



## Redefining Women's Entrepreneurship: A Conceptual Comparison with General Entrepreneurship

## Kadın Girişimciliğini Yeniden Tanımlamak: Genel Girişimcilik ile Kavramsal Bir Karşılaştırma

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### Abstract

This study compares the literature on women entrepreneurship and general entrepreneurship, examining the thematic and conceptual differences between the two fields. The analysis includes articles published in English up to 2025 in the Web of Science database. In the women entrepreneurship literature, a total of 5,058 articles and 8,983 keywords were identified, while in the general entrepreneurship literature, 24,038 articles and 31,385 keywords were analyzed. The findings indicate that the women entrepreneurship literature primarily focuses on themes such as gender, empowerment, social capital, and social entrepreneurship. In contrast, the general entrepreneurship literature encompasses broader themes, including innovation, entrepreneurship education, institutional structures, and economic growth. While concepts like empowerment, social entrepreneurship, and intersectionality are prominent in the women entrepreneurship literature, the general entrepreneurship literature emphasizes innovation, institutions, and entrepreneurial ecosystems. The findings of this study provide a crucial foundation for understanding the unique challenges and opportunities of women entrepreneurs while underscoring the need for a more inclusive perspective in general entrepreneurship literature. These differences highlight the importance of integrating the two fields for a more bal-

### Öz

Bu araştırmada kadın girişimcilik ve genel girişimcilik literatürleri karşılaştırılarak iki alanın tematik ve kavramsal farklılıkları incelenmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında, 2025 yılına kadar Web of Science veri tabanında İngilizce yayımlanmış makaleler incelenmiştir. Kadın girişimcilik literatüründe toplamda 5058 makale ve bu makalelerde geçen 8983, genel girişimcilik literatüründe ise 24038 makale ve 31385 anahtar kelime tespit edilmiştir. Analiz sonuçları, kadın girişimcilik literatürünün daha çok toplumsal cinsiyet, güçlenme, sosyal sermaye ve sosyal girişimcilik gibi konulara odaklandığını göstermektedir. Buna karşın genel girişimcilik literatürü, yenilikçilik, girişimcilik eğitimi, kurumsal yapı ve ekonomik büyüme gibi daha geniş kapsamlı temalara odaklanmaktadır. Kadın girişimcilik literatüründe güçlenme, sosyal girişimcilik ve keşifimsellik gibi kavramlar öne çıkarken, genel girişimcilik literatüründe yenilikçilik, kurumlar ve girişimcilik ekosistemleri dikkat çekmektedir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, kadın girişimciliğinin kendine özgü zorluklarını ve fırsatlarını anlamak için önemli bir temel oluştururken, genel girişimcilik literatürüne daha kapsayıcı bir perspektif kazandırma gerekliliğini de vurgulamaktadır. Literatürler arasındaki bu farklar, daha dengeli ve kapsayıcı bir girişimcilik anlayışı için iki alanın entegrasyonunun önemini ortaya

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Original research article

Article submission date : 7 January 2025

Article acceptance date: 25 Haziran 2025

Özgün araştırma makalesi

Makale gönderim tarihi: 7 Ocak 2025

Makale kabul tarihi: 25 Haziran 2025

anced and inclusive understanding of entrepreneurship. Future research is recommended to ensure greater representation of women entrepreneurship in the general entrepreneurship literature and to foster mutual enrichment between the two fields.

**Keywords:** Women Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship, Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Sustainability.

koymaktadır. Gelecekteki arařtırmalar, kadın giriřimciliđin genel giriřimcilik literatüründe daha fazla yer bulması ve bu iki alanın karřılıklı olarak birbirini zenginleřtirmesi gerektiđi önerilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kadın Giriřimcilik, Giriřimcilik, Sosyal Giriřimcilik, Yenilikçilik, Sürdürülebilirlik.

## Introduction

According to many scholars, entrepreneurship is one of the most important drivers of economic growth, innovation, and societal transformation (Drucker, 1985; Schumpeter, 1983). Entrepreneurs are not only job creators; they also transform markets, develop new technologies, and generate social value (Baumol, 1996; Kirzner, 1999). Despite this, the field of entrepreneurship research has been nearly exclusively gender-neutral has long remained, practically neglecting the distinct features of female entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2006). Although female entrepreneurship has been increasingly examined in recent years, it is still largely neglected in the overall literature on entrepreneurship (Brush vd., 2009). The prevailing theories of entrepreneurship have been frequently articulated from the standpoint of male entrepreneurs, thus failing to encapsulate women's specific challenges, motivations, and determinants of success fully (Marlow & Patton, 2005). The absence of this perception calls for a framework that is informed by women's entrepreneurship's specific distinguishing characteristics.

