020/21/22). The numbers peaked in 2020 (see Figure 2). Although 2021 presented a decline, it still produced a considerable number of studies, while an upward trend was observed again in 2022 (12.68%). However, as of 2023, there still seems to be few studies investigating the phenomenon.

2.1.2 | Research Focus

Although a few studies investigated the phenomenon at several levels of analysis simultaneously (see Figure 3), the

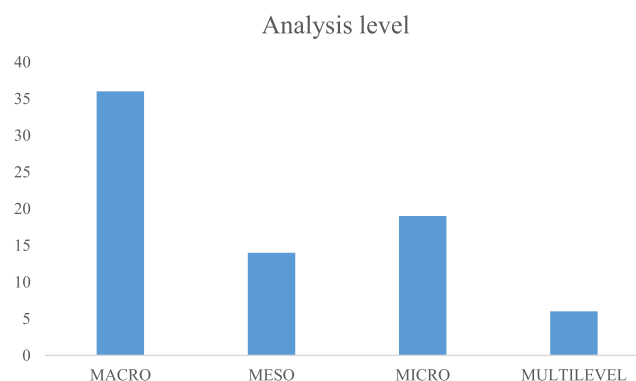


FIGURE 3 | Level of analysis investigated, considering that some papers analyse multiple levels simultaneously.

results show that the literature is strongly skewed towards analysis at the macro-level (48%), especially focusing on the economic conditions of the country where women live and structural gender inequalities (Figure 4). The studies conducted at the meso-level comprise 19% of the studies analysed (Figure 5), while those conducted at the micro-level account for 25% (Figure 6).

Thus, with regard to the most investigated factors under each level, the analysis of socio-economic factors of the country of origin constitutes 32% of the entire literature on women's entrepreneurship of necessity. This figure is understandable, as it is assumed that socio-economic disadvantage is a major push factor in women's choice to become entrepreneurs of necessity.

Factors at more micro- and meso-levels of analysis, such as family environment (9%), stereotype threat (6%) and sociodemographic individual differences (6%), are considerably less investigated.

2.1.3 | Most Influential Articles

The citation analysis revealed the influential articles (Table 1) with significant contributions to the shared literature on women's necessity entrepreneurship. The most influential

Macro Level

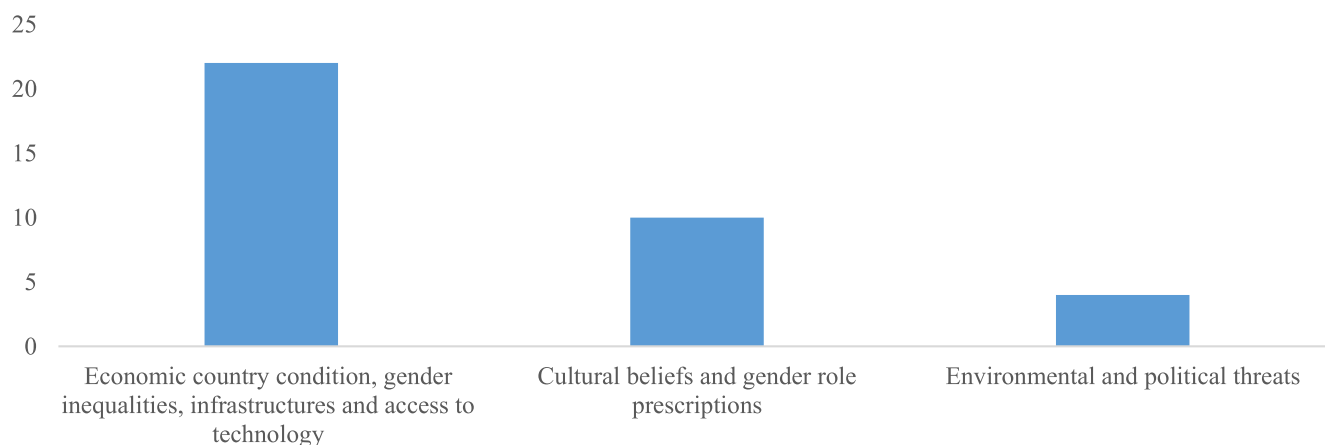


FIGURE 4 | Areas of investigation at the macro-level.

Meso Level

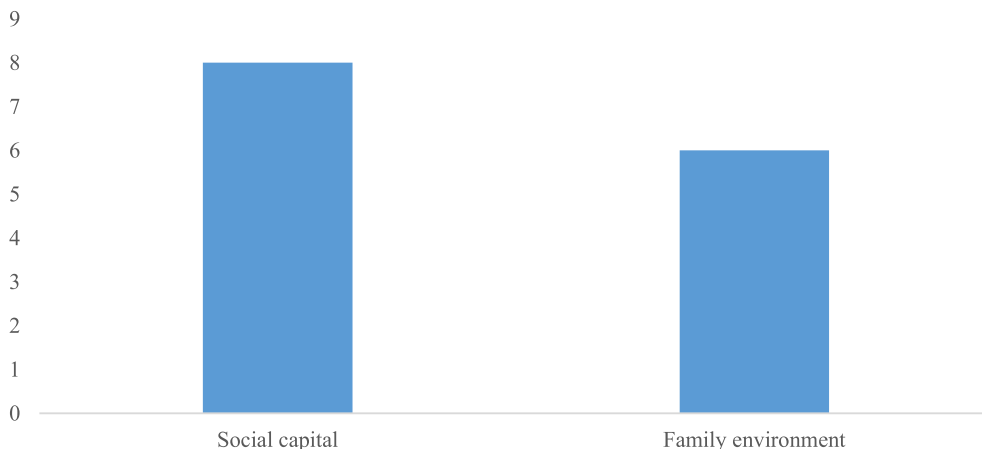


FIGURE 5 | Areas of investigation at the meso-level.

Mico Level

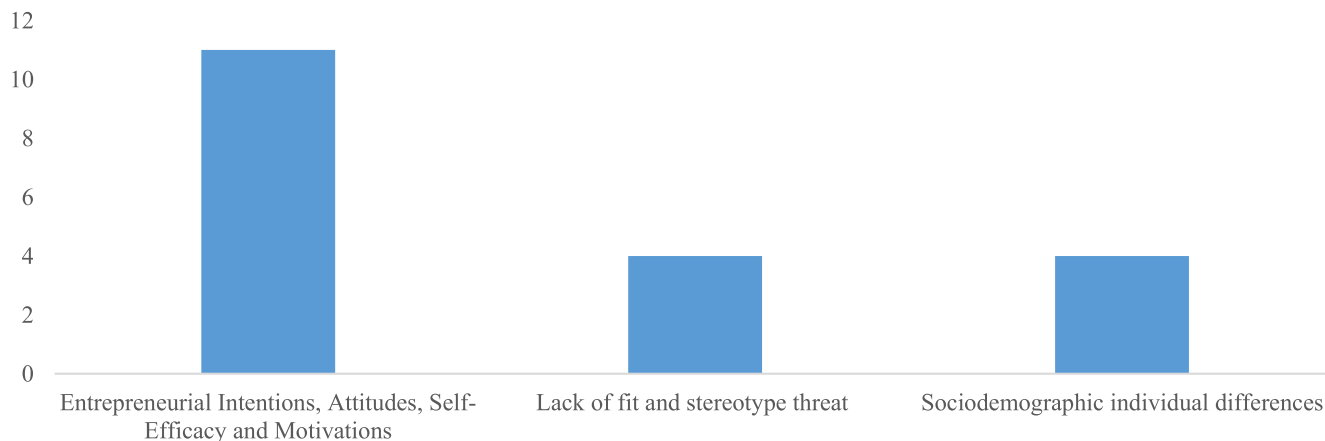


FIGURE 6 | Areas of investigation at the micro-level.

studies used qualitative methodologies, such as the studies by Neumeyer et al. (2019) and Orhan and Scott (2001). The field seemed to be strongly influenced by studies analysing social

capital, such as the studies of Arenius and Minniti (2005) or Renzulli et al. (2000). Studies analysing developing socio-cultural contexts, such as the studies of Bastian et al. (2018)

TABLE 1 | Impactful articles based on aggregate citations (with a minimum of 20 citations).

