e-ISJN: A4372-3114 ISSN: 2321-7782 (Online)
p-ISJN: A4372-3115 ISSN: 2347-1778 (Print)
Impact Factor: 7.529

Volume 11, Issue 4, April 2023

# **International Journal of Advance Research in Computer Science and Management Studies**

Research Article / Survey Paper / Case Study
Available online at: www.iiarcsms.com

Women entrepreneurship and gender-related issues: a systematic review and bibliometric analysis

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Abstract: The bibliometric analysis enables the objective evaluation of massive amounts of bibliometric data. In this study, bibliometric analysis is used to examine research trends and the future direction of research on women entrepreneurs. The Scopus database was used to locate studies on female entrepreneurship and gender diversity. A total of 294 papers were selected for bibliometric analysis. R studio and VOS viewer were used to analyze the collected data. The most frequently used keywords; according to the findings were entrepreneurs, women's status, and gender relations. The most cited authors are Ahl H, Jones S, Marlow S, Welsh D, and Berglund Kare. United Kingdom, United State of America, Sweden, Spain, and the Netherlands are the top five countries whose scientific production is very much higher. This research has theoretical as well as practical implications. The study's findings can help researchers and practitioners understand the current state of female entrepreneurs. It can also be used as a practical guide for identifying potential gaps in the literature.

Keywords: Bibliometric analysis, Women Entrepreneur, Scopus database, entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## Introduction

Previously, all entrepreneurship research was focused on, conducted by, and for men. The terms "entrepreneur" and "entrepreneurship" both are written in a masculine language in both historical and cultural contexts. (H. J. Ahl, 2002; Lewis, 2006; H. Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Baron et al., 2001; Bruni et al., 2004; TYLER, 2008; Ughetto et al., 2019; Wee & Brooks, 2012). New models were developed to increase female entrepreneurship (HALAÇ & MEŞE, 2021). Women's entrepreneurship began to emerge as a result of public support, volunteer women's organizations, and other supportive policies to support entrepreneurship implemented by most of the international organizations as few of them are the World Bank, the European Union, and the United Nations.

According to a report by Forbes India, (2021), women hold approximately 30% of senior corporate management positions in India, far exceeding the global average (24%). However, India ranks 113th out of 135 countries in terms of the gender gap in the overall workforce. Women may have more time flexibility if they are in charge of their own firm instead of working for someone else (Kirkwood & Tootell, 2008; Eddleston & Powell, 2012).

Woman who starts her own businesses often have a strong desire for control and independence (Holmén et al., 2012). However, if they are simultaneously coping with a heavy workload, it may be challenging to accomplish this goal (Prottas & Thompson, 2006; Bunk et al., 2012). A study by Haar (2013) and Hobfoll (2001) propose that the extra energy that women entrepreneurs have because they feel in control of their work—specifically, because they are not constrained by others'

expectations of how and when to complete their tasks—can produce significant resource gains that they can put to use to better manage their obligations in both their personal and professional lives. According to study of Ke et al. (2019) and Sarri & Trihopoulou (2005) suggest that this resource in particular gives women business owners greater options for juggling work and personal commitments.

"I wanted to stand for those women who want to be beautiful for themselves, not for men or other women." Nykaa, a one-stop shop for cosmetics and other beauty products, was founded by Falguni Nayar. She started her journey at 50, when most people start thinking about retirement, but she made the decision to start a new adventure (Top 10 Famous Women Entrepreneurs in India 2021). In the words of Former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, "Empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered, society with stability is assured. Empowerment of women is essential as their thoughts and their value systems lead to the development of a good family, good society and ultimately a good nation." (Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam on Women Empowerment - The Womb).

#### Literature review

Professional women are shifting from waged employment to self-employment (Bennett & Dann, 2000; Cabrera, 2007; Terjesen, 2005; Walker et al., 2011) Women are earning more with business and professional degrees, not limited to this as they are also entering the labor force, however, they do not penetrate the highest levels of corporate organizations (Singh and Vinnicombe, 2004). Instead, the majority of senior female employees are starting their own enterprises outside of corporate environments. (Terjesen, 2005).

Due to gender stereotypes that encourage a hierarchical valuing where the masculine is prioritized above the feminine, the concept of entrepreneurship is biased toward one gender (Ogbor, 2000). Individual gender discrimination experiences of women in performance appraisal contexts (Maas & Torres-González, 2011), their concerns about their professional growth (Lane & Piercy, 2003), or access to their bank lending (Cozarenco & Szafarz, 2018), are addressed in business ethics literature.

Despite being mentioned in previous research by (H. J. Ahl & Jönköping., 2002; Bruni et al., 2004) and (Díaz-García & Brush, 2012) out of many researches there are only two issues identified which are not fully addressed in the past research. First the masculine hinge upon is used to depict women as the others who must adjust to the systems and structures. The diversity of women entrepreneurs comes in second. On the other hand Carter & Shaw (2006) show that women make up a disproportionately small proportion of the self-employed, owing to the fact that they run smaller businesses. More women are not satisfied so they are rejecting corporate careers and are choosing not to be a part of organization politics and subordination in favor of entrepreneurship (Hewlett and Luce, 2005). According to Robb & Wolken (2002), women-owned businesses had a higher failure rate and lower levels of sales, profits, and employment.

This awareness of previous research flaws, recent research using mixed samples have shown an increased interest in the subject of gender identification (Benschop, 2009; Binns, 2008) or men samples (Pullen & Simpson, 2009). The result of a study conducted by Robb, (2000) reflects that a portion of the lower survival chances of employer enterprises owned by women was explained by gender variations in time spent at work and motivations for beginning a business. There is still a prevalent belief that women should take on more domestic responsibilities than men, despite global trends toward greater gender equality, which causes women to be more engaged and actively involved in household chores (J. Jennings & McDougald, 2007; Wood & Ridgeway, 2010; Eddleston & Powell, 2012).

According to research on women entrepreneurship, the majority of newly founded women-owned enterprises are necessity-driven ventures in low-earnings female-gendered occupations (Arum & Müller, 2004). Furthermore, traditional gender norms are reified in economic procedures (Gurley-Calvez et al., 2009; Marlow & Mcadam, 2012). It is not true that entrepreneurship has a positive impact on women by improving their economic health (Tonoyan et al., 2010). These results

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ISSN: 2321-7782 (Online)

encourage a feminist, critical analysis of public policy to look into whether entrepreneurship is really the social and economic panacea for women that it is sometimes claimed to be (H. Ahl & Nelson, 2015).

Despite their economic importance, female entrepreneurs continue to outnumber male entrepreneurs (Verheul et al., 2006). According to Reynolds et al. (2002), men are about twice as likely as women to start their own business, and also the findings of a study conducted by Minniti et al., (2005) show that in 2004's Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, men participated in entrepreneurship at a higher rate than women did. A significant amount of research has been conducted to check whether there are gender differences in entrepreneurial behavior or not (Gupta et al., 2013; Hechavarría et al., 2017; Marlow & McAdam, 2013; Marlow & Swail, 2014). A study conducted by Bennett & Dann (2000) state that owning a business allows women to take more risks and define their work style. New business development generates new job opportunities Powell (2008) and Walzer (2007) have pioneered governmental policies that encourage entrepreneurship through mechanisms including law, regulation, programming, and budget allocation (Henrekson & Stenkula, 2010).

Existing business ethics research acknowledges that for women, finding a good balance between their professional and personal obligations is a crucial objective (O'Neil et al., 2008; Phipps & Prieto, 2016) a critical issue, particularly for female business owners (Forson, 2013; SINGH et al., 2010; Ufuk & Özgen, 2001), a challenge faced especially by female entrepreneurs (Carrington, 2006; Woetzel 2015; Cuberes & Teignier, 2016; De Vita et al., 2014; Minniti, 2005). Governments create policies, which are then implemented as programs, to support business start-up and growth because infrastructure that fosters innovation and business development is viewed as a desirable national investment in future economic prosperity (H. Ahl & Nelson, 2015).