Among the most pressing problems elaborated in the female entrepreneurship literature are the gender-based constraints imposed by society on women when they set off and run their businesses (S. Carter vd., 2007; Kivalya & Caballero-Montes, 2024). Gender roles and societal expectations have made the obstacles encountered by female entrepreneurs quite distinct from those of their male counterparts, leading to the differences in their entrepreneurial journeys (Brush, 1992; Rahman vd., 2024). For example, women may have more difficulties in obtaining financing, the challenge of which is the gender bias existing in the financial markets. This situation has the result of their firms not reaching all the growth potential, as well as keeping sustainability (Marlow & McAdam, 2013). Grasping the elementary characteristics of female entrepreneurship is significant to filling in the considerable void of research besides men, and help women to achieve equality in this area (Ahl & Nelson, 2010). Another important focus in the research domain is the ways by which female entrepreneurs succeed in making use of resour-

ces including social capital, networks, and mentoring (Renzulli *vd.*, 2000). The literature reveals that women are the ones who, in contrast to men, make totally different approaches to building and utilizing the business network (Greve & Salaff, 2003). These dissimilarities imply the emergence of a social capital structure that is unique to female entrepreneurship (Aldrich & Cliff, 2003).

Furthermore, the reasons that women have for starting their businesses could be quite different from those prescribed by the conventional rationalism on entrepreneurship (Buttner & Moore, 1997). While male entrepreneurs are consistently inspired by profit, empowerment and technology development, female entrepreneurs may be the ones who are led by factors that are formed by gender roles, family responsibilities and societal impact (Brush, 1992). This is the rationale behind promoting a model of entrepreneurship especially catered to women (Fischer *vd.*, 1993).

In such a case, another significant subject concerning the literature on female entrepreneurship is the cultural barriers women come across (Aldrich & Cliff, 2003). The social norms and the cultural codes can reinforce the difficulties that women encounter in business creation and management. In some communities, for instance, business activities are considered to be a male prerogative, so it is difficult for women to take part in such cultural practices (Brush *vd.*, 2009). Such a condition underlines the necessity for the research that looks at the cultural barriers faced by women when starting and growing their businesses.

The purpose of this study is to differentiate female entrepreneurship from general entrepreneurship by focusing on those elements that are unique to female entrepreneurship. Precisely, the project will examine those notions and fields which are found in female entrepreneurship, but which are either absent or neglected in general entrepreneurship. This evaluation is aimed at providing the female entrepreneurship literature with an original input and at remedying the existing deficiencies in the discipline (Marlow & Patton, 2005). Furthermore, this study endeavors to promote gender issues in entrepreneurship and contribute to the creation of gender-sensitive and more inclusive policies (Ahl & Nelson, 2010). The paper will help address the knowledge gap with respect to the differences between female and general entrepreneurship and the implications of those differences.

It is imperative that, on the foundation of the understanding of the dilemmas that female entrepreneurs go through, a series of strategies are developed to tackle the problems, thus ensuring the active involvement of women in the entrepreneurial ecosystem (S. L. Carter *vd.*, 2000). Finally, this research intends to not only construct a model of entreprene-

urship that is specific to female entrepreneurs but also extend this model to cover concepts and issues that have been inadequately addressed in the general entrepreneurship literature. This study, by virtue of its concentration on the unique circumstances and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, contributes to the promotion of gender consciousness within the field of entrepreneurship research.

## **1. Literature Review**

### **1.1. Women Entrepreneurship**

The interest and exploration of women's entrepreneurship as an independent research area have resulted in a surge of interest and research efforts in it. Initially, the domain of entrepreneurship has been highly male-dominant; consequently there were hardly any studies exploring women's entrepreneurship for a long period (Ahl, 2006). But, as the gender equality movements grew in strength and women gained a greater foothold in the business sector in different parts of the world, women startup companies were increasingly written about in the scholarly literature. This section discusses the concept of women's entrepreneurship, the primary theoretical models that seek to explain the phenomenon and the key results reported in the literature.

The development of women's entrepreneurship was directly linked to women's growing participation in the labor market. The increase in the proportion of women joining in labor sector in the 1970s led them to be more active in the economy and a new trend of women setting up their own firms was observed (Brush, 1992). But at that time, the research on entrepreneurship was highly male-biased, and there was no proper investigation into the particular characteristics that comprise women's entrepreneurship (S. L. Carter *vd.*, 2000).

The emphasis in the initial studies on women's entrepreneurship was on the disadvantages that women suffer due to their gender in the business environment and how these affect the process of their business creation. These studies indicated barriers like social capital deficits, financial access difficulties and gender role expectations as major hindrances for women business people. Such preliminary findings pointed out the necessity to embrace women's entrepreneurship from a new perspective (Ahmetaj *vd.*, 2023; S. Carter *vd.*, 2007).

In-depth considerations of women's entrepreneurship were initiated in the 1980s as a result of the expansion of entrepreneurship theories and the incorporation of gender differences into these theories (Aldrich & Cliff, 2003). The period marked the growing recognition of the view of women's entrepreneurship not only as an economic activity but also as a reflection of gender roles and social structures. This line of thought

broadened the conceptual framework of women's entrepreneurship, transforming it into a new area of research in the academic literature.

## **1.2. Entrepreneurship**

The critical role of entrepreneurship as an important factor behind growth, dynamism, innovation, and sustainability in modern economies has been highlighted. The topic of entrepreneurship, which is the subject of the literature, contains a number of subjects, including how individuals and organizations create new business opportunities, how they take advantage of these, and the consequences of these activities on society and the economy (Schumpeter, 1983; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). In this part, the key contemporary issues in entrepreneurship literature will be the conceptual development, historical background, theoretical models, and core themes that will be discussed in detail.

The concept of entrepreneurship has been part of economic literature for a longer period and the most common definition it has is the way processes are carried out, which are the activities that create commercial success (Van Praag, 1999). Today, it can be said that modern entrepreneurship was established by the work of Schumpeter (1934). The Schumpeterian view that entrepreneurs are the main engine of economic change and innovation has been widely accepted; He stated that creative destruction, a process that entrepreneurs initiate, leads to the formation of new markets and industries. Today, we still rely on Schumpeter's idea of focusing on innovation as the one essential pillar of entrepreneurship literature.

Another entrepreneur besides Schumpeter was Kirzner (1974) one who also saw entrepreneurship as an individual activity which is aimed at recognizing market disequilibria and acquiring the profits from them. He maintained that entrepreneurs are the ones who continuously keep an eye on the market, recognize the opportunities, and seize them. This model of entrepreneurship refers to the process of dynamic, as the economic factors can fluctuate; the entrepreneurs are the ones who get the reward from the unknown market.

Since the mid-20th century, the concept of entrepreneurship has been examined not only through different disciplines but also by way of new theories that have enriched original perspectives. As Knight (1921) expressed the idea, entrepreneurship can be approached as the process of decision-making in a risky environment where the issue of managing risk has become broader in this discipline. Drucker (1985) in his definition, he referred to entrepreneurship as the systematic application of innovation, which made the point that not only those who seize the opportunities but also those who create them are entrepreneurs.

The growth of the entrepreneurship issue has not only transformed it into a broader intellectual enterprise, but also its interplay with the other dimensions of our life, particularly the social and cultural ones, has grown. The 21st century has seen the emergence of new trends that entrepreneurship is driven by: globalization, digitalization, and sustainability, which have led to a reconceptualization of what entrepreneurship entails (Ács vd., 2009). This revolution resulted in the broadening and diversification of entrepreneurship literature.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Sample**

The qualitative research model that this study utilizes is content analysis, which is the main method for arranging and analyzing the data for clear patterns and meanings in the texts (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Krippendorff, 2004). This study is concentrating on the words women entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship that have been used in the titles and abstracts of the articles that are indexed in the Web of Science (WOS) database. To ensure the robustness of the dataset, it has been decided to include solely articles that were published in English and have been classified as scientific journals (Zhu & Liu, 2020). Two independent samples were used, both taken from WOS. The first assortment of six articles focused on women's entrepreneurship (keywords: women entrepreneurship, women's entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurships, women's entrepreneurships, women entrepreneur, women entrepreneurs, women's entrepreneurs, woman entrepreneurship, woman entrepreneurships, woman entrepreneur, woman entrepreneurs, female entrepreneurship, female entrepreneurships, female's entrepreneurships, female entrepreneur, female entrepreneurs, female's entrepreneurs), while the other one is for articles which examine general entrepreneurship (entrepreneurship, entrepreneur, entrepreneurships, entrepreneurs). Both sets consisted of papers that were only written in English up to 2025. With the dual-sample design, a comparison can be made, and with the help of the design, both the differences in the two concepts and the shared themes can be noticed.

### **2.2. Data Collection Instruments**

This research explores the majority of the articles that have qualified for inclusion in the scientific elite through bibliometrics. Such articles were used in this research based on the bibliographic software made available by the University of Laval. The software is web-based and easy to use and download for researchers from any university running a Java-enabled web/browser. The articles were extracted from the Web of Science (WOS) database. The Web of Science (WOS) database is a widely

used and trustworthy bibliographic database worldwide. Publishers that publish papers in the database only if they are of high quality, with a peer-reviewed system operational. This is the reason why the data used in this academic research is characterized by data reliability and validity (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). The database is mediated to a total of 39582 indexed science journal articles, with the majority being those from 2009 (1741).

This strong bibliometric basis and journal membership with high impact factor make WOS the database of choice for research that requires extensive bibliometric analyses (Gavel & Iselid, 2008). Only WOS-listed articles that were published in English and categorized as scientific journal articles were included in the dataset in a way that is consistent and strong. This type of entry selection correlates with the standards of bibliographic review processes and accordingly promotes the inclusion of the best scientific output in the dataset in a manner that is beyond doubt (De Bellis, 2009).

The rigor of WOS indexing is seen in the statistics of citation metrics and the standard of journal quality, which is why the data derived from the database is credible, and potential biases related to low-standard sources are also dealt with (Walters, 2017). Conversely, the use of the same articles from the WOS database positively bolsters the reproducibility of the study, as the database provides the researchers with the opportunity to repeat the searches by using the same keywords and filtering. Also, the database's full metadata is user-friendly and it eases tasks such as keyword extraction and network mapping, which facilitate comparative research between disciplines (Falagas *vd.*, 2008). In the present research, the keywords were "women" and entrepreneurship, which were the terms concerning which the local articles were defined in the WOS acquisition process. These keywords were used within the advanced search segment to find articles that contained the required phrase in their titles and abstracts. The use of the Web of Science ensures that the data collection process complies with the well-established standards for research work, which makes the findings of this study robust and of broad application in the field of entrepreneurship research.

### **2.3. Procedure**

The compilation of keywords that had been extracted from the articles was done with great care including merging synonymous and redundant terms into coherent lists. Upon receiving the final keyword lists, the researcher along with two experts in the fields of Economics and Administrative Sciences validated the lists (Bryman & Cramer, 2012; Patton,

2014). The methodological framework strengthened by these two interconnected samples is the basis for a broader view on women's entrepreneurship and general entrepreneurship through conceptual and thematic distinctions.

This research methodology comprised highly systematic steps that were designed to ensure accurate analysis of the data and dependable results.

*Searches in Web of Science Journals:* For each sample, the searches were carried out in journals that are logged into the Web of Science (WoS) database, in pursuit of the exact keywords. As a result, the process generated a total of 5058 articles on the subject of women entrepreneurship and 24038 articles related to general entrepreneurship.

*Keyword Extraction:* From the recognized articles, keywords were pulled and cataloged. Ultimately, this step resulted in the identification of 9070 keywords for women entrepreneurship and 31602 keywords for general entrepreneurship.

*Keyword Consolidation:* Similar keywords were carefully considered and merged into coherent, unified lists using a thesaurus file to minimize redundancy (e.g., combining "gender difference" and "gender differences") (Van-Eck & Waltman, 2023). Thus, the new number of keywords for women entrepreneurship was 8983 and 31385 for general entrepreneurship.

*Co-Occurrence Analysis:* The VOSviewer program was used to develop the co-occurrence lists for keywords. The analysis brought out 12027 co-occurrences for women entrepreneurship keywords, of which 2566 were directly women entrepreneurship related. Also, 45029 co-occurrences were found for general entrepreneurship keywords, with 6463 ones, which were directly related to general entrepreneurship. Co-word analysis (a text-mining technique) is a tool through which it is possible to show the connections between the keywords and work out the structural reasoning. This way of use illustrates the commonness of co-occurring pairs of keywords in the papers in the database and it is a useful method to interpolate their thematic links (Narong & Hallinger, 2023).

In order to observe the longitudinal development of the fields, a trend analysis was conducted as part of the procedural design. For each sample—women entrepreneurship and general entrepreneurship—the annual distribution of scientific articles indexed in the Web of Science database from 1975 to 2024 was identified. This temporal mapping provided a quantitative overview of how scholarly attention toward each concept evolved. By identifying the number of publications per year, this step enabled a comparative temporal assessment of the matu-

rity, rising interest, and possible saturation points in both research domains. Such a trend analysis is essential for capturing the historical dynamics of academic focus and for contextualizing the co-occurrence patterns of keywords observed in later stages of analysis. As Hamilton (2020) notes, trend analysis in bibliometric studies plays a critical role in detecting paradigm shifts and emerging subfields. Therefore, its inclusion in this study contributes not only to methodological rigor but also to a more comprehensive understanding of the academic evolution and thematic transformations within the literature.

*2024 Keyword Analysis:* To capture current academic interests and emerging topics, a separate keyword analysis was conducted exclusively on articles published in 2024. This allowed the identification of recent trends, thematic shifts, and unique research focuses that may differ from earlier periods. Such year-specific analyses are commonly used in bibliometric studies to reveal how research evolves in response to contemporary developments and societal changes (Deng & Qin, 2024).

*Analysis of Data and Displaying the Results:* The VOSviewer program played an important role in analyzing and interpreting the data received. Through this application, the relationships among the keywords were shown, the verbal structures were invented, and the major topics in each sample were brought to the notice of the reader.

This structured procedure guarantees a thorough and trustworthy survey of the conceptual and thematic differences between women's entrepreneurship and general entrepreneurship, their critical part in comparative analysis enriching them with precious insights.

#### **2.4. Data Analysis**

The use of keyword analysis to systematically analyze and compare the fields of women entrepreneurship and general entrepreneurship made it possible. The network maps were set by including only the keywords used in at least five studies (Van-Eck & Waltman, 2010). The original component of the study was to use VOSviewer software, which is a widely applicable program for bibliometric analysis. VOSviewer provided the possibility to visualize the connections and frequencies of keywords, which, in turn, gave the researchers insights into the conceptual and thematic structures of the fields that were analyzed. The creation of two separate network maps for the main keywords related not only to women entrepreneurship but also to general entrepreneurship was by these tools. These visualizations made it possible to see both the conceptual differences and similarities between the two fields and to comparison of their thematic and structural characteristics (Leydesdorff & Rafols, 2009). The examination of the analysis also included a direct

comparison of the most significant keywords uncovered for each concept. This comparison was the examination not only of the common problems of the thematic but also of the unique and oblique aspects of the two kinds of entrepreneurship. Besides that, the investigation was made to analyze and compare the annual publishing activity on each concept, which exposed the present patterns and trends of the publication of the journals for the years in question. Concurrently, a special stance was upon the comparison of the areas of research and related keywords for both disciplines in the year 2024. This lent a modern view of the actual discussion, enabling a more profound understanding of how two fields propose the introduction of more topics and difficulties. The methodology described is the one that identifies the key themes and trends, uncovers the vacuum in the literature, and offers future paths of research. Through identifying the differences and similarities by looking at the theme of keywords chronologically, the study hopes to provide thorough insights into both the special characteristics of each field and their interrelation (Flick, 2018).

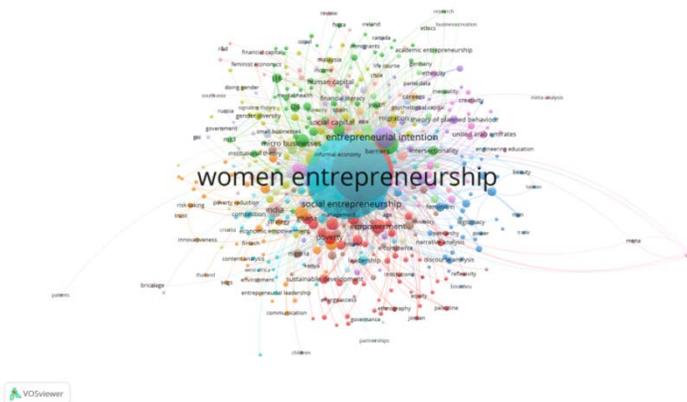
### 3. Findings

The findings obtained within the scope of this research are presented separately for women entrepreneurship and general entrepreneurship.

#### 3.1. Women Entrepreneurship

In this research, 5058 studies, 8983 keywords and 12027 co-occurrences were identified. At first, network diagrams were constructed based on the obtained keyword lists. The first of these, the women entrepreneurship diagram, is shown below.

**Figure 1.** Women Entrepreneurship Network Diagram



**Source:** Prepared by the author.

The visual representation of networks for women entrepreneurship is a panoramic view of the academic discussions around this field. Absolutely central to the network, the keyword women entrepreneurship is the main term, with a multitude of networked terms indicating trends in key research areas and thematic priorities. The diagram not only provides a deeper understanding of the literature pero it also shows the gaps and the emerging trends. One of the predominant themes is the concern with empowerment and gender. Terms such as empowerment, gender diversity, intersectionality, and feminism form a major cluster substantiating the preeminent position of gender factors and women's empowerment in the context of entrepreneurship.

These expressions display that women's experiences in management, the way they reconstruct realities, and the tactics they choose to employ are all influenced by societal factors, gender norms, and systemic inequities. Issues of the believer—the social and economic dimensions are also critically considered. Terms like social capital, poverty, economic empowerment, and developing countries illustrate the complementary dimensions existing in the women's entrepreneurship literature. These keywords represent how women's entrepreneurship is an instrument in minimizing socio-economic disparities and in promoting growth which is all-embracing. Education and forming institutions also appear as critical areas of inquiry. Keywords like entrepreneurship education, higher education, and institutions clarify the need for formal education, institutional support, and training programs to effectively grow women's entrepreneurial skills. This cluster also highlights the need for systemic changes in educational and institutional ecosystems for better support of women entrepreneurs.

The theme of innovation and technology is strongly represented in the network. Keywords such as innovation, digital entrepreneurship, and startups give evidence of women's increasing engagement with high-growth, technology-based industries. It is shown that women are contributing to the innovation agenda with these new businesses. However, the relatively low frequency of these terms suggests that more attention can be given to this area in the future. The network predominantly covers social and sustainable entrepreneurship as well. Terms such as sustainability, sustainable development, and social entrepreneurship are a sign of women's entrepreneurs that predominantly go along with broader social and environmental objectives.

This trend shows that women are key players in addressing such global problems as climate change, inequality, and poverty by their business models and sustainable practices. Territorial-wise, the keywords like India, Africa, and China draw attention to the research con-

centration in particular regions. It seems to be the influence of the socio-economic and cultural conditions on women's entrepreneurship in these areas. Also, terms like culture and intersectionality suggest a research effort on how the cultural and societal factors influence entrepreneurial practices. Lastly, methodological advancements are evident in keywords like systematic literature review, bibliometric analysis, and institutional theory. These words, which showcase the application of structured methodologies grounded on evidence, are now prevalent to improve the quality and credibility of research in this domain.

**Table 1.** Women Entrepreneurship Co-Occurrences List

	Keywords	Co-Occurrences	Total link strength	Total Co-occurrences	Co-occurrences percentage
Model 1	Women Entrepreneurship	2566	5617	12027	21,34%
	Entrepreneurship Entrepreneurial Intention	1410	3325	9461	14,90%
	Self-Employment	163	416	9461	1,72%
		156	361	9461	1,65%
Model 2	Smes	136	358	9461	1,44%
	Social Entrepreneurship	126	251	9461	1,33%
	Innovation	124	314	9461	1,31%
	Motivational Factors	95	260	9461	1,00%

**Source:** Prepared by the author.

Research on women's entrepreneurship, as the outcomes of this study indicate, is systematically related to topics such as entrepreneurship in general, motivation, and innovation. The abundance of social entrepreneurship and SMEs among the keywords illustrates that the field is increasingly concerned with the concepts of social value generation and small-sized enterprises. Moreover, the recurrent use of expressions like entrepreneurial intention and self-employment brings to the forefront the psychological and economic incentives of women's entrepreneurial endeavors. The further development of these themes denotes the authors' holistic understanding of the existing problems and prospects in female entrepreneurship. The study offered a detailed keyword analysis that creates a pathway for future research, underlining the areas such as the innovation role and women entrepreneur success motivational dynamics that need deeper research.

### 3.2. Entrepreneurship

In this research criteria resulted in a total of 24038 articles, 31385 keywords, and 45029 co-occurrences. In the first place, the entrepreneurship sector model was drawn by the use of the identified keywords.



organizational impacts. Keywords such as corporate social responsibility, strategy, and social impact underline the field's concentration on the exactitude of entrepreneurship's role in reaching societal and economic targets. Moreover, the network gives a lot of attention to innovation and entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which are seen as the personal abilities necessary for success in entrepreneurship or the use of new processes by entrepreneurs. Terms like motivation, entrepreneurial climate, and entrepreneurial knowledge are additional factors in the psychological and environmental aspects of entrepreneurship. Sustainability is one more area, with keywords such as sustainability, climate change, and frugal innovation indicating the higher commitment of entrepreneurship to environmental and social issues globally. These terms substantiate the shift towards confronting environmental conservation and economic inequality in the entrepreneurship narrative. The methodological terms like bibliometric analysis, systematic literature review, and co-word analysis are the ones that express the strong focus on state-of-the-art analytical methods in entrepreneurship research. These instruments result in a more coherent picture of the field. At last, the terms referring to specific regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and China, not only show the geographical mapping of entrepreneurship research but also point to possible gaps in the research of some regions needing to be covered further. All in all, the entrepreneurship network map is a comprehensive look into the field of entrepreneurship with its various themes, fresh trends, and areas for additional investigation. How spectrums support the idea that inclusive organizational cultures benefit performance through innovation. This diagram is a manifestation of the variety of subjects in the research and the entrepreneurial field is quite vast and has been examined concerning many different themes. It provides an important insight into the major topics in the area of entrepreneurship literature and the way they relate to one another.

**Table 2.** Entrepreneurship Co-Occurrences List

	Keywords	Occurrences	Total link strength	Total Co-occurrences	Co-occurrences percentage
Model 1	Entrepreneurship	6463	14190	45029	14,4%
	Social Entrepreneur	1117	2326	38566	2,9%
	Entrepreneurship Education	1087	2226	38566	2,8%
	Sustainability	700	1572	38566	1,8%
	Innovation	676	1667	38566	1,8%
Model 2	Gender	554	1688	38566	1,4%
	Entrepreneurship Intention	468	1176	38566	1,2%
	Social Capital	463	1170	38566	1,2%
	Innovation	446	1193	38566	1,2%
	Institutions	440	1107	38566	1,1%
	Sme	419	1125	38566	1,1%

**Source:** Prepared by the author

The review brings out the multifaceted character of general entrepreneurship studies. The terms that indicate social entrepreneur and sustainability broaden the view on the environmental and social responsibilities related to entrepreneurship. Conversely, the frequent mentioning of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship intention serves as the sign of the importance of the development of entrepreneurial skills and the comprehension of individual motivations. When this analysis is juxtaposed with women entrepreneurship, it becomes crystal clear that the general entrepreneurship literature is wider in scope, including aspects such as innovation, institutional frameworks, and gender dynamics. The discoveries that are made here not only give a complete account of the ongoing research trends but also point out the areas, such as the involvement of sustainability and social entrepreneurship in a variety of cultural contexts, that may benefit from further study.

### 3.3. Keywords Specific to Women’s Entrepreneurship

A major conclusion from this investigation is the presence of some keywords that are frequently found in the women’s Entrepreneurship literature but are rare or nonexistent in the general entrepreneurial literature. These keywords are necessary to comprehend the distinctive attributes of women's entrepreneurship and the topics of research in this area. The study data revealed that, for instance, certain keywords such as empowerment, work-life balance, microfinance, family business, and social capital appear frequently in the literature on women’s entrepre-

neurship but are rarely found in the general entrepreneurship literature. These terms refer to that women entrepreneurship is more focused on matters like gender roles, family responsibilities, and economic empowerment which in turn reflects the heelocking literature that is specific to the unique hurdles and chances that women entrepreneurs grapple with. As an instance, the word empowerment is used mostly in connection with gender equality when women's entrepreneurship is being talked about.

The economic empowerment of women has been identified as a very effective instrument for transformation at both individual and societal levels (Kabeer, 1999; Mosedale, 2005). The tendency of women's entrepreneurship literature to convey the concept of empowerment as part of the gender perspective interrelated with women's entrepreneurship development should also be noted. This is contrary to the situation in which, the promotion of the empowerment concept is less seen in the general entrepreneurship literature. This observation may mean that the general entrepreneurship research is most of the time seen from a gender-neutral point of view and gender roles are not addressed enough. The term work-life balance is another main keyword that is a focus of the challenges women have in balancing work and family responsibilities. Traditional gender roles have arranged women's tasks in the workforce as an area that must be balanced with family responsibilities (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Lewis, 1997). Discussion with the term work-life balance that is observed frequently in the women's entrepreneurship literature denotes the imperative nature of this balancing process for women entrepreneurs. The result was that this concept was considerably less researched than in the women's entrepreneurship literature. In other words, the entrepreneurship literature has been primarily approached from a gender-blind perspective, whereby gender-specific issues such as work-life balance are not or insufficiently researched.

Another interesting piece of information is the term microfinance, that is often used in the women's entrepreneurship literature. Microfinance is a financing model developed to provide financial services to low-income individuals, especially women (Yunus, 2007). Women's entrepreneurs getting funds through microfinance facilitates the realization of their independence and the start of their businesses. In comparison, the topic microfinance is a bit unheard of in the general entrepreneurship literature, which talks mostly about institutional and corporate entrepreneurship. This shows that the gender-related aspects of women entrepreneurs' financial problems are generally not covered in the broader entrepreneurship literature. The terms family business and

social capital also stand out in the women's entrepreneurship literature but are less emphasized in the general entrepreneurship literature. Family business indicates that women entrepreneurs often participate in entrepreneurial activities through family businesses (Danes *et al.*, 2009). Women tend to prefer family businesses that offer flexible working hours and environments compatible with family responsibilities. Social capital emphasizes the role of networking and social relationships in the empowerment and development of women entrepreneurs. For women entrepreneurs, social capital plays a critical role in accessing financial resources and expanding business networks (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988). These findings show in a clear way how women's entrepreneurship becomes different from the regular one. In addition to that, they also highlight the unique challenges and opportunities that are there in the case of women entrepreneurship.

The concentration of research on gender roles, family responsibilities, and economic empowerment in women's entrepreneurship has added a substantial extension to the literature. However, by merging such research with the general entrepreneurship literature, women's entrepreneurship will be discussed in a wider context and will also help in creating a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem.

In essence, these keywords specifically associated with women's entrepreneurship reflect the recognition of the unique challenges women face in the business environment and the strategies they employ to overcome them. Therefore, future research should explore these concepts in greater depth, and further efforts should be made to better integrate women entrepreneurship into the broader entrepreneurial literature. Highlighting the distinctive dimensions of women's entrepreneurship and incorporating them more extensively into mainstream research will significantly contribute to a more balanced and inclusive entrepreneurship scholarship.

### **3.4. Trend Analysis**

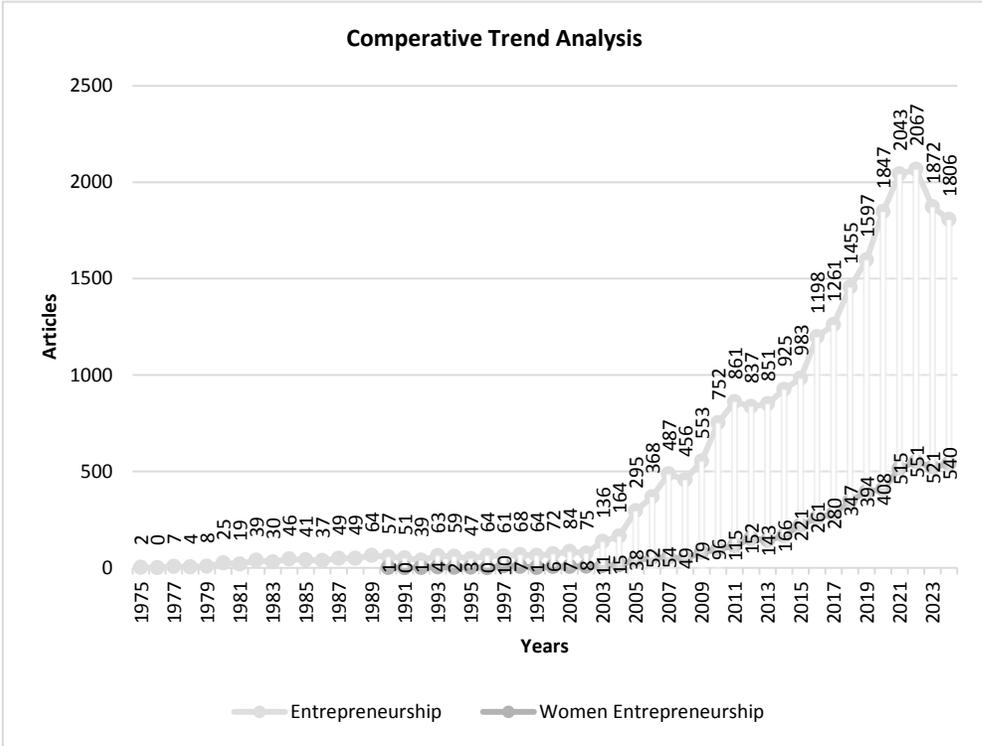
The trend analysis in the study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, the number of articles published for both samples up to 2025 was determined by year and presented in the graph below.

#### **3.4.1. Analysis by Number of Articles**

The analysis by the number of articles provides a temporal overview of the scholarly attention dedicated to both women entrepreneurship and general entrepreneurship. By examining the annual publication trends up to 2025, this analysis identifies the growth trajectories, thematic priorities, and shifts in academic focus within each domain. Such a comprehensive approach enables a deeper understanding of the evolving dynamics in entrepreneurship research, highlighting not only the areas

of significant scholarly interest but also potential gaps and underexplored topics. This examination serves as a foundational step in contextualizing the development of both fields and offers insights into their relative prominence and intersections over time.

**Figure 3.** Trend Analysis for Years



**Source:** Prepared by the author

A comparative trend analysis was conducted using data obtained from the Web of Science database, identifying 24,038 articles focused on entrepreneurship and 5,058 on women entrepreneurship published until 2025. The analysis demonstrates that general entrepreneurship has garnered significantly greater academic attention over the years, consistently yielding higher publication counts than women entrepreneurship. The earliest publication on entrepreneurship dates back to 1975, while scholarly attention to women entrepreneurship only began in 1990, indicating a 15-year delay in the inclusion of gender-specific discourse in entrepreneurship research. This chronological lag reflects a long-standing underrepresentation of women-focused themes within the broader entrepreneurial literature.

When the annual distribution is examined, a noteworthy rise in the number of publications in both fields begins around the early 2000s, gaining significant momentum particularly after the 2007–2008 global financial crisis. This pattern supports the idea that major economic shocks may serve as catalysts for both entrepreneurial activity and corresponding academic interest. For instance, periods of economic downturn often lead to increased unemployment and labor market instability, pushing individuals toward self-employment and small business creation as alternative income strategies. This phenomenon, referred to as "necessity entrepreneurship," has been widely discussed in the literature (e.g., Fairlie, 2013; Fritsch & Kritikos, 2020). The sharp increases in publication counts during this time—487 articles on entrepreneurship in 2007 rising to 752 in 2010—suggest that researchers responded to these structural changes by intensifying their examination of entrepreneurial phenomena.

Similarly, although the absolute number of women entrepreneurship articles remains significantly lower, its trajectory also mirrors this trend. After the global financial crisis, the number of related studies nearly doubled from 54 in 2007 to 96 in 2010. This may reflect a growing academic awareness of how crises disproportionately impact women in labor markets and the need to explore women's entrepreneurial responses to economic precarity.

The upward trend continued into the 2010s and early 2020s, peaking in 2021 for entrepreneurship (2,043 articles) and in 2022 for women entrepreneurship (551 articles). This sharp growth can be partially attributed to increased global interest in entrepreneurship education, innovation, and sustainability—areas that gained heightened visibility in post-crisis policy and development agendas. It also corresponds with increased funding and institutional support for entrepreneurship research during this period, particularly in OECD and emerging economies.

In 2024, publication counts declined slightly in both areas—1,806 articles for entrepreneurship and 540 for women entrepreneurship. While it is too early to determine if this decline represents a long-term trend or a short-term fluctuation, it may be partially linked to post-pandemic research redirection or shifting academic priorities.

Overall, the trend analysis reveals that despite consistent growth in both fields, women's entrepreneurship remains significantly underrepresented in academic discourse. However, its relