

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TERMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND GENDER FACTORS: AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH IN ÇORUM¹

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurship provides women with the opportunity to fulfill their roles in the family as well as to contribute to the society by achieving their own goals. Contribution to the society can be achieved only bring more innovation. In line with this thought, women entrepreneurs who are trying to bring more innovation in society and give importance to innovation are important for the society. In this study, female entrepreneurship was studied due to the importance of entrepreneurship. In this respect, the main purpose of our research is to determine the thoughts on the environmental factors (social and cultural, economic, legal and political factors), the thoughts about entrepreneurship and the gender factors in women entrepreneurship. According to the results of the research, women's arithmetic mean value of entrepreneurship thought is high. The Female entrepreneurs participating in the research believe that social and cultural, economic, legal and political factors affect women entrepreneurs. Moreover, there is a low level of relationship between entrepreneurship thoughts and gender factors but gender factors did not have any influence on women entrepreneurial thinking. This study is meaningful and differentiating due to the fact that female entrepreneurs think that they are not different from male entrepreneurs.

Key Words: Entrepreneurship, Women Entrepreneurship, Environmental Factors, Gender

JEL Codes: J16, M10, M13, M19, L26

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INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship phenomenon includes the activities that existing companies have to perform in order to grow, develop, earn or become leader in their fields. Entrepreneurship is a means of increasing the levels of prosperity, development, welfare and building welfare for societies. The level of development of a society is determined by the entrepreneurs of that society. As the number of entrepreneurs increases, it provides a sustainable competitive advantage, accelerates the economic growth, develops employment opportunities, changes and transforms the society through innovations.

We can take the entrepreneurs as the main catalyst for the development of countries. The rapid increase of active entrepreneurs is reflected positively on the welfare level of the country. Entrepreneurship is no longer a male-dominated concept within the modern society, but it also includes the issue of women's entrepreneurship. Women are now competing with men in political, educational, technological and economic fields. The number of women entrepreneurs is increasing in parallel with the new developments in technology and economy. As such women entrepreneurs contribute to the social welfare by creating new methods and contributing to the newly emerged structures. In developed countries or even in our own country, we see women at the highest position of important enterprises. Now women have become entrepreneurs who seek new opportunities instead of working in blue collar jobs or being a housewife, and turn those opportunities into an economic value by putting those thoughts and resources into practice.

Entrepreneurship, which is the most important element of economic development from a historical point of view, has been activity carried out by male entrepreneurs. The fact that women, almost half of our country's population, cannot be at the same rate in entrepreneurship activities constitutes a serious disadvantage in economic terms. When we look at the statistics, it is a fact that entrepreneurship among women is not at the desired level. In this manner, women are the hidden potential power that our country cannot fully utilize. The fact that environmental factors and gender discrimination at certain points have created a serious handicap on female entrepreneurship and the difficulties arising from the nature of the entrepreneurship process have made it difficult for women to be entrepreneurs. The general purpose of this study is to determine the opinions and perspectives of women entrepreneurs in a province in terms of environmental factors, entrepreneurship and gender. In addition, the general thoughts of entrepreneurship and the degree of influence and relationship of environmental factors and gender-related issues attributed to male entrepreneurs are meant to be revealed.

1. THEORETICAL APPROACH

1.1. Entrepreneurship

In most general terms, entrepreneurship can be defined as a process of value-creating activity starting with opportunity identification, creating innovative approaches and changes and transformations as a result of innovations. In general, there is no agreed upon consensus on the definitions of entrepreneurship (Berglann et al., 2011: 180). Entrepreneurship is mainly related to innovation and value creation in the economy (Jennings et al., 2009: 339). Entrepreneurship is the creation of new organizations to economize the opportunities (Gartner, 1989: 62). Bridge et al. (1998: 35) also argue that entrepreneurship, more specifically, involves starting a business, having a job, and developing and expanding the business. When the definitions are examined, it appears that the entrepreneurship includes elements such as creating and developing a new business, identifying opportunities, seeking and creating opportunities, taking risks, being creative and innovative, and creating value.