The first aspect captures the women's restricted freedom from discrimination; the second aspect prevents formal pledges of this freedom; and the third aspect reduces the urge to exercise freedom (Inglehart & Norris, 2003; Welzel & Alexander, 2008; Welzel, 2012; Brieger et al., 2019). The current study's findings provide the insights into the theoretical foundations of research on women entrepreneurs, allowing us to recognize the contributions of other scholars and develop a course of action for future research.

# Objectives of study

- 1. To identify the most cited research articles on women entrepreneurs.
- 2. To identify the journals that publishes the most articles in terms of research on women entrepreneurs.
- 3. To identify the countries that contribute the most research articles about women entrepreneurs.

ISSN: 2321-7782 (Online)

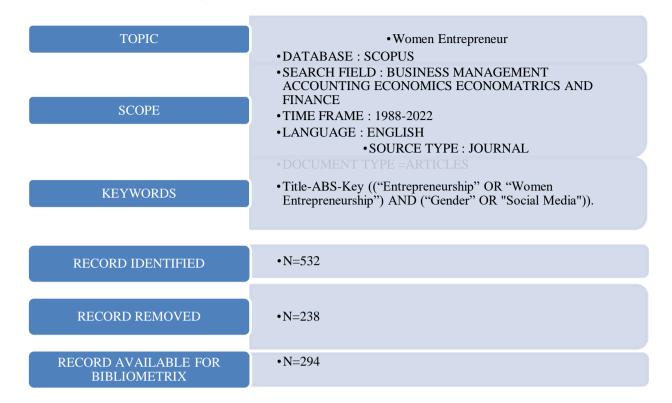
The review methodology and software are essential tools for conducting a systematic review and bibliometrics analysis in order to broaden the study's objectives. (Boloy et al., 2021). As a result, this study contributes to future research guidelines.

# Research design

The current bibliometric study conducted a thorough search of various repositories and multiple publishers for literature on women entrepreneurs. Information is collected mainly from ten English language databases as Elsevier, Emerald, Springer, Routledge, Sage, MDPI, John Wiley & Sons, Taylor & Francis and some other publishers. Search query as (("Entrepreneurship" OR "Women Entrepreneur") AND ("Gender" OR "Social Media")) are used. This study spans the years 1988 to 2021 and includes only peer-reviewed research articles from reputable academic journals. Initially, there were a lot of articles. So, in order to reduce the sample size of articles, we limited our search to management, business, and accounting. Following the restriction, we finally got 3491 articles. Despite using numerous filters, there are a large number of unrelated articles to search through. As a result, the title and abstract of each article was read carefully before deciding whether to keep or discard them from the current study. The main selection criteria used for article scrutiny is that the document must be focused

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on women's entrepreneurship or women's entrepreneurial challenges. Following a thorough screening of the articles, 532 research articles were discarded, leaving 294 research articles in the study for further analysis.



# Annual total citation per year

Table 1 shows that the average citations per article in 1988 was 164 and the average citations per year was 4.82. This area was undiscovered between 1989 and 1999. After that there were some fluctuations as in 2000 average citations for an article was 90 and average citations per year was 4.09. There was no growth in the year 2001 and 2002. In 2003 the average citations for an article was 108 and average citations per year was 5.68. Again, in the year 2004 and 2008 there was no growth. In the year 2009 there were highest average citations per article was 248.17 and highest average citations per year was 19.09. Since 2022 have not ended yet so the data for the same was not available and average citations per year is not mentioned.