Author(s)	Title of the article	Citations
Arenius and Minniti (2005)	Perceptual variables and nascent entrepreneurship	909
Renzulli et al. (2000)	Family matters: Gender, networks, and entrepreneurial outcomes	509
Neumeyer et al. (2019)	Entrepreneurship ecosystems and women entrepreneurs: a social capital and network approach	456
Minniti and Nardone (2007)	Being in someone else's shoes: the role of gender in nascent entrepreneurship	362
Orhan and Scott (2001)	Why women enter into entrepreneurship: An explanatory model	338
Gupta et al. (2008)	The effect of gender stereotype activation on entrepreneurial intentions	241
Heilman and Chen (2003)	Entrepreneurship as a solution: The allure of self-employment for women and minorities	166
Terjesen and Amorós (2010)	Female entrepreneurship in Latin America and the Caribbean: Characteristics, drivers and relationship to economic development	95
Bastian et al. (2018)	Women entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa: A review of knowledge areas and research gaps	83
Warnecke (2013)	Entrepreneurship and gender: An institutional perspective	50
Boyd (2000)	Race, labor market disadvantage, and survivalist entrepreneurship: Black women in the urban North during the Great Depression	46
Williams and Youssef (2013)	Evaluating the gender variations in informal sector entrepreneurship: Some lessons from Brazil	41
Almobaireek and Manolova (2013)	Entrepreneurial motivations among female university youth in Saudi Arabia	35
Santos and Neumeyer (2021)	Gender, poverty and entrepreneurship: A systematic literature review and future research agenda	31
Dal Mas and Paoloni (2020)	A relational capital perspective on social sustainability; the case of female entrepreneurship in Italy	30
Bakas (2017)	Community resilience through entrepreneurship: the role of gender	29
Hernandez et al. (2012)	Female entrepreneurship in China: Opportunity- or necessity-based?	28
Santos and Neumeyer (2022)	The technologization of entrepreneurial processes: A poverty perspective	27
Calderon et al. (2017)	Opportunity versus necessity: Understanding the heterogeneity of female micro-entrepreneurs	27
Sahasranamam and Sud (2016)	Opportunity and necessity entrepreneurship: A comparative study of India and China	27
Mehtap et al. (2019)	"I'm a stay at home businesswoman": an insight into informal entrepreneurship in Jordan	21

and Warnecke (2018), also seemed to have a strong impact. Interestingly, the most cited studies used a meso-level of analysis; although some studies have investigated the phenomenon of entrepreneurship also at the macro-level, analysing economic conditions and inequalities.

2.1.4 | Theories and Methods of Analysis Used

Given the multidimensional nature of the phenomenon and the recent interest in the topic, it is understandable that the theoretical models adopted to inform the study hypotheses were diverse,

fragmented and inconsistent with each other; without presenting a reference model.

The main reference theories were those related to socio-economic inequalities (Quartey et al. 2018; Ferrín 2023); some articles also referred to motivational and career decision-making theories (Heilman and Chen 2003). A considerable body of studies referred to gender aspects, considering theories such as social role theory (Morales-Urrutia et al. 2022) and theories on stereotypes and stereotype threat (Muzaffar 2023; Benavides-Espinosa and Mohedano-Suanes 2011). Table 2 presented the main theories used in the literature in the study of female entrepreneurship of need.

TABLE 2 | Theoretical frameworks employed in the articles reviewed (Top 10).

Theory	N. of papers
Socio-Economic Inequalities	21
Social Role Theory and Stereotypes	19
Social Capital Theory	9
Motivons and Carrer Decision Making	7
Work-Life Ballace Theory	2
Planned Behavior Theory	2
Social Cognitive Career Theory	2
Theory of Ethnic Enterprise	1
Social Learning Theory	1
Self-Efficacy Theory	1

3 | Analysis of Push and Pull Factors of Female Entrepreneurship of Necessity

3.1 | Macro-Level.

3.1.1 | Economic Country Condition, Gender Inequalities, Infrastructures and Access to Technology

Many studies in this analysis confirmed the role of the country's economic advancement in women's necessity entrepreneurship. In particular, it has been shown that female entrepreneurs in advanced economies pursue opportunity, while those in emerging economies respond to necessity (e.g., Dileo and Garcia-Pereiro 2018; Santos et al. 2017). Indeed, the lack of economic stability in these latter countries results in greater motivation for women who want to exit precarious labour market conditions (Vracheva and Stoyneva 2020). For example, Jamali (2009) found that Lebanese women entrepreneurs were driven by frustration with discrimination, due to a lack of integration into the labour market. In a study conducted in Saudi Arabia, women seemed to be less likely to start a new business for the sake of success or to realise a vision; instead, they were more likely to start a business to achieve independence (Almobaireek and Manolova 2013; see also Meyer and Landsberg 2018). Several studies in emerging economy countries showed that women start businesses because they were dissatisfied with their jobs or with being stay-at-home mothers and demonstrated a strong motivation to become independent, improve their economic situation (Cho et al. 2021) and contribute to economic and social development (Dye and Dye 2018).

Research by Conroy and Low (2022) described a U-shaped relationship between entrepreneurial activity and per capita income for women-owned businesses: need-based entrepreneurship may drive the declining portion of the curve (the left-hand side of the U-shape) and opportunity-based entrepreneurship may drive the increasing side of the curve, especially in urban areas where the wage and salary labour market was denser. These results were consistent with recent findings in the literature that female-owned firms were associated with greater regional income inequality, as

female entrepreneurs more commonly operate in low-income situations (Conroy et al. 2021; Hernandez et al. 2012).

A study by Ferrín (2023) that analysed 17 European countries showed that not only the economic situation in a country, but also the type of policy actions for gender equality was crucial in women's choice to start a business. One of the major problems that women faced when they decided to enter the world of entrepreneurship was the lack of access to capital at different stages of the enterprise (Dechant and Lamky 2005; Zamberi Ahmad 2011). This was a deficit found especially in developing countries, where most women lacked access to bank credit. Indeed, financing seemed to come mainly from informal sources, such as family and friends, rather than from formal financial institutions (Weeks 2009). As a consequence, gender inequalities in the incentives available to start an entrepreneurial activity (Terjesen and Amorós 2010) constituted another important factor. For example, Terjesen and Amorós (2010) investigated entrepreneurial activities in 13 Latin American countries, considering gender inequalities in the provision of opportunities and incentives to start businesses. Opportunities and incentives to start entrepreneurial activities were unfavourable for women, even when they possessed the skills and knowledge and a favourable perception of entrepreneurship (Amorós and Pizarro 2007).

On the other hand, recent findings by Daovisan and Chamaratana (2020) clearly illustrated that women who have access to finance (loans and debt) have the potential to become successful entrepreneurs by accumulating income, managing working capital, investments and accounts.

Finally, the literature also highlighted that access to technology may play a role in enabling necessity entrepreneurship. Conroy and Low (2022) found that broadband access was a key factor leading to a higher establishment of enterprises in rural areas, especially those that were women-led and remote rural establishments. This also emerged in different studies by Santos (e.g., Neumeyer et al. 2019; Santos and Neumeyer 2022; Santos and Neumeyer 2023), in which access to technology (e.g., Internet penetration, mobile phone use and mobile payment services) was considered an important factor for women's necessity entrepreneurship.