Entrepreneurship also includes activities and changes in all existing organizations. Throughout history, as pioneers of change and innovation in the economic activities, entrepreneurs have created new markets, products, and sectors (Brush, 2008: 21). Entrepreneurs are defined as the creators of the new world, which sets out an initiative and the idea of activating it (Dvir et al., 2010: 43). An entrepreneur is actually a creative or innovative individual (Rani: 1996:4).

Whether it is a newly established business or one already in the sector, entrepreneurship is a process that brings about changes and transformations through creativity and innovations; it creates value for the customer and expresses the attractive power of the enterprises to be the winner and leader. Entrepreneurs are individuals who create new employment opportunities, enable the emergence of innovations, and increase the welfare of society in economic and social life. Entrepreneurs are the leading figures in developing countries while they are cornerstones of dynamism in developed countries. The leading actors of economic development, entrepreneurs are individuals who meet the demands and needs of the customers by making innovations, who are willing to satisfy their customers and give their contributions to change.

1.2. Women Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship has become the process of both creating an initiative and seeking opportunities while bringing change, innovation and creativity in existing organizations. Women entrepreneurs pursue entrepreneurial activities in a fierce competitive environment and perform a number of functions while engaging in entrepreneurship. They create a value when performing these functions.

The changing social, economic and cultural conditions of the economy further strengthened the place of women in today's business life, and led to a significant increase in the number of women (women entrepreneurs) who established their own businesses as well as women working for wages. Women's contribution to economic development is increasingly recognized throughout the world. This important role of women in development has gained importance in recent years (Osinubi, 2007:46). If the women are offered more opportunities, the number of women entrepreneurs will increase. Women entrepreneurs play an important role in wealth and job creation (Coughlin and Thomas, 2002: 5).The more the society offers opportunities, the more are chances for an environment open to entrepreneurship is created (Bridge et al., 1998: 54).

Education, work experience, improved economic condition and financial incentives are important factors for bringing new women entrepreneurs(Sangolagi & Alagawadi, 2016: 216). The increasing level of education for women and/or gaining access to more education opportunities will empower women and bring more women entrepreneurs in business world (Tulan & Turko, 2018: 303). The women who have an entrepreneurship training have attitudes towards entrepreneurship were higher than those who did not receive (Tekin, 2018:1091).

Male entrepreneurs still outnumber women entrepreneurs (Godwyn, 2009: 51). The common challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in many countries are inequality of opportunity, poor credibility, lack of recognition, exhausting family responsibilities, lack of talent and gender discrimination (Goby and Eroğul, 2011: 330). Gender differences in entrepreneurship understanding have been studied for years (Zhang et al., 2009: 94). Gender is an important individual trait determined to affect the decision to become an entrepreneur (Aldridge and Audretsch, 2011: 1060). Although the characteristics of male and female entrepreneurs are very similar, female entrepreneurs are different in terms of motivation, work ability and professional background (Hisrich and Peters, 2002: 75). Men are often described as those who care about business growth and financial success, while women are defined as having more emphasis on career satisfaction with personal relationships and social goals with their employees and clients (Eddleston and Powell, 2008: 245).

On the other hand, attractive factors are elements that urge women to set up businesses and work. Personal and real values such as self-realization, professional development, social and communal relations have a greater impact on female entrepreneurs than on male entrepreneurs (González-González et al., 2011: 361). While a large proportion of males are willing to create wealth and desire economic development, a large proportion of women become entrepreneurs to balance work and family (DeMartino and Barbato, 2003: 816). Female entrepreneurs take less risk than male entrepreneurs and they are more adapted to defensive business strategies (González-González et al., 2011: 361). In

addition, studies comparing the performance of female entrepreneurs and male entrepreneurs indicate that the enterprises that they have established tend to be smaller than that of males (Cliff, 1998: 524).

Hisrich and Peters (2002: 76), who compared female entrepreneurs and male entrepreneurs, identified the differences in terms of motivation, starting point, funding sources, professional background, personal characteristics, background, support groups, and the first type of work they established as below:

