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## **Management style and innovation of females in gender-atypical businesses**

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**Abstract:** Research on female entrepreneurship has increased in recent years. Female entrepreneurship is understood as an additional opportunity to create jobs and contribute to economic growth. Female entrepreneurs play a plurality of roles in the family and professional environment. The goal of this research is to study the entrepreneurial profile and the management style of females in gender-atypical businesses. This is a contemporary topic but still with few empirical studies, particularly in Portugal when we observe it from the specific regional perspective of less developed regions, such as the interior of Portugal (region of Viseu). This study is based on a qualitative methodology, and presents 12 case studies of female entrepreneurship in SMEs from to a regional perspective. The main results suggest that women voluntarily create their own business and balance their private and professional life well. The managerial profiles seem to reveal no substantial differences between male and female entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** case study; entrepreneurial profile; gender; women entrepreneurship.

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## 1 Introduction

Global integration and globalisation have generated a significant increase in female activity. The 2015 Female Entrepreneurship Index (FEI) (GEDI, 2016) analyses 77 countries and utilises an established theoretical framework to measure the entrepreneurial environment ecosystem and individual aspirations, and it scores nations from 0 to 100. The results suggest that the USA again ranks first in the world at 82.9, eight points ahead of 2nd-ranked Australia (74.8), while 47 of 77 nations still score below 50 points – an indication that these countries must pursue significant changes in order to reduce barriers for female entrepreneurs. However, in others regions, mainly those less developed, the differences remain significant.

During the twentieth century, the role of women in Western societies changed, as a result of economic, political and social changes. The social evolution of women roles could be noted in many sectors of society, with their attributions and active voice standing out in social, economic and environmental issues. There is a growth in women's participation in the labour market (ILO, 2016), but there are various obstacles and constraints related to inequality and some professional positions, leadership positions, wages for the same functions, etc. still show precariousness and register differences when comparing to males in the same positions. A comparison of the participation of men and women in business creation and the labour market still reveals a gap, particularly in less developed economies (Minniti and Naudé, 2010) and significantly fewer women than men own and manage businesses worldwide (Devine, 1994a, 1994b; Georgellis and Wall, 2005).

Several studies suggest that, after correcting factors such as size of the business and sectoral distribution, women's failure rates are not significantly different from those of men (Perry, 2002). Literature also highlight differences in businesses owned and managed by men and women, such as the fact that women's businesses tend to be smaller and to grow less (DuReitz and Henrekson, 2000; Coleman, 2007) and also generate lower sales and turnover than those owned by men, even in same-industry comparisons (Chaganti and Parasuraman, 1996).

In this context innovation could represent a competitive advantage that would contribute to reduce these differences between male and female-owned businesses. Innovation requires improvement and/or the creation of new products and services. Given the strong competition and instability of markets, it is necessary for companies to develop new ideas and concepts to consolidate their leadership against the competition. It also implies proactive managers, with the knowledge to develop their projects in the long-term. These features are common between men and women and are not a gender issue.

Additionally, it is important to note that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) play an essential role in economic growth, job creation and maximising the efficiency of resource allocation and distribution by mobilising and utilising local human and material resources (Cunningham and Rowley, 2007). Most SMEs have been illustrated as dynamic, innovative and efficient and their small size allows flexibility, immediate feedback, a short decision-making chain, better understanding and a quicker response to customer needs (Singh et al., 2008; Idar and Mahmood, 2011; Ramadani et al., 2017; Ratten, 2016; Ratten and Dana, 2017). A large number of these SMEs are owned and operated by women (Alam et al., 2011). Nevertheless, research on female-owned SMEs is still neglected, especially on factors that affect their business success (Ndemo and Maina, 2007; Brush et al., 2010) and in gender-atypical-businesses. Gender atypical-businesses are those that are often male-dominated, such as trucking, construction, or auto repair, and where women entrepreneurs can become innovators (Blake and Hanson, 2005). According to these authors, owning a gender-atypical business is innovative as the owner does not conform to an assigned gendered position.

To cover the gap identified in the literature, this research aims to contribute to a better understanding about the profile and characteristics of women entrepreneurs in a less developed region. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part presents the literature review about entrepreneurship, innovation and gender considering the topics of management style and entrepreneurial profile. The second part presents the empirical study based on 12 case studies collected in the Viseu region (Portugal) in SMEs (considered as gender atypical-businesses) owned by females.