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Year	N	Mean TC per Article	Mean TC per Year	Citable Years
1988	1	164	4.82	34
1989	0	0	0	0
1990	0	0	0	0
1991	0	0	0	0
1992	0	0	0	0
1993	0	0	0	0
1994	0	0	0	0
1995	0	0	0	0
1996	0	0	0	0
1997	0	0	0	0
1998	0	0	0	0
1999	0	0	0	0
2000	1	90	4.09	22
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	1	108	5.68	19

Impact Factor: 7.529 ISSN: 2347-1778 (Print)

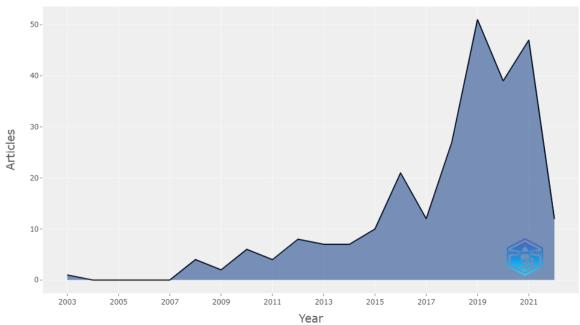
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	2	114.5	6.74	17
2006	3	131.33	8.21	16
2007	2	156	10.4	15
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	6	248.17	19.09	13
2010	8	38.25	3.19	12
2011	4	46.25	4.2	11
2012	7	92.43	9.24	10
2013	12	59.25	6.58	9
2014	14	28.93	3.62	8
2015	11	32.73	4.68	7
2016	17	29.53	4.92	6
2017	16	35.94	7.19	5
2018	34	17.41	4.35	4
2019	35	15.54	5.18	3
2020	40	8.57	4.29	2
2021	49	2.8	2.8	1
2022	34	1.12		0

Note: N= Number of publications, Mean TC per Article = Average total citations per article, Mean TC per Year = Average total citations per year.

### Data analysis

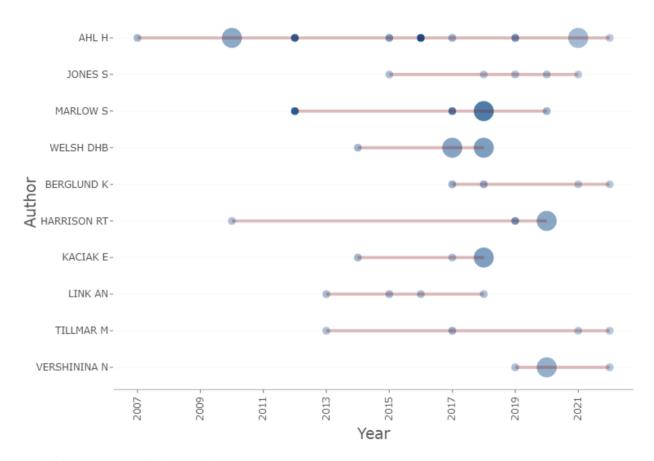
Academicians and researchers are conducting research around the topic "Women Entrepreneur" since 1988. Pace of researches conducted in the field of this topic are not constant there are many fluctuations over the period of time as only one article was published in 1988. Between 1989-1997 there were no articles published. As there were many fluctuations after 1998 and in the year 2018 there were highest numbers of articles published with mean citation per document 18.41. According to scientific production scale, the growth rate of number of articles which are being produced in this area are 10.93 percent. This also shows the evolution over time of the article publications per year.

# Annual Scientific Production



# Evolution over the time of articles publication per year.

As image given below represents the top 10 most cited articles of authors Ahl H, Jones S, Marlow S, Welsh D and Berglund K from different prestigious databases like scopus. Research articles which are published by these above mentioned five authors are top cited in present literature related to women entrepreneurship. In 2009, four out of top ten research articles are published which is maximum contribution with respect to top cited article followed by two articles each in years 2015, 2019 and 2013 in the top 20.



# Most productive author and index numbers

Ahl H was on the top of the list of productive authors in this category, with 8 h index and a total citation of 974 of 10 papers published in 2007. Marlow S is next on the list has with 5 h index and a total citation 582 for five papers since 2012. Welsh Dhb is third in the list with 5 h index,164 total citations for a total of 5 papers published since 2014. The forth and fifth in the list are Harrison Rt and Jones S respectively.