Table 1.1. Differences Between Female and Male Entrepreneurs

Characteristics	Male Entrepreneurs	Female Entrepreneurs
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Success achieved as a result of finishing the assigned job - Personal independence - Job satisfaction as a result of having control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Success achieved as a result of realizing a purpose - Independence arising from doing a job alone
Starting Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dissatisfaction with current work - To be interested in a new job in school and current work - Dismissal or Leaving Work - Sense of Winning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The work-related frustration - To define and take advantage of the opportunity - Change in personal situation
Capital Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal assets and savings - Banks - Investors - Loans from friends and family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal Belongings and Savings - Personal Loans
Professional Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Profession experience - To be a well-known expert or to have achieved great success in that field - To be skilled in various business fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience in business - To be a middle level manager - History in service industry
Personal Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be convincing - To be focused on - To be renovative and idealistic - To have a strong self-confidence - To be willing and energetic - The necessity of being his / her boss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being flexible and tolerant - To be focused on - To be creative and realistic - To have an average self-confidence - Be willing and energetic - Ability to deal with social and economic environment
Personal Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of business between the ages of 25-35 - Having an entrepreneurial father - Being a university graduate - Being the first child of the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of business between ages of 35-45 years - Having an entrepreneurial father - Being a university graduate - Being the first child of the family
Support Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friend, lawyer, accountants - Friends from the business world - Spouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close friends - Spouse - Family - Professional women's groups - Commerce Chambers
The first business they established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Production or Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service Sector

Source: Hisrich ve Peters (2002:76).

2. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The aim of this research is to reveal the relationship between entrepreneurship and environmental and gender factors. In other words, the main purpose of our research is to determine the thoughts on the environmental factors (social and cultural, economic, legal and political factors), the thoughts about entrepreneurship and the gender factors in women entrepreneurship by empirical research. Once the scale was determined in our study, the development of the questionnaire form was initiated. The questionnaire form developed for this study consists of three parts. In order to determine the opinions of women entrepreneurs on the **environmental factors** (social, cultural, economic, legal and political environment) in which the survey was conducted, İlter's (2010: 137) scale was used. In the second part, to determine the female entrepreneurs' ideas about **entrepreneurship** Özen Kutaniş's scale was used. In the third chapter, Özen Kutaniş's scale used to determine the thoughts about **the gender factors** in entrepreneurship. Both second and third part of the questionnaire, was taken from Özen Kutaniş's "Entrepreneur Women" (Özen Kutaniş, 2006:49- 50).

The findings of our survey is limited to female entrepreneurs in Çorum and the data obtained from these female entrepreneurs. From the questionnaires given to 54 female entrepreneurs, the reliability has been thought to be 95% in the universe of study, and a sample of error of 5% was estimated and sampling has been identified as 48 in the universe of 54 (The Survey System, 2018). The participation rate was 39 persons while the participation rate was 72.2%.

As given in Table 1, the reliability analysis of the Entrepreneurship Thought and Environmental Factors was highly reliable. The Gender Factor Scale was highly reliable as well.

Table1. Reliability Values of Scales

Scales	Number of Articles	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability
Entrepreneurship Thought	11	0,945	Highly Reliable
Environmental Factors	15	0,837	Highly Reliable
Gender Factor	6	0,782	Quite Reliable

3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Demographic Findings

Marital Status	N	%	Educational Status	N	%
Married	31	79,5	Primary School	3	7,6
Single	7	17,9	High School/ Associate	12	30,8
Divorced	1	2,6	Undergraduate	17	43,6
			Graduate/ Doctorate	7	18

Ages	N	%	Number of Children	N	%
18-25 years	1	2,6	None	12	30,8
26-35 years	18	46,2	1	15	38,5
36-45 years	16	41,1	2	11	28,2
56 or above	4	10,1	3	1	2,6
Number of Employment	N	%	Enterprise's year in Business	N	%
None(Self-Employed)	12	15,4	1-5 years	23	59
1-9	15	64,1	6-10 years	7	17,9
10-24	11	12,8	11-15 years	4	10,3
25 or above	1	7,7	16 or above	5	12,8

When the demographic findings analyzed, 80% of the participants were married and the university graduate rate was determined as 62%. The majority of women entrepreneurs are between 26-45 years old and therefore young. When the number of children is examined, the rate of having 2 or fewer children is at a normal level for women who work with a ratio of 98%. In terms of the number of employees, the rate of women entrepreneurs working in their own workplaces is 15%, the number of employees in 1-9 is 64%; The number of employees is 10% and 20%. Finally, the majority of enterprises are newly established enterprises. The ratio of enterprises that continue their activities for 5 years and above is 41% and this situation gives hope for the future of women entrepreneurship. What is really significant is not the amount of enterprises opened up by women but their companies long-lasting.