## **2 Literature review**

### *2.1 Entrepreneurship, innovation and gender in a regional context*

Schumpeter (1934) provides a comprehensive definition of entrepreneurship associated with innovation and creative destruction. The Schumpeterian perspective highlights the role of the entrepreneur as innovator in the entrepreneurial process. The entrepreneur revolutionises the pattern of production by exploiting new or untried technology and processes.

Damanpour (1991) and Johannessen et al. (2001) suggest that innovation is assessable by the degree of 'newness' adopted to develop or improve new products or services, processes and organisational process, and also to access new markets. Successful entrepreneurs reveal innovative skills (Drucker, 1985; Chell, 2001).

More recent studies have examined how entrepreneurs apply innovations in order to increase organisational performance and to determine organisational culture, which stimulates innovation (Idris, 2009). Entrepreneurs use innovations to develop their business scope and boost organisational growth (Zhao, 2005), exploiting innovative culture as an opportunity for developing new products or services and penetrating new markets (Kanungo, 1999) and management styles are related to innovation and creativity (Zhao, 2005; De Jong and Den Hartog, 2007). However, we believe that innovation is not associated with gender, males and females do not reveal dissimilarities.

According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM, 2014) business activity continues to be carried out mainly by men. The 'fear of failure' exists in both genders; however, it has a slightly higher presence in women than in men.

It is possible to find different motivations for entrepreneurship between genders and it can be suggested that women reveal a high rate of entrepreneurship by necessity when compared with men in the same world regions. Moreover, that discrepancy between genders in entrepreneurial activity is associated with cultural, social and economic reasons. Díaz-García and Jiménez-Moreno (2010) argued that females still consider entrepreneurship less beneficial than males. Females, in general, reveal a negative view about the entrepreneurial process, and this perception negatively affects their decision to create a business. This negative perception is revealed as a fear of failure, which has been proven to be an important deterrent in the creation of new enterprises by women. There is evidence that women who have a proactive personality are significantly affected by exposure to the common 'male' stereotype about entrepreneurs and a significant decrease in entrepreneurial intentions (Díaz-García and Jiménez-Moreno, 2010). In spite of this, the previous authors also mention that "if entrepreneurship is viewed by women as a career option that is closely related to their own characteristics and values, women will be more likely to start their own business." [Díaz-García and Jiménez-Moreno, (2010), p.264]. These idiosyncrasies between genders could also be reflected in companies' innovation processes. According to Damanpour and Schneider (2006), the effect of gender on innovation is mixed. Stelter (2002) notes that women tend to evince a leadership style that is more transformational than their male equivalents, proposing that female leaders will positively affect the adoption of innovations. Another perspective provided by DiTomaso and Farris (1992) found that women R&D engineers tend to rate themselves lower than men do on innovativeness, and Sonfield et al. (2001) state no gender differences among business owners in their chosen venture innovation/risk situation strategies. It is important to point out that some cultural and environmental factors could influence these profiles and attenuate the differences between males and females in adopting innovation. We can consider education as a smoothing factor of gender, due to the fact that the implementation of new ideas requires knowledge and highly educated top managers are more likely to use complex and diverse approaches to problem-solving and decision-making (Lee et al., 2005).

Innovative processes are also associated with geography and region. Local context must be considered as these place-to-place variations in resources result in spatial variations in rates of innovation (Blake and Hanson, 2005). The presence of business incubators, industrial clusters, technical resources, a skilled labour force, suppliers, and business networks are all attributes of 'successfully' innovating regions (MacPherson, 1992; Malecki, 1994). Local conventions and norms and the degree of cooperation among actors within a particular business community which shape the distribution of capital and information to innovators and from innovators to the market are key elements for innovation in a regional context. Gender is therefore systematically implicated in the question of how and why certain geographic contexts promote some kinds of innovations to come out and be developed while discouraging or preventing others (Blake and Hanson, 2005). Hanson (2003) studied the intersection of gender and geography in entrepreneurship, with particular attention to how gender shapes the start-up process, location decisions, and the relationship of the business to place.

Studies applied in a regional context considering gender atypical businesses owned by women are still scarce. Owning a gender-atypical business is innovative because the owner does not conform to an assigned gendered position (Blake and Hanson, 2005). The next section discusses management styles of female entrepreneurs.

## 2.2 Management styles of female entrepreneurs

Management styles and leadership are linked to specific organisational practices such as innovative culture (Roberts et al., 1989). A more centralised structure could have a negative effect on innovation (Damanpour, 1991), and an open style and a flat structure encourages and rewards idea development (Zhao, 2005). These studies, however, do not examine female entrepreneurs in particular. Chow (2005) argued that male leaders might be more inclined to use coercive power whereas females choose more personal interaction, and they are more participative and democratic in their leadership style than many men (Eagley and Johnson, 1990). Women also tend to have more highly developed interpersonal skills (Brenner et al., 1989). Rosener (1995) describes women's leadership style as interactive, emphasising consensus building, being comfortable with ambiguity, and sharing power and information. This study also suggests that women leaders tend to encourage multidirectional feedback develop reward systems that value group as well as individual contributions and foster empowerment of employees at all levels. Bancroft (1995) reported that women adopt a holistic, process-oriented approach that is inclusive and collaborative.

Some literature suggests that that men and women tend to evince a preference for different interactional styles Tannen (1998), Coates (2004) and Holmes (2006) cited features of male and female interactional styles (see Table 1).

**Table 1** Male and female interactional styles in management and leadership

<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Competitive	Facilitative
Aggressive interruptions	Supportive feedback
Confrontational	Conciliatory – indirect
Direct	Collaborative
Autonomous	Minor contribution (in public)
Dominate (public) talking time	Person/process-oriented
Task/outcome-oriented	Affectively oriented
Referentially oriented	

*Source:* Holmes (2006, p.6)

Women represent about half of the world population. Nevertheless, the number of firms created by women is still inferior when compared with the number of firms created by men, but has registered a gradual increment in recent years. Despite the high number of women with a higher education degree, they tend to develop their business in the trade and service sector to the detriment of strategic areas of scientific and intellectual development, suggesting that they are less involved in activities that mobilise their full potential, and also less likely to assume positions of responsibility and decision (GEM, 2012).

However, despite the progress made in the last decade in Europe, the exploitation of the entrepreneurial potential of women is still far from desirable, especially regarding entrepreneurial activities of an innovative nature, which contribute most to the development of a knowledge society (Marques and Moreira, 2011).

The ancient social role of the women in the home taking care of their families still influences some cultures. Cabral (1991, quoted by Ussman, 2006) argued that Portuguese society is predominantly domestic for women and social-professional for men. Winn (2005) stated that married women with children and entrepreneurs often divorce due to the pressure to reconcile family life with entrepreneurial projects. Given the professional demands and the equal role that women and men hold in all sectors of society, it is essential to promote family work conciliation practices.

### *2.3 Female motivations to become an entrepreneur*

Concerning the issues of gender and entrepreneurship in various countries, including Portugal, women reveal lower rates of entrepreneurial activity when compared with men. Some studies point out the differences and the peculiarities of female entrepreneurship, such as Brush et al. (2009), Hughes et al. (2012), Fischer et al. (1993), Kourilsky and Walstad (1998), Lewis (2006), Marlow and Patton (2005) and Carvalho and Williams (2014).

Some studies reveal that motivations to become an entrepreneur are similar in males and females and depend on economic factors, perceived market opportunities, independence, self-fulfilment and job dissatisfaction (Greene et al., 2006; Ramadani et al., 2013; Ramadani, 2015). For Minniti and Naude (2010), the motivations of women to start a business are different from those of men for cultural reasons or discrimination. These authors point out variations in socioeconomic characteristics between women and men as justification for the differences registered, such as, as education, wealth, family, social status and position in the labour market. This gap could be reduced when these aspects register fewer differences. In the case of Portuguese females, Dinis and Helms (2000), based on a qualitative research, concluded that the main motivations are associated with necessity, namely, financial needs and the fact that some women feel discriminated against in their workplace.

It is possible to note differences between studies conducted with women entrepreneurs in different countries. In the USA, UK and Denmark, motivations are fundamentally linked to entrepreneurship by opportunity, although it is also stimulated by the requirement to reconcile work and family. Similar studies with women entrepreneurs from Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine, indicating unemployment and the lack of perspectives as decisive factors in the decision to become an entrepreneur referring to entrepreneurship by necessity.

The lower rate of female entrepreneurship found in some studies could be justified by several factors. One of them is lower risk tolerance (Byrnes et al., 1999). In general, individuals with greater fear of failure are less motivated to develop a business activity. Risk aversion and the fear of losing control of the company leads to women preferring to keep their small and easy-to-manage companies. This situation could limit the ability to develop new products, services and hiring new employees and especially the company's survival and development in adverse times (Byrnes et al., 1999). Another limit factor is access to financial resources. Some authors related that when a woman asks for a loan, the banks tend to place her at a higher risk level than men in the same position and this could constrain access to financial resources and social capital (Roomi, 2009). Some studies also suggest that women have greater difficulty in accessing information than men, due the limitations on entering some trade and business associations (Winn, 2005), which means that only a small percentage of women access external capital from

business angels or venture capital (Coleman and Robb, 2009). According to Díaz-García and Jiménez-Moreno (2010), women reveal a different perception about entrepreneurship that influences the exploitation of new opportunities. However, the same authors also point out that if entrepreneurship is seen by women as a career option regardless of their own characteristics and values, they will be more motivated to start their own business (Díaz-García and Jiménez-Moreno, 2010).

Other specific motivations are highlighted, such as difficulty in ascending in the professional career, organisational human resources policies, and the difficulty in reconciling work and family (Machado et al., 2003a, 2003b).

Many women, with the creation of their own jobs, believe in achieving greater independence and autonomy in decision-making, greater flexibility of schedules and greater availability, and thus more easily manage professional and family responsibilities (Greene et al., 2006). This contingency of work-family harmonisation is one of the recurrent reasons for a people to create their business, important and common to both genders, but in the case of women, it becomes even more necessary and indispensable.

### **3 Empirical study**

#### *3.1 Methodology*

The main objective of this study was to understand the entrepreneurial profile and management characteristics of entrepreneurial women in gender-atypical businesses in the Municipality of Viseu – Portugal.

Due to the exploratory nature of the study, a qualitative method – via personal interviews – was considered more suitable. According to Burns (2000), a personal interview enables the researcher to obtain the respondent's subjective experiences when a life event is being narrated, it presents the respondent's perspective instead of the researcher's own views, it gives respondent and researcher equal status in the dialogue and it is especially useful in qualitative research when ethnography is not possible. This research follows a holistic-inductive approach that requires a flexible design which is in constant evolution: "Since the researcher does not impose a priori categories or hypotheses, but rather attempts to understand phenomena based on field research, new questions must constantly be formulated" [Dana and Dana, (2005), p.82].

The case study methodology allows depth and detail of a limited number of objects, individuals or environments using observation and interviews. These case studies are included in the topic suggested by Dana and Dana (2005) as small business and entrepreneurship research often focuses on the firm or the entrepreneur. We consider, in the same line of these cited authors, that a quantitative strategy often limits the researcher's capability to study context and environment in an ethnographic approach. This type of approach in non-quantitative research would improve our knowledge and understanding of such pertinent and critical factors (Dana and Dana, 2005; Dana and Dumez, 2017). The interviews were done during the second semester of 2016 in person using audio recording with the manager or president of each SME.

The regional context to collect the case studies was the Viseu region (Portugal). Viseu is a municipality in the central region of Portugal, with a population of 99,274 inhabitants, and centre of the Viseu Dão Lafões inter-municipal community, with 267,633 inhabitants. Viseu is a regional economic hub with a strong wine industry and is

the seat of international conglomerate Visabeira. However, this region is located in an interior region with some demographic inequalities and economic and social problems that also affect more vulnerable groups such as women. Studying this phenomenon in a less developed region with a more traditional culture is a challenge, mainly when we aim to study gender-atypical businesses led by women.

The interviews included the following questions:

- Female profile (attending to the personal features, educational and professional background).
- Motivation to become an entrepreneur, and consequences of this choice in their family life. The motivation to become an entrepreneur was an open question, in which we invited the entrepreneurs to present their reasons and arguments to become an entrepreneur.
- Perceptions about entrepreneurial activity: advantages and difficulties faced during the entrepreneurial process.
- Managerial style and innovative approach.

We provided some types of managerial styles in the interview and we asked the entrepreneurs what their type of leadership is. We also requested a justification for their self-perception with the indication of some features of their managerial styles. Table 2 gives the managerial styles presented in the interview.

**Table 2** Managerial styles

<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
Autocratic style	The dictator lays down the law in his or her group and expects individuals to perform without questioning his or her authority.
Democratic style	This capitalises on their skills and talents by letting them share their views, rather than simply expecting them to conform.
Laissez-Faire style	Very little guidance from leaders. Complete freedom for followers to make decisions. Leaders provide the tools and resources needed. Group members are expected to solve problems on their own.
Bureaucratic style	Everything is decided in the light of predetermined guidelines. Everything is done as per policy or procedure.
Situational	In this style, everything is decided on the spot. No pre-plan is required, but rather everything is decided as per requirement. The leader changes his/her pace with the changing situation.

*Source:* Khan et al. (2015)

### 3.2 Selection of case studies

The selection of case studies was not an easy process, due to the existence of thousands of companies in the Viseu region in addition to the fact that this study aims to identify SMEs created and/or managed by women.

This qualitative research followed the suggestion provided by Dana and Dana (2005) and opted to concentrate on a very small sample of individual entrepreneurs, gender-atypical business managed by women. To select the cases, firstly we collected all information about SMEs in the municipality of Viseu on the internet using PORDATA<sup>1</sup>



and publications of the Portuguese Ministry of Justice<sup>2</sup>, and crossed the data collected from these sources in order to identify SMEs managed by women in Viséu. After identifying the companies with women in management, these companies were analysed in detail, considering the year of creation, address, mission, social capital, dimension, sector of activity (NACE – classification of economic activities in the European Union) and duration (in years) of female leadership of the SME.

**Table 3** Case studies

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Type of company	
Sole proprietorship	4
Limited partnership	3
Anonymous society (S.A.)	5
Age	
1978–1991	3
1992–2005	3
2006–2012	6
Number of employees	
1–20	7
21–65	2
66–100	2
101–230	1
Share capital	
5,000.00€–35,000.00€	6
36,000.00€–50,000.00€	2
51,000.00€–750,000,00€	2
751,000.00€–32,500,000,00€	2
Sector/activities	
Construction and public works	6
Mechanics and engineering	2
Commerce and retail: post and sale of fuels; sale of plumbing articles, heating, cooling; livestock products and veterinary medicines and similar	4

After this preliminary analysis, some companies were chosen and the final selection was based on the following criteria:

- SMEs with a NACE considered as a gender-atypical business, such as construction, mechanics, engineering, fuels
- SMEs founded by women and with women in management for at least the last year.

Based on these criteria, 22 companies were selected. However, *a posteriori*, ten companies did not show willingness to collaborate in the interview alleging unavailability of time or did not answer to our request to schedule the interview. In the end we had 12 cases studies, presented in Table 3.

The information collected was the subject of content analysis, “as a technique for describing the content of messages” [Bardin, (1977), p.38] and triangulation of the collected data.

### 3.3 Discussion of results

#### 3.3.1 Female profile

The profiles of the respondents are summarised in Table 4.

**Table 4** Profile of respondents

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Age	
28–40 years old	3
41–50 years old	8
51–55 years old	1
Marital status	
Married	11
Single	1
Children	
0	1
1	3
2	7
3	1
Education	
Basic education and high school level	4
Graduation	8
Training area	
Management	5
Accounting and administration	3
Veterinary and biology	2
Education	1
No training area	1
Position in company	
Manager	8
President or member of board of administration council	4
Duration (years) in management of the company	
1 to 3 years	
4 to 10 years	
11 to 16 years	3
Factors that determined being a business woman	
Opportunity (desire to have their own business)	3
Family (husband, family succession)	8
Unemployment	2

### *3.3.2 Motivations to become an entrepreneur*

Most respondents didn't plan to become an entrepreneur and this happened through the family (succession) or marriage. The motivations to create a business most cited by the respondents are: family (succession); possibility of learning and creating a new project; self-realisation and situation of unemployment. These motivations are not so different from the motivations registered by males in the literature. Greene et al. (2006) argued that the essential motivations of women are quite similar to those of men, being essentially economic factors, perceived market opportunities, independence, self-realisation and job dissatisfaction.

Some entrepreneurs (three case-studies) reveal that they became an entrepreneur to lead the management of their family business and most of them are co-entrepreneur with their husband. In fact, family could influence the involuntary decision to become an entrepreneur (Greene et al., 2006).

Considering future projects, most of them consider it important to expand the business and make new investments; maintain the family business; gain more training; manage the SME effectively; develop projects of social responsibility directed at children and solidarity.