3.1.2 | Cultural Beliefs and Gender Role Prescriptions

At the macro-level, the literature has shown how cultural norms in society can cascade to influence the beliefs and ideas people have about what is considered appropriate behaviour in society (Achtenhagen and Welter 2003; Sultan 2016; Zhang and Jurik 2021).

The analysis of these factors seemed to come mainly from studies conducted in emerging countries (particularly, in the Middle East and North African countries). In a review conducted by Bastian et al. (2018), it was found that barriers for female entrepreneurs came from patriarchal beliefs related to gender roles. Women were seen (and expected to be) as less powerful and more focused on relationships, while men were seen as more powerful and more focused on their individual goals (Zamberi Ahmad 2011). In some societies, there were therefore regulatory pressures (Javadian and Singh 2012) that were also reinforced

by religious beliefs granting men 'power' over women in terms of financial responsibility, marriage and divorce (Kazemi 2000).

Interestingly, the endorsement of the same gender role prescriptions may favour female necessity self-employment in Western societies. Research conducted by Foley et al. (2018) on entrepreneurial mothers showed that women entrepreneurs and mothers experienced independence not as an opportunity to overcome gender role prescriptions, but as a functional necessity in managing the perceived time-related and moral demands of motherhood. These women did not pursue the desire for independence for a more autonomous lifestyle or the achievement of personal success and satisfaction, but rather out of a need for flexibility to fulfil family obligations.

On the other hand, gender stereotypes can also become a driving factor for women (Adom and Anambane 2020) and generate more women entrepreneurs, due to their need to emancipate themselves from gender role prescriptions. Cho et al. (2021) showed that Korean women entrepreneurs were dissatisfied with their current jobs or with being stay-at-home mothers because they wanted to be independent and overcome gender stereotypes.

Note that gender role prescriptions and stereotypes may also move women's conceptualisation of entrepreneurship away from the classical view of it, so that women may not become entrepreneurs for profit-oriented reasons, but mainly to achieve a 'collective good' (Bakas 2017).

3.1.3 | Environmental and Political Threats

The COVID-19 pandemic crisis also appeared to be a contextual factor enabling the emergence of women-led enterprises. For instance, COVID-19 offered Turkish urban middle-class women an opportunity to enter entrepreneurship and overcome occupational gender stereotypes (Muzaffar 2023). The COVID-19-induced drop in household income forced many cultural contexts to reconsider existing common stereotypical beliefs about female entrepreneurship and accept the role of women as entrepreneurs. Indeed, a qualitative survey of Brazilian women conducted by Ayatakshi-Endow and Steele (2021) found that the experience of the crisis caused by COVID-19 strengthened their motivation to pursue entrepreneurship as a means to increase their opportunities (Dawson and Henley 2012). The study found that the pandemic increased women's burdens as they had to balance multiple roles, such as that of a self-employed professional and those of mother and wife (Ayatakshi-Endow and Steele 2021).

Also, in zones characterised by high political threats, such as the Gaza Strip, necessity entrepreneurship acts as an influential catalyst enabling women to renegotiate their gender roles in these conflict contexts and contributing to a form of liberalisation (Althalathini et al. 2020).

Note that studies also showed an intersection between environmental and political threats and gender role prescriptions. If contextual threats were pushing women to take up self-employment and entrepreneurial activities on the one hand, then it was also

true that gender role prescriptions further enhanced work-life balance conflicts for women entrepreneurs on the other (Kim and Ling 2001). During the recent economic crises, women entrepreneurs were forced to spend more time on their businesses (Kirkwood and Tootell 2008); thus reducing the time available for family care (Cesaroni et al. 2018). This increased women entrepreneurs' guilt about neglecting their roles as a wife and mother (McGowan et al. 2012).

3.2 | Meso-Level

3.2.1 | Social Capital

Certainly, starting a new business out of necessity requires the mobilisation of resources at the meso-level as well and among these, social capital and networking play an important role in promoting this type of female entrepreneurship (Autio and Acs 2010; Bhagavatula et al. 2010; De Clercq et al. 2013). Evidence showed that the role of external and informal peer support networks was crucial for female entrepreneurship, as they strengthened social relationships (Revenge and Dooley 2020).

People who had access to these resources were more likely to overcome the challenges associated with starting a new business (Shane and Venkataraman 2000).

Knowledge of other entrepreneurs was positively associated with motivation for entrepreneurship (Ashourizadeh and Zhang 2021), not only for women but also for men (Lerner et al. 1997); however, gender differences in networking approaches were observed (Manolova et al. 2007). For example, in Vietnam, networking in affiliation with associations played an essential role in the entrepreneurial success of women entrepreneurs by giving them access to experiential information about running a business (Dragusin 2007).

There was strong evidence in the literature that female-owned entrepreneurial initiatives were positively influenced by participation in social networks (Lerner et al. 1997; Charles and Gherman 2013). The social fabric, especially in collectivist social contexts, supported the growth of cohesive groups (clan, family and organisation) and contributed to the creation of a social identity.

Some studies also defined social capital as the individual's exposure to entrepreneurial role models (Arenius and Minniti 2005) and the impact of this experiential 'confidence' increased awareness of new venture creation (Minniti and Nardone 2007); reduced uncertainty (Davidsson and Honig 2003); and acted as a source of emotional support (Klyver et al. 2008).

3.2.2 | Family Environment

Family support was found to be necessary not only for a positive entrepreneurial experience for women (Xheneti et al. 2019); but also as a form of motivation.

In some research, such as that of Renzulli et al. (2000), it appeared that family approval or disapproval acted as an important

source of support or hindrance to women's entrepreneurial intentions. Especially in countries where traditional gender role prescriptions prevailed, family approval or disapproval had a significant impact on women's entrepreneurial intentions (Sharma 2013). For example, in the qualitative survey conducted by Mehtap et al. (2019), the unavoidable need for support from patriarchal families in Jordan emerged: women who wanted to start a business, especially out of necessity to support their children, had to obtain permission from their husband (Al-Dajani and Marlow 2010). The conflict experienced between work-life and family also played a crucial role in women's entrepreneurial careers (Agarwal and Lenka 2015).

Another interesting aspect highlighted by the literature was dynastic conformity: women took over the management of family businesses almost by 'osmosis'. They inherit or take over the business from their family of origin or a male partner, as the male figure was the main entrepreneur of the household (Xiong et al. 2020; Orhan and Scott 2001).

3.3 | Micro-Level

Factors analysed at the micro-level were frequently studied in connection with factors at the macro-level.

3.3.1 | Entrepreneurial Intentions, Attitudes, Self-Efficacy and Motivations

Entrepreneurial intention was certainly a highly significant predictor of subsequent entrepreneurial behaviour (e.g., Kautonen et al. 2015). The literature agreed that women tended to have lower entrepreneurial intentions (e.g., Elam et al. 2019) and a higher likelihood of starting a business out of necessity rather than opportunity than men (Van der Zwan et al. 2016; Elam et al. 2019), even with the same skills (Sendra-Pons et al. 2022).

To analyse proximal antecedents of entrepreneurial intention in the literature, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB, Ajzen 1991) has been widely used. As for entrepreneurial intention, the literature showed that women had lower positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Zampetakis et al. 2017) and lower perceived self-efficacy than men (Wilson et al. 2009). Indeed, women were more likely to fear failure and demonstrate lower levels of self-efficacy than men (e.g., Koellinger et al. 2013; Sahasranamam and Sud 2016).

The literature shows that self-efficacy (also referred to as self-confidence) played a substantial role in influencing women's entrepreneurial intentions and appeared to be one of the most influential barriers (Boyd and Vozikis 1994). Kirkwood (2009) found that women were less committed to entrepreneurship than men due to their low confidence in their own abilities, which also hindered their ability to secure funds (see also Patra and Lenka 2022). Conversely, when self-confidence is high, this acts as a key motivator, as shown in studies on Saudi women (Sadi and Al-Ghazali 2010), Iranian women (Javadian and Singh 2012) and Lebanese women (Jamali 2009).