Table 2

Name	h index	g index	m index	TC	NP	PYstart
AHL H	8	10	0.5	974	10	2007
MARLOW S	5	5	0.455	582	5	2012
WELSH DHB	5	5	0.556	164	5	2014
HARRISON RT	4	4	0.308	110	4	2010
JONES S	4	4	0.5	41	4	2015
KACIAK E	4	4	0.444	121	4	2014
LINK AN	4	4	0.4	107	4	2013
ESSERS C	3	3	0.75	32	3	2019
FOSS L	3	3	0.429	335	3	2016
HENRY C	3	3	0.429	335	3	2016

Source: Authors' development using R-Studio

# Word cloud using authors' keywords

To identify the key terms that were found during systematic information search form different databases, the R-Software-4.1.0 was used. Authors detail, publication years, title, abstract and sources detail were taken to extract the key information. Title and abstracts of 294 finally selected papers are taken to carry out frequency of word analysis, which made up of most repeated words presented by word cloud mart. It allows us to spot most frequently used word in the image given below by the font of the text. Larger the size of font in word cloud mart, represents greater frequency of used word in the database. As shown below, the most repeated words as identified as entrepreneur, women's status, gender relations, feminism, empowerment and entrepreneurship among other words.



Source; Authors' development using R-Studio

# **Country scientific production**

As the table given below shows the top 10 country scientific production over the period of time. UK is on the top of the list with highest scientific production with the frequency of 163. After that on the list with second highest scientific production frequency of 86 is USA. Next on the third place is Sweden with third highest scientific production frequency of 52. This list is further followed by Spain, Netherlands, Italy, Germany and so on.

Table 3

Region	Frequency
United Kingdom	163
USA	86
SWEDEN	52
SPAIN	43
NETHERLANDS	38
ITALY	36
GERMANY	29
AUSTRALIA	24
PORTUGAL	23
SOUTH AFRICA	23

Source: Authors' development using R-Studio

# Most prolific journals

To spot the most relevant and leading journals which are publishing research articles related to theme of women entrepreneur, research was done in R-studio 4.1.0 version. During analysis of journals, it is found that highest number of research articles 28 produced by journal "Small business economics" which is producing best quality research articles in upswing order since 2010. Followed by journal "International journal of gender and entrepreneurship" which is publishing

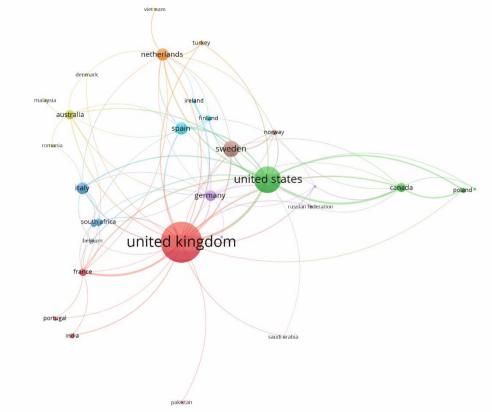
research article related to title "Women entrepreneur" since 2010 opening with 3 articles. Total 16 research articles are published by this journal from 2010 to 2022. When we analyzing journals publications evolution over the time, it is clearly reflecting that there is a representative growth in the publications on the subject of Women entrepreneurship since 2015 as seen in table below.

Table 3

Table 3								
Year	SMALL BUSINESS ECONOMICS	INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF GENDER AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP	ENTREPRENEU RSHIP AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT	INTERNATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS JOURNAL: RESEARCHING ENTREPRENEURSHIP	INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENTREPRENEURIAL BEHAVIOUR AND RESEARCH	JOURNAL OF BUSINESS VENTURING		
1988	0	0	0	0	0	1		
1989	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1990	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1991	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1992	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1993	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1994	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1995	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1996	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1997	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1998	0	0	0	0	0	0		
1999	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2002	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2003	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2005	0	0	0	0	0	1		
2006	0	0	1	0	0	0		
2007	0	0	0	0	0	1		
2008	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2009	1	0	0	0	0	0		
2010	0	3	0	0	0	0		
2011	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2012	1	0	1	0	0	0		
2013	2	2	0	0	1	0		
2014	0	0	0	0	0	1		
2015	1	2	0	1	0	1		
2016	0	0	1	1	0	0		
2017	0	2	1	2	2	1		
2018	2	1	2	2	0	0		
2019	3	1	4	2	3	0		
2020	4	3	1	1	0	0		
2021	6	1	0	0	1	2		
2022	8	1	0	2	1	0		
Total	28	16	11	11	8	8		

ISSN: 2347-1778 (Print)

**Impact Factor: 7.529** 



Source: Authors' development using VOS viewer

#### **Discussion and conclusion**

The findings have both theoretical and practical implications in this study. To begin, it provides a comprehensive historical overview of the literature over the last 3 decades. Second, it highlights the most relevant and productive authors, countries and publications in the literature. This could provide a very basic and solid start for interested researchers to choose which countries to conduct advanced research in and which journals to publish their findings in. Third, researchers will be able to concentrate their efforts on the pertinent, prominent, and recent publications. The main topics or research areas that contain the concepts related Women entrepreneur in business, management, economics, econometrics, accounting, and finance.

As this study has both positive and negative aspects of itself noticing a gap between policymaker's expectations for entrepreneurship as a remedy for current economic and social problems and the actual results for women entrepreneurs, the purpose of this research was to ascertain how the discussion on women's entrepreneurship in policy texts portrays women and their entrepreneurship (H. Ahl & Nelson, 2015). Women's entrepreneurship related research, as stated by Jennings & Brush (2013), has long demonstrated the importance of gendered entrepreneurship.

These are some of the important findings of this study, as there are different findings by researchers at different time period. There is difference in the opinion of researchers as some of them has stated that women are more empower and are better entrepreneurs then men. Whereas some has stated that most of the corporate women employees had left their jobs to pursue a career as an entrepreneur. To support this government is also helping them by formulating polices which are in their favor as this will leads to more employment opportunities and ultimately will leads to economic growth of a country.

Academicians and researchers are conducting research around the topic "Women Entrepreneur" since 1988. Pace of researches conducted in the field of this topic are not constant there are many fluctuations over the period of time as only one article was published in 1988 whereas in 2018 highest number of articles were published. Research articles published by Ahl H, Jones S, Marlow S, Welsh D and Berglund K are the most cited articles in existing literature related to women entrepreneurship.

The title and abstracts of 294 finally selected papers are taken to carry out frequency of word analysis, which made up of most repeated words presented by word cloud mart. The most repeated words as identified are entrepreneur, women's status,

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gender relations, feminism, empowerment and entrepreneurship among other words. During analysis of journals, it is found that highest number of research articles are produced by journal "Small business economics" which is consistently producing quality research articles. The United Kingdom is being at the top place on the list with the highest scientific productivity, followed by the United States on second place and Sweden on third place. Other countries on this list include Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and so on. The drawback is that, specifically, just the Scopus database was used as the sole data source for this specific study, leaving out PhD theses, unpublished papers, master's and doctorate dissertations, and unpublished articles on women entrepreneurs. As a result, information can be gathered from all of these sources in future research, and the outcomes of those analyses can be compared to those of current one. It might be considered that this study is not comprehensive in all respects given the aforementioned constraints. However, a number of significant publications have been included in this study, and it is still thought that a thorough bibliometric analysis is presented. The field is also benefited by this study's identification of pertinent keywords and recommendations for new researchers' future research.

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ISSN: 2347-1778 (Print)

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Impact Factor: 7.529 ISSN: 2347-1778 (Print)