### *3.3.3 Perceptions about entrepreneurial activity: advantages and difficulties faced during the entrepreneurial process*

The advantages associated with entrepreneurial activity mentioned are: social recognition; creativity and new dynamics; relation with stakeholders; flexible schedules; success; financial stability (a higher salary) and a high standard of revenue.

The negative side of entrepreneurial activity mentioned by the female entrepreneurs are: financial concern such as payments from customers and payment to suppliers and employees without delays and risk perception; difficulties in conciliating schedules with their children's vacation; more flexible time management but sometimes without weekends or holidays, mainly in the first years of the business; responsibility; decision-taking and management of human resources.

In terms of the features that they consider relevant to becoming an entrepreneur, the most cited features are: hard work, commitment, persistence, leadership, pragmatism, dedication and resilience.

### *3.3.4 Managerial style and innovative approach*

Regarding managerial style, the case studies reveal a similar pattern. Women tend to be person/process oriented; reveal passion for what they do (affectively oriented); be calm and patient (facilitative) and collaborative. The entrepreneur's self-perceive their managerial style as democratic (nine cases) and situational (three cases). Situational styles are associated with the sector: construction, commerce and retail and with small firms.

These features are in part similar with the study carried out by Holmes (2006). The management and leadership style suggest some characteristics focused on in the literature such as flexibility, comprehension but the ability to take decisions at the right time, being an example to employees, having a critical spirit and the ability to overcome the obstacles together with their teams.

Regarding to the advice that they suggest for other women about the entrepreneurial process, they suggest a study of the market and the factors that could affect the business in order to develop an innovative strategy to differentiate themselves developing a low-cost structure of costs and step-by-step growth with minimised risks. And in behavioural dimension: courage, keeping calm and analysing the environment, dedication, persistence and resilience.

The cases focused on gender atypical business. A woman owning a gender-atypical business is innovative because the owner does not conform to an assigned gendered position (Blake and Hanson, 2005). The cases show that women business owners who seek to act as role models and to act out an atypical role successfully must overcome their illegitimate status. In the cases it was reported that at the beginning of the business, some social barriers limited their performance; however, with the time these problems were overcome and they didn't find differences with men in the same position. Additionally, they planned to locate the business in an area which was more convenient and closer to their own residences, to manage their families and balance their role of entrepreneur and mother.

Innovation such as women in areas covered by men in a more traditional and less developed region weaken traditional gender ideologies and support the creation and legitimatisation of opportunities in industries and sectors where women have been excluded in the past. These successful cases could become a social innovation to change the mentality and cultural framework and facilitate the creation of new firms for female entrepreneurs in the future.

#### **4 Remarks: implications for research and practice**

Entrepreneurship as a process of innovation arises when entrepreneurs have the desire and ability to transform creative ideas into businesses or value (economic or social). Entrepreneurship occurs in a geographic context and often benefits from non-technological innovations, such as social innovation. In some contexts, female entrepreneurship and the creation and management of a gender-atypical business could be seen as a social innovation and could generate important implications for research and policy. In particular, we describe entrepreneurship, innovation and gender, considering management style, regional context and female motivations to become an entrepreneur.

We consider that the implications of this research could be related with economic development policy. Through the 12 case studies, we have emphasised some relevant aspects about female-owned, gender-atypical business SMEs. The study reveals that in this region, the role of entrepreneur brings women personal fulfilment and recognition, and in addition allows for more flexible schedules and financial stability that contribute to a better standard of living. The literature suggests that these aspects are suitable for the profile of female entrepreneurs and less often registered in male entrepreneurs in general. Negative aspects associated with the role of female entrepreneur are mostly associated with risk, mainly in terms of investment return, compliance with financial commitments, human resources management, and a greater responsibility with less free time for personal activities.

Concerning implications for research, the discussion about gender-based, age-based, and race-based divisions in the labour market is still to be brought up to date. And it is important to note that aspects such as social context and regional development influence

entrepreneurial dynamics and innovative performance of SMEs. Therefore, future research could explore these relations between social changes and regional contexts associated with the innovation of more segmented groups in the labour market, mainly in terms of the entrepreneurial process.

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## Notes

- 1 <http://www.pordata.pt>
- 2 <http://www.estatisticasempresariais.mj.pt>