Other studies, such as Özsungur's (2019), have shown that 'proving oneself', 'fairness' and 'self-confidence' were correlated with emotional and balance factors that attracted women to entrepreneurship. Furthermore, there was evidence in some studies that, regardless of their economic situation, women had an altruistic motivation to make a difference (Muzata 2024; Rose-Ackerman 1997).

3.3.2 | Lack of Fit and Stereotype Threat

A wide variety of scientific research has shown that the common stereotype of the entrepreneurial figure is masculine (e.g., Frese and Gielnik 2014) and therefore women may tend to experience an incongruence or lack of fit between the stereotypical characteristics attributed to them as women and those traditionally attributed to entrepreneurs (Ahl 2006). Moreover, the perception that the entrepreneurial world was male-dominated was certainly a determinant of the perceived lack of fit by women and acted as an inhibiting factor (Mohanty and Mishra 2020). However, there are few studies that analyse whether this incongruity became a pull factor for women's intentions to become entrepreneurs.

A survey by Ballesteros-Sola and Osorio-Novela (2021) found that family rootedness and gender identity were critical factors affecting the process of women's micro-enterprise creation in emerging economies.

Another important factor that has been analysed at the individual level was stereotype threat (Gupta et al. 2008; Gupta and Bhawe 2007). It appeared that in the field of entrepreneurship, the activation of the male stereotype of entrepreneurs reduced women's entrepreneurial intentions (e.g., Gupta and Bhawe 2007). Interestingly, an experimental study showed that the presentation of a female entrepreneurial model could function as a positive example that increased the self-perception of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in women (Laguía et al. 2022).

3.3.3 | Sociodemographic Individual Differences

A study on Indian women entrepreneurs found that women's participation as necessity entrepreneurs was influenced by their socio-religious status, age group, marital status, workplace location and type of enterprise (Chakraborty and Chatterjee 2021). In highly religious emerging countries, women struggled to start businesses, especially if they belonged to religious minorities or suffered the effects of social stigma. For this reason, they seemed to direct their working life choices more often into informal sectors (Shuvam and Mohanty 2023).

In relation to age, there seemed to be conflicting evidence regarding the effect of age on women's entrepreneurial entry. On the one hand, the increased expertise, professional experience and greater availability of capital that come with age make entrepreneurial activity more likely (Bates 1995; Romeu Gordo et al. 2022). On the other hand, the level of professional entrenchment increased with age and the planning horizon decreased (Bates 1995). As people age, they become less willing to

invest time in activities that have an uncertain payback period, such as starting a business (Levesque and Minniti 2006). In light of these conflicting arguments, some studies suggested an inverted U-shape in the relationship between age and entrepreneurial propensity (Bates 1995; Bergmann and Sternberg 2007).

4 | Discussion

4.1 | Main Knowledge Gaps and Future Suggestions

This paper performed a systematic literature review on female entrepreneurship by systematising the existing literature on entrepreneurship among women. It is important to note that it was not always possible to clearly distinguish between studies on necessity entrepreneurship and those on opportunity entrepreneurship, especially at the meso- and micro-levels, where an explicit definition of the type of entrepreneurial activity was not always provided. To better understand whether factors promoting or hindering necessity versus opportunity entrepreneurial activities differ, future research should be invited to measure and report the type of entrepreneurship considered. Given that existing literature on push and pull factors for women's entrepreneurial activity (e.g., Lingappa and Rodrigues 2023) does not differentiate among various levels of analysis, the present review adopted a socio-ecological framework to articulate existing findings along three levels: macro, meso and micro.

In terms of theoretical ground, female entrepreneurship of necessity is confirmed as a fragmented area of research, in which the majority of studies do not use any specific model or theory. The temporal distribution of the studies included in the SLR shows a clear boost received by this literature during the Covid-19 pandemic. Geographical distribution shows that studies analysing developing socio-cultural contexts are prominent. This is consistent with recent findings in the literature that female-owned firms are associated with greater regional income inequality, as female entrepreneurs more commonly operate in low-income situations (Conroy et al. 2021).

Future research should examine potential differences between factors promoting or hindering female entrepreneurship in leading countries, analysing the intersection between gender and other socio-demographic variables such as migration status, ethnicity and age.

In terms of the investigated variables, the most obvious characteristic of this fragmented literature lies in the number of studies examining the various levels of analysis that we have considered. Most studies are at the macro-level and at this level, most research is focused on socio-economic and cultural factors. For example, the analysis of economic factors has been widely studied, especially in developing areas where gender inequality in wealth and financial support is more pronounced (e.g., Conroy and Low 2022; Chappelle 2012). This finding is supported by recent studies; for instance, Atarah et al. (2023) demonstrate that women's emancipation is often linked to their engagement in economic activities and their ability to mobilise the resources needed to launch a business in culturally and economically constrained contexts (see also Santos and Neumeier 2021).

However, structural poverty frequently hinders women's access to institutional support and financial resources (Deng et al. 2024). Moreover, research has shown that the distribution of social capital differs significantly between male and female entrepreneurs and that these differences are shaped by the type of business they engage in Neumeier et al. (2019) and Jafari-Sadeghi (2020).

In contrast, fewer studies investigate support policies (e.g., Warnecke 2014), cultural aspects and factors related to stereotypes and gender roles (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al. 2023) that are indeed found to play a role in women's entrepreneurship.

Micro-level factors come second in terms of number of related articles. At this level, the literature has extensively investigated motivational aspects and individual resources, again reporting mixed results: on the one hand, it is widely agreed that, as compared to men, women report less self-efficacy, which drives them away from engaging in entrepreneurial activities (Koellinger et al. 2013; Langowitz and Minniti 2007); on the other hand, self-confidence appears to be a key motivator for women regarding their entrepreneurial intentions (Sadi and Al-Ghazali 2010; Javadian and Singh 2012; Jamali 2009).

Finally, the least represented level of analysis is the meso-level. This pattern shows that this literature seems marked by an understanding of women's entrepreneurship as driven by macro-contextual levers or rather determined by individual attitudes and characteristics, but less so by determinants that are located at the level of the relational and social world closest to the (future) female entrepreneur. For example, the study of the quality of the couple's relationship in women's entrepreneurial choices is almost absent, particularly, its interaction with micro and macro-level factors. In this regard, dyadic studies on female entrepreneurs and their partners would certainly be important and could reveal hitherto unexplored aspects of these processes. Indeed, research has shown that workers' well-being is associated with their partners' ability to manage stress together, especially in individualistic countries where the partner is a key source of support that is difficult to substitute (Donato et al. 2023). In particular, the distribution of the care load with their partner was found to be associated with women's ability to better integrate their work identity with their familial roles (Manzi et al. 2024) and their gender identity (Reverberi et al. 2021).

In addition, this review suggests that these three levels should be analysed in association with one another. Indeed, female entrepreneurship can be the result of a complex interconnection of aspects operating at different levels. Even at the broadest, macro-level, factors do not always correlate unequivocally with women's necessity entrepreneurship.

On the one hand, entrepreneurship can be a means of emancipation from workforce discrimination, as evidenced in studies conducted in emerging economies (e.g., Muzaffar 2023). On the other hand, a cultural context conveying stereotypical gender norms can also lead women to engage in entrepreneurial activity because it allows them to more easily reconcile work with caregiving responsibilities, thereby using entrepreneurship to align with, rather than question, traditional gender roles.