Table 3. Average and Standard Deviation of Women Entrepreneurship

	Number of Questions	Average	Standard Deviation
Entrepreneurship Thought	11	3,9441	0,95132
Environmental Issues	15	3,3564	0,64962
Findings Related to Gender	6	2,6197	0,76848

Table 3 shows the averages, frequencies and percentage of the answers given by the female entrepreneurs to each statement in order to reveal their opinions about environmental factors, entrepreneurship and gender factor in entrepreneurship. It shows that women entrepreneurs are aware of entrepreneurship by showing that they have a significant level of knowledge, experience and thoughts about entrepreneurship. In the entrepreneurship process, it is revealed that social, cultural, economic, legal and political environmental factors encountered by women entrepreneurs have positive or negative effects on women entrepreneurs. When the findings about gender with the lowest averages are examined, it has been observed that the importance of gender difference on women's entrepreneurship is not an important issue for women entrepreneurs who were participating in the survey.

Table 4. Results of Environmental Factors in Influencing Entrepreneurship Thought

(Regression Analysis)

Independent Variables	B Value	T	P
Constant	-,088	-,187	0,000
Environmental Factors	0,683	8,724	0,000
Straight. R²	0,673		
F	76,102		
P	0,000*		
Durbin-Watson	1,701		

In the light of the information given in table 4, environmental factors explain 68.3% of entrepreneurial behavior. This reveals that when employees' environmental factors change in favor of women, entrepreneurial thought and behavior increases.

Table 5: Results of Environmental Factors on Influencing Entrepreneurship Thought

(Regression Analysis)

Independent Variables	B Value	T	P
Constant	3,174	-,187	0,000
Gender Factor	0,294	8,724	0,146
Straight. R²	0,056		
F	2,209		
P	0,146		
Durbin-Watson	1,426		

In terms of entrepreneurial thought, it has been observed that gender factor in anova test of $p < 0.05$ is not significant in $p < 0.05$ which is given in table 5. Therefore, gender-related thoughts and issues do not affect the entrepreneurial behaviors of women.

Table 6. Correlation Analysis of Entrepreneurship Thought, Environmental Factors, and Gender

	Entrepreneurship Thought	Environmental Factors	Gender Factor
Entrepreneurship Thought	1		
Environmental Factors	0,82	1	
Gender Factor	0,24	0,23	1

As seen in the table 6, as a result of Pearson's correlation analysis, there is a high positive correlation between entrepreneurial thought and environmental factors ($r = 0.82$; $p < 0.01$). In addition, as a result of correlation analysis analysis ($r = 0,82$; $p < 0,01$), there was a positive correlation between entrepreneurial thought and gender related thoughts.

The study has been tried to reveal whether the most important factor affecting female entrepreneurship is gender or environmental factors. According to the results, women do not think that being a woman is a disadvantage in terms of entrepreneurship, issues like gender discrimination do not affect their entrepreneurship and that they are not afraid of male domination. Besides, women's social and cultural duties do not hinder their entrepreneurship. According to the study, it has been revealed that social, cultural, economic, legal and political environmental factors for women entrepreneurs deeply affect their entrepreneurship.

CONCLUSION

Women's entrepreneurship is an important issue for social development and social welfare. Entrepreneurial activity of women at a high level accelerates the structuring and development of societies and the existence of a community living in prosperity. Therefore, it is important to make the means available for women to become entrepreneurs in order to establish a wealthy community and to provide wealth.

Women entrepreneurship should be encouraged and the necessary support should be given for women entrepreneurs to take their places in different sectors. Turkey also needs to continue searching for the incentives necessary to increase the number of women entrepreneurs and removal of obstacles ahead of them. Training and consultancy services should be provided for women to be educated as entrepreneurs.

Women entrepreneurs are affected by the way society views them and changes in their customers' preferences, they have an intense competition with male entrepreneurs, they have opportunities in their sectors, knowing their legal rights has a positive impact on them and they have contributed to the legal and political regulations. Therefore, it should be taken into consideration that women entrepreneurs' proposals and experiences for women who will engage in entrepreneurship activities should be taken into account and experiences are actually a situation after mistakes, deficiencies, achievements or failures.

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