These contradictory results may justify further investigation into the role of macro-level factors in the context of factors operating at different levels. It would be, particularly, useful to better understand which factors moderate the impact of the macro-level context on women's entrepreneurial intentions. What explains these different directions? Why do the same contextual conditions result in different outcomes at the micro-level? When exploring these moderating factors, moreover, special attention should be given to meso-level ones. It is likely, for example, that the relational factors in which women are embedded shape the meanings and opportunities that the cultural context offers them. In addition, individual-level conditions, like women's socio-demographic characteristics, as well as unexplored aspects in this line of literature, such as personality traits and identity, can play an important role in understanding these processes. Research on identity integration, for example, has shown that the ability of over-50 female workers to integrate their work and gender identities is linked to better health and work outcomes (Reverberi et al. 2021). Indeed, the awareness of belonging to more than one group at the same time contributes to mitigating intergroup differentiations (Prati and Rubini 2015).

A final word should also be spent on methodological aspects. The reviewed literature also appears relatively underdeveloped with regard to research methods. Qualitative studies are abundant, but experimental and intervention studies are nearly absent. With regard to research design, it would be advisable to promote more cross-cultural studies to gain a more complete understanding of macro-level factors, especially socio-economic and cultural ones.

5 | Conclusions

Our systematic literature review of 71 articles focusing on women's entrepreneurship of necessity guides the systematisation of the drivers at the macro-/meso-/micro-levels of the phenomenon examined. We identify both established and still open issues in the literature by pointing out gaps at the theoretical, empirical and methodological levels.

In concluding this journey, we gain insight into how to support women's necessity entrepreneurship. First, the government must focus on developing effective economic policies and on building fair and equal access to resources. Indeed, it is recognised that the accumulation of finance is a necessity for women entrepreneurs seeking start-up capital (Thiele and Wendt 2017; Kim 2018; Edelman et al. 2018).

A second aspect concerns gender role prescriptions and gender stereotypes. On the one hand, in more developed countries, gender stereotypes are a key factor in creating the sense of necessity to establish one's own profession. Indeed, the desire for flexible working hours is one of the main reasons why women report leaving their companies and being drawn to entrepreneurship (Catalyst, the National Foundation for Women Business Owners [NFWBO], and the Committee of 200 Foundation 1998). However, in emerging countries, gender stereotypes lead women to perceive a misfit with the entrepreneurial role, binding them to a condition of dependence and poverty. Moreover, these same gender role prescriptions are responsible for the obstacles women often face within their families and partnerships when

attempting to pursue an entrepreneurial path. Women's entrepreneurial activities indeed contradict traditional ideas, which attribute to women the roles of housewife and mother, and to men the role of breadwinner (Goby and Eroglu 2011). Therefore, combating these stereotypical views is fundamental to liberating women from these constraints. This would also help increase motivation and self-confidence, as already demonstrated in other professional roles (e.g., Oswald 2008).

Acknowledgements

Open access publishing facilitated by Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, as part of the Wiley - CRUI-CARE agreement.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

References

- Achtenhagen, L., and F. Welter. 2003. *Female Entrepreneurship in Germany*, 71–100. Information Age Publishing.
- Adom, K., and G. Anambane. 2020. "Understanding the Role of Culture and Gender Stereotypes in Women Entrepreneurship Through the Lens of the Stereotype Threat Theory." *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies* 12, no. 1: 100–124.
- Agarwal, S., and U. Lenka. 2015. "Study on Work-Life Balance of Women Entrepreneurs—Review and Research Agenda." *Industrial and Commercial Training* 47, no. 7: 356–362. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ICT-01-2015-0006>.
- Ahl, H. 2006. "Why Research on Women Entrepreneurs Needs New Directions." *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 30, no. 5: 595–621. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2006.00138.x>.
- Ajzen, I. 1991. "The Theory of Planned Behavior." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 50, no. 2: 179–211.
- Al-Dajani, H., and S. Marlow. 2010. "Impact of Women's Home-Based Enterprise on Family Dynamics: Evidence From Jordan." *International Small Business Journal* 28, no. 5: 470–486. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242610370392>.
- Alhajri, A., and M. Aloud. 2024. "Female Digital Entrepreneurship: A Structured Literature Review." *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* 30, no. 2/3: 369–397.
- Almobaireek, W. N., and T. S. Manolova. 2013. "Entrepreneurial Motivations Among Female University Youth in Saudi Arabia." *Journal of Business Economics and Management* 14, no. suppl: S56–S75. <https://doi.org/10.3846/16111699.2012.711364>.
- Althalathini, D., H. Al-Dajani, and N. Apostolopoulos. 2020. "Navigating Gaza's Conflict Through Women's Entrepreneurship." *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* 12, no. 4: 297–316. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJGE-01-2020-0014>.
- Amorós, J. E., and Pizarro. 2007. "Women Entrepreneurship Context in Latin America: An Exploratory Study in Chile." In *The Perspective of Women's Entrepreneurship in the Age of Globalization*, 107–126. Information Age Publishing.
- Arenius, P., and M. Minniti. 2005. "Perceptual Variables and Nascent Entrepreneurship." *Small Business Economics* 24: 233–247.

- Ashourizadeh, S., and C. Zhang. 2021. "Lessons From Global Financial Crisis: Human Capital and Business Activities Among Nascent Women Entrepreneurs in China." In *The Emerald Handbook of Women and Entrepreneurship in Developing Economies*, 355–370. Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Atarah, B. A., V. Finotto, E. Nolan, and A. Van Stel. 2023. "Entrepreneurship as Emancipation: A Process Framework for Female Entrepreneurs in Resource-Constrained Environments." *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development* 30, no. 4: 734–758.
- Autio, E., and Z. Acs. 2010. "Intellectual Property Protection and the Formation of Entrepreneurial Growth Aspirations." *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal* 4, no. 3: 234–251. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sej.93>.
- Ayatakshi-Endow, S., and J. Steele. 2021. "Striving for Balance: Women Entrepreneurs in Brazil, Their Multiple Gendered Roles and Covid-19." *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* 13, no. 2: 121–141. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJGE-09-2020-0142>.
- Bakas, F. E. 2017. "Community Resilience Through Entrepreneurship: The Role of Gender." *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy* 11, no. 1: 61–77. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEC-01-2015-0008>.
- Ballesteros-Sola, M., and G. Osorio-Novela. 2021. "Understanding the Processes of Necessity Micro-Entrepreneurs in Developing Contexts: The Tijuana Case." *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship* 26, no. 4: 2150022.
- Bastian, B. L., Y. M. Sidani, and Y. El Amine. 2018. "Women Entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa: A Review of Knowledge Areas and Research Gaps." *Gender in Management: An International Journal* 33, no. 1: 14–29. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-07-2016-0141>.
- Bates, T. 1995. "Self-Employment Entry Across Industry Groups." *Journal of Business Venturing* 10, no. 2: 143–156. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-9026\(94\)00018-P](https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-9026(94)00018-P).
- Baumann, C., M. Cherry, and W. Chu. 2019. "Competitive Productivity (CP) at Macro-Meso-Micro Levels." *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management* 26, no. 2: 118–144. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCSM-08-2018-0118>.
- Benavides-Espinosa, M. M., and A. Mohedano-Suanes. 2011. "Linking Women Entrepreneurship With Social Entrepreneurship." In *Women's Entrepreneurship and Economics: New Perspectives, Practices, and Policies*, 53–71. Springer New York.
- Bergmann, H., and R. Sternberg. 2007. "The Changing Face of Entrepreneurship in Germany." *Small Business Economics* 28: 205–221.
- Bhagavatula, S., T. Elfring, A. Van Tilburg, and G. G. Van De Bunt. 2010. "How Social and Human Capital Influence Opportunity Recognition and Resource Mobilization in India's Handloom Industry." *Journal of Business Venturing* 25, no. 3: 245–260. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2008.10.006>.
- Boyd, N. G., and G. S. Vozikis. 1994. "The Influence of Self-Efficacy on the Development of Entrepreneurial Intentions and Actions." *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 18, no. 4: 63–77. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104225879401800404>.
- Boyd, R. L. 2000. "Race, Labor Market Disadvantage, and Survivalist Entrepreneurship: Black Women in the Urban North During the Great Depression." In *Sociological Forum*, vol. 15, 647–670. Kluwer Academic Publishers-Plenum Publishers.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. 2000. *Ecological Systems Theory*. American Psychological Association.
- Calderon, G., L. Iacovone, and L. Juarez. 2017. "Opportunity Versus Necessity: Understanding the Heterogeneity of Female Micro-Entrepreneurs." *World Bank Economic Review* 30: S86–S96.
- Cardella, G. M., B. R. Hernández-Sánchez, and J. C. Sánchez-García. 2020. "Women Entrepreneurship: A Systematic Review to Outline the Boundaries of Scientific Literature." *Frontiers in Psychology* 11: 1557.
- Carrasco, I. G. 2019. "Women-Led Cooperatives in Spain: Empowering or Perpetuating Gender Roles?" *REVESCO: Revista de Estudios Cooperativos* 131: 48–64.
- Catalyst, the National Foundation for Women Business Owners (NFWBO), and the Committee of 200 Foundation. 1998. *Paths to Entrepreneurship: New Directions for Women in Business (Sponsored by Salomon Smith Barney)*. Catalyst.
- Cesaroni, F. M., M. G. Pediconi, and A. Sentuti. 2018. "It's Always a Women's Problem! Micro-Entrepreneurs, Work-Family Balance and Economic Crisis." *Administrative Sciences* 8, no. 4: 74. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci8040074>.
- Chakraborty, S., and P. Chatterjee. 2021. "Women Entrepreneurs in India: Where Do They Stand?" *Indian Journal of Labour Economics* 64, no. 4: 1069–1092.
- Chapelle, K. 2012. "Personal Assets, Access to Credit and Gender Entrepreneurial Disparities: The Case of the South African Informal Sector." *Savings and Development* 36, no. 1: 25–69.
- Charles, V., and T. Gherman. 2013. "Factors Influencing Peruvian Women to Become Entrepreneurs." *World Applied Sciences Journal* 27, no. 10: 1345–1354.
- Cho, Y., J. Park, S. J. Han, M. Sung, and C. Park. 2021. "Women Entrepreneurs in South Korea: Motivations, Challenges and Career Success." *European Journal of Training and Development* 45, no. 2/3: 97–119. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-03-2020-0039>.
- Conroy, T., S. Deller, and P. Watson. 2021. "Regional Income Inequality: A Link to Women-Owned Businesses." *Small Business Economics* 56: 189–207.
- Conroy, T., and S. A. Low. 2022. "Opportunity, Necessity, and no One in the Middle: A Closer Look at Small, Rural, and Female-Led Entrepreneurship in the United States." *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy* 44, no. 1: 162–196. <https://doi.org/10.1002/aep.13193>.
- Corrêa, V. S., F. R. D. S. Brito, R. M. D. Lima, and M. M. Queiroz. 2022. "Female Entrepreneurship in Emerging and Developing Countries: A Systematic Literature Review." *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* 14, no. 3: 300–322.
- Dal Mas, F., and P. Paoloni. 2020. "A Relational Capital Perspective on Social Sustainability; the Case of Female Entrepreneurship in Italy." *Measuring Business Excellence* 24, no. 1: 114–130.
- Daovisan, H., and T. Chamaratana. 2020. "Resistance to Change in the Financial Management of Small Family-Owned Firms: A Grounded Theory of Family Firms in Laos." *Journal of Accounting and Organizational Change* 16, no. 3: 497–514. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JAOC-05-2020-0063>.
- Davidsson, P., and B. Honig. 2003. "The Role of Social and Human Capital Among Nascent Entrepreneurs." *Journal of Business Venturing* 18, no. 3: 301–331. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026\(02\)00097-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026(02)00097-6).
- Dawson, C., and A. Henley. 2012. "'Push' Versus 'Pull' Entrepreneurship: An Ambiguous Distinction?" *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* 18, no. 6: 697–719. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13552551211268139>.
- De Clercq, D., D. S. Lim, and C. H. Oh. 2013. "Individual-Level Resources and New Business Activity: The Contingent Role of Institutional Context." *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 37, no. 2: 303–330. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2011.00470.x>.
- Dechant, K., and A. A. Lamky. 2005. "Toward an Understanding of Arab Women Entrepreneurs in Bahrain and Oman." *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship* 10, no. 2: 123–140.
- Deng, W., Q. Liang, J. Li, and W. Wang. 2021. "Science Mapping: A Bibliometric Analysis of Female Entrepreneurship Studies." *Gender in Management: An International Journal* 36, no. 1: 61–86.
- Deng, W., I. Orbes, and P. Ma. 2024. "Necessity- and Opportunity-Based Female Entrepreneurship Across Countries: The Configurational

- Impact of Country-Level Institutions.” *Journal of International Management* 30, no. 4: 101160.
- Dileo, I., and T. Garcia-Pereiro. 2018. “The Moderate Impact of Gender Egalitarianism on Nascent Entrepreneurship at the Individual Level. Evidence From GEM Data on Some European Countries.” *L’Industria* 39, no. 3: 405–428.
- Donato, S., A. Brugnera, R. Adorni, et al. 2023. “Workers’ Individual and Dyadic Coping With the COVID-19 Health Emergency: A Cross Cultural Study.” *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 40, no. 2: 551–575.
- Dopfer, K., J. Foster, and J. Potts. 2004. “Micro-Meso-Macro.” *Journal of Evolutionary Economics* 14: 263–279.
- Dragusin, M. 2007. “National and Regional Women Entrepreneurs’ Networks.” *Romanian Journal of Regional Science* 1, no. 1: 81–90.
- Dye, B., and K. Dye. 2018. “Surfacing the Voices of the Other: Female Entrepreneurs in Manila.” *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship* 30, no. 2: 157–173. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08276331.2017.1398061>.
- Edelman, L. F., R. Donnelly, T. Manolova, and C. G. Brush. 2018. “Gender Stereotypes in the Angel Investment Process.” *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* 10, no. 2: 134–157. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJGE-12-2017-0078>.
- Elam, A. B., C. Brush, P. G. Green, B. Baumer, M. Dean, and R. Heavlow. 2019. *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2019/2020 Women’s Entrepreneurship Report*. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. <https://www.gemconsortium.org/report>.
- Fairlie, R. W., and F. M. Fossen. 2020. “Defining Opportunity Versus Necessity Entrepreneurship: Two Components of Business Creation.” In *Change at Home, in the Labor Market, and on the Job*, 253–289. Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Ferrín, M. 2023. “Self-Employed Women in Europe: Lack of Opportunity or Forced by Necessity?” *Work, Employment and Society* 37, no. 3: 625–644. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017021103531>.
- Foley, M., M. Baird, R. Cooper, and S. Williamson. 2018. “Is Independence Really an Opportunity? The Experience of Entrepreneur-Mothers.” *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development* 25, no. 2: 313–329. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-10-2017-0306>.
- Franzke, S., J. Wu, F. J. Froese, and Z. X. Chan. 2022. “Female Entrepreneurship in Asia: A Critical Review and Future Directions.” *Asian Business & Management* 21, no. 3: 343–372.
- Frese, M., and M. M. Gielnik. 2014. “The Psychology of Entrepreneurship.” *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* 1, no. 1: 413–438.
- GEM, Women’s Entrepreneurship. 2021. *Thriving Through Crisis*. Global Entrepreneurship Research Association (GERA).
- Goby, V. P., and M. S. Erogul. 2011. “Female Entrepreneurship in The United Arab Emirates: Legislative Encouragements and Cultural Constraints.” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 34, no. 4: 329–334. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2011.04.006>.
- Gupta, D. D. 2013. “The Effect of Gender on Women-Led Small Enterprises: The Case of India.” *South Asian Journal of Business and Management Cases* 2, no. 1: 61–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2277977913480654>.
- Gupta, V. K., and N. M. Bhawe. 2007. “The Influence of Proactive Personality and Stereotype Threat on Women’s Entrepreneurial Intentions.” *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 13, no. 4: 73–85. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1071791907013004090>.
- Gupta, V. K., D. B. Turban, and N. M. Bhawe. 2008. “The Effect of Gender Stereotype Activation on Entrepreneurial Intentions.” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 93, no. 5: 1053–1061. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.93.5.1053>.
- Heilman, M. E., and J. J. Chen. 2003. “Entrepreneurship as a Solution: The Allure of Self-Employment for Women and Minorities.” *Human Resource Management Review* 13, no. 2: 347–364.
- Hernandez, L., N. Nunn, and T. Warnecke. 2012. “Female Entrepreneurship in China: Opportunity-Or Necessity-Based?” *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business* 15, no. 4: 411–434. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJESB.2012.046473>.
- Hulland, J., and M. B. Houston. 2020. “Why Systematic Review Papers and Meta-Analyses Matter: An Introduction to the Special Issue on Generalizations in Marketing.” *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 48: 351–359.
- International Lon (ILO). 2017. *World Employment and Social Outlook*.
- Jafari-Sadeghi, V. 2020. “The Motivational Factors of Business Venturing: Opportunity Versus Necessity? A Gendered Perspective on European Countries.” *Journal of Business Research* 113: 279–289.
- Jamali, D. 2009. “Constraints and Opportunities Facing Women Entrepreneurs in Developing Countries: A Relational Perspective.” *Gender in Management: An International Journal* 24, no. 4: 232–251. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17542410910961532>.
- Javadian, G., and R. P. Singh. 2012. “Examining Successful Iranian Women Entrepreneurs: An Exploratory Study.” *Gender in Management: An International Journal* 27, no. 3: 148–164. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17542411211221259>.
- Kautonen, T., M. Van Gelderen, and M. Fink. 2015. “Robustness of the Theory of Planned Behavior in Predicting Entrepreneurial Intentions and Actions.” *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 39, no. 3: 655–674. <https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12056>.
- Kazemi, F. 2000. “Gender, Islam, and Politics.” *Social Research* 67, no. 2: 453–474.
- Kim, J. L. S., and C. S. Ling. 2001. “Work-Family Conflict of Women Entrepreneurs in Singapore.” *Women in Management Review* 16, no. 5: 204–221. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649420110395692>.
- Kim, S. 2018. “Domains and Trends of Entrepreneurship Research.” *Management Review: An International Journal* 13, no. 1: 65–90.
- Kirkwood, J. 2009. “Motivational Factors in a Push-Pull Theory of Entrepreneurship.” *Gender in Management: An International Journal* 24, no. 5: 346–364. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17542410910968805>.
- Kirkwood, J., and B. Tootell. 2008. “Is Entrepreneurship the Answer to Achieving Work-Family Balance?” *Journal of Management & Organization* 14, no. 3: 285–302. <https://doi.org/10.5172/jmo.837.14.3.285>.
- Klyver, K., K. Hindle, and D. Meyer. 2008. “Influence of Social Network Structure on Entrepreneurship Participation—A Study of 20 National Cultures.” *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal* 4: 331–347.
- Koellinger, P., M. Minniti, and C. Schade. 2013. “Gender Differences in Entrepreneurial Propensity.” *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics* 75, no. 2: 213–234. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0084.2011.00689.x>.
- Kosakowska-Berezecka, N., J. K. Bosson, P. Jurek, et al. 2023. “Gendered Self-Views Across 62 Countries: A Test of Competing Models.” *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 14, no. 7: 808–824.
- Laguía, A., D. Wach, C. Garcia-Ael, and J. A. Moriano. 2022. ““Think Entrepreneur–Think Male”: The Effect of Reduced Gender Stereotype Threat on Women’s Entrepreneurial Intention and Opportunity Motivation.” *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* 28, no. 4: 1001–1025.
- Langowitz, N., and M. Minniti. 2007. “The Entrepreneurial Propensity of Women.” *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 31, no. 3: 341–364. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2007.00177.x>.
- Lerner, M., C. Brush, and R. Hisrich. 1997. “Israeli Women Entrepreneurs: An Examination of Factors Affecting Performance.”

- Journal of Business Venturing* 12, no. 4: 315–339. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026\(96\)00061-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026(96)00061-4).
- Levesque, M., and M. Minniti. 2006. “The Effect of Aging on Entrepreneurial Behavior.” *Journal of Business Venturing* 21, no. 2: 177–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2005.04.003>.
- Lingappa, A. K., and L. L. Rodrigues. 2023. “Synthesis of Necessity and Opportunity Motivation Factors in Women Entrepreneurship: A Systematic Literature Review.” *SAGE Open* 13, no. 1: 21582440231159294.
- Manolova, T. S., N. M. Carter, I. M. Manev, and B. S. Gyoshev. 2007. “The Differential Effect of Men and Women Entrepreneurs’ Human Capital and Networking on Growth Expectancies in Bulgaria.” *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 31, no. 3: 407–426. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2007.00180.x>.
- Manzi, C., S. Donato, F. Lagomarsino, M. G. Pacilli, S. Pagliaro, and N. Rania. 2024. “Moving From “Balancing” to “Blending”: The Role of Identity Integration for Working Parents.” *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 41, no. 1: 200–224.
- McGowan, P., C. L. Redeker, S. Y. Cooper, and K. Greenan. 2012. “Female Entrepreneurship and the Management of Business and Domestic Roles: Motivations, Expectations and Realities.” *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development* 24, no. 1–2: 53–72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2012.637351>.
- Mehtap, S., L. Ozmenekse, and A. Caputo. 2019. “‘I’m Stay at Home Businesswoman’: An Insight Into Informal Entrepreneurship in Jordan.” *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies* 11, no. 1: 44–65. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEEE-10-2017-0080>.
- Meyer, N., and J. Landsberg. 2018. “What Motivates Females to Start a Business? The Case of a Female Entrepreneurship Programme in South Africa.” In *31st International Business Information Management Association Conference: Innovation Management and Education Excellence Through Vision 2020, IBIMA 2018*, 2271–2281. International Business Information Management Association, IBIMA.
- Minniti, M., and C. Nardone. 2007. “Being in Someone Else’s Shoes: The Role of Gender in Nascent Entrepreneurship.” *Small Business Economics* 28: 223–238.
- Mohanty, E., and A. J. Mishra. 2020. “Understanding the Gendered Nature of Developing Country Msme’s Access, Adoption and Use of Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D).” *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* 12, no. 3: 273–295.
- Monitor, G. E. 2018. *The influence of GEM on Policy 2017/18*. GEM Consortium.
- Morales-Urrutia, X., D. Morales-Urrutia, and L. E. Simbaña-Taipe. 2022. “Entrepreneurial Intention and Gender: An Analysis of Environmental Factors.” *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business* 47, no. 1: 42–58.
- Muzaffar, H. 2023. “Pandemic Silver Lining: How the COVID-19 Pandemic Helped Women to Beat the “Gender Stereotypes Pandemic” in Entrepreneurship.” *Gender in Management: An International Journal* 38, no. 1: 76–92. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-10-2021-0316>.
- Muzata, S. 2024. “Motivations for Entrepreneurship: New Evidence From Tertiary-Level Educated Sub-Saharan African Women.” *Journal of African Business* 25, no. 1: 37–67. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15228916.2022.2069434>.
- Neumeyer, X., S. C. Santos, A. Caetano, and P. Kalbfleisch. 2019. “Entrepreneurship Ecosystems and Women Entrepreneurs: A Social Capital and Network Approach.” *Small Business Economics* 53: 475–489.
- Orhan, M., and D. Scott. 2001. “Why Women Enter Into Entrepreneurship: An Explanatory Model.” *Women in Management Review* 16, no. 5: 232–247. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649420110395719>.
- Oswald, D. L. 2008. “Gender Stereotypes and Women’s Reports of Liking and Ability in Traditionally Masculine and Feminine Occupations.” *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 32, no. 2: 196–203.
- Özşungur, F. 2019. “A Research on Women’s Entrepreneurship Motivation: Sample of Adana Province.” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 74: 114–126. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2019.03.006>.
- Patra, B. C., and U. Lenka. 2022. “Barriers to Entrepreneurial Intentions of Women: Nominal Group Technique, Analytic Hierarchy Process, and Scientometric Approach Instigating the Necessity of Policy Intervention.” *Journal of Public Affairs* 22, no. 2: e2429. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2429>.
- Paul, J., and A. R. Criado. 2020. “The Art of Writing Literature Review: What Do We Know and What Do We Need to Know?” *International Business Review* 29, no. 4: 101717. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2020.101717>.
- Paul, J., W. M. Lim, A. O’Cass, A. W. Hao, and S. Bresciani. 2021. “Scientific Procedures and Rationales for Systematic Literature Reviews (SPAR-4-SLR).” *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 45, no. 4: O1–O16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12695>.
- Prati, F., and M. Rubini. 2015. “Multiple Social Categorizations, Social Identities and the Reduction Of Intergroup Prejudices|Categorizzazioni, appartenenze sociali multiple e riduzione del pregiudizio intergruppi.” *Psicologia Sociale* 10, no. 1: 13–34.
- Quartey, P., M. Danquah, G. Owusu, and A. M. Iddrisu. 2018. “Unmasking the Contributing Factors of Entrepreneurial Activities Among Men and Women in Ghana.” *Journal of Economic Studies* 45, no. 1: 114–125.
- Renzulli, L. A., H. Aldrich, and J. Moody. 2000. “Family Matters: Gender, Networks, and Entrepreneurial Outcomes.” *Social Forces* 79, no. 2: 523–546. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/79.2.523>.
- Revenga, A., and M. Dooley. 2020. *What Works for Women Micro Entrepreneurs. A Meta-Analysis of Recent Evaluations to Support Female Entrepreneurship*. Global Media Office.
- Reverberi, E., C. Manzi, C. Van Laar, and L. Meeussen. 2021. “The Impact of Poor Work-Life Balance and Unshared Home Responsibilities on Work-Gender Identity Integration.” *Self and Identity* 21, no. 5: 588–607.
- Romeu Gordo, L., J. Stypińska, and A. Franke. 2022. “Gender Differences in the Determinants of Mature Entrepreneurship? The Case of Germany.” *Frontiers in Sociology* 7: 998230.
- Rose-Ackerman, S. 1997. “Altruism, Ideological Entrepreneurs and the Non-Profit Firm.” *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 8, no. 2: 120–134.
- Sadi, M. A., and B. M. Al-Ghazali. 2010. “Doing Business With Impudence: A Focus on Women Entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia.” *African Journal of Business Management* 4, no. 1: 1.
- Sahasranamam, S., and M. Sud. 2016. “Opportunity and Necessity Entrepreneurship: A Comparative Study of India and China.” *Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal* 22, no. 1: 21.
- Santos, G., R. Silva, R. G. Rodrigues, C. Marques, and C. Leal. 2017. “Nascent Entrepreneurs’ Motivations in European Economies: A Gender Approach Using GEM Data.” *Journal of Global Marketing* 30, no. 3: 122–137.
- Santos, S. C., and X. Neumeyer. 2021. “Gender, Poverty and Entrepreneurship: A Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda.” *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship* 26, no. 3: 2150018.
- Santos, S. C., and X. Neumeyer. 2022. “The Technologization of Entrepreneurial Processes: A Poverty Perspective.” *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management* 70, no. 3: 1174–1185.
- Sendra-Pons, P., S. Belarbi-Munoz, D. Garzón, and A. Mas-Tur. 2022. “Cross-Country Differences in Drivers of Female Necessity Entrepreneurship.” *Service Business* 16, no. 4: 971–989.
- Shane, S., and S. Venkataraman. 2000. “The Promise of Entrepreneurship as a Field of Research.” *Academy of Management Review* 25, no. 1: 217–226. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2000.2791611>.

- Sharma, Y. 2013. "Women Entrepreneur in India." *IOSR Journal of Business and Management* 15, no. 3: 9–14.
- Shuvam, S., and P. C. Mohanty. 2023. "Necessity or Opportunity Driven: Gender Differentials and Structural Changes of Proprietorship in the Indian Unorganized Enterprises." *Global Business Review* 24, no. 2: 295–316. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09721509198950>.
- Sultan, S. S. 2016. "Women Entrepreneurship Working in a Conflict Region: The Case of Palestine." *World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development* 12, no. 2–3: 149–156.
- Terjesen, S., and J. E. Amorós. 2010. "Female Entrepreneurship in Latin America and the Caribbean: Characteristics, Drivers and Relationship to Economic Development." *European Journal of Development Research* 22: 313–330.
- Thiele, F. K., and M. Wendt. 2017. "Family Firm Identity and Capital Structure Decisions." *Journal of Family Business Management* 7, no. 2: 221–239. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFBM-05-2017-0012>.
- Van der Zwan, P., R. Thurik, I. Verheul, and J. Hessels. 2016. "Factors Influencing the Entrepreneurial Engagement of Opportunity and Necessity Entrepreneurs." *Eurasian Business Review* 6: 273–295.
- Vracheva, V., and I. Stoyneva. 2020. "Does Gender Equality Bridge or Buffer the Entrepreneurship Gender Gap? A Cross-Country Investigation." *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* 26, no. 8: 1827–1844. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEER-03-2020-0144>.
- Warnecke, T. 2014. "Are We Fostering Opportunity Entrepreneurship for Women? Exploring Policies and Programmes in China and India." *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management* 18, no. 2–3: 154–181. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJEIM.2014.062880>.
- Warnecke, T. 2018. "Social Entrepreneurship in China: Driving Institutional Change." *Journal of Economic Issues* 52, no. 2: 368–377.
- Weeks, J. R. 2009. "Women Business Owners in the Middle East and North Africa: A Five-Country Research Study." *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* 1, no. 1: 77–85. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17566260910942354>.
- Wilson, F., J. Kickul, D. Marlino, S. D. Barbosa, and M. D. Griffiths. 2009. "An Analysis of the Role of Gender and Self-Efficacy in Developing Female Entrepreneurial Interest and Behavior." *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship* 14, no. 2: 105–119.
- Xheneti, M., S. T. Karki, and A. Madden. 2019. "Negotiating Business and Family Demands Within a Patriarchal Society—the Case of Women Entrepreneurs in the Nepalese Context." *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development* 31, no. 3–4: 259–278. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2018.1551792>.
- Xiong, L., I. Ukanwa, and A. R. Anderson. 2020. "Institutional Influence and the Role of Family in Poor Women's Micropreneurship." *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* 26, no. 1: 122–140. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEER-05-2017-0162>.
- Zamperi Ahmad, S. 2011. "Evidence of the Characteristics of Women Entrepreneurs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: An Empirical Investigation." *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* 3, no. 2: 123–143. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17566261111140206>.
- Zampetakis, L. A., M. Bakatsaki, C. Litos, K. G. Kafetsios, and V. Moustakis. 2017. "Gender-Based Differential Item Functioning in the Application of the Theory of Planned Behavior for the Study of Entrepreneurial Intentions." *Frontiers in Psychology* 8: 451. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00451>.
- Zhang, D., and N. C. Jurik. 2021. "Mobilising She Power: Chinese Women Entrepreneurs Negotiating Cultural and Neoliberal Contexts." In *Women's Entrepreneurship and Culture*, 174–195. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781789905045.00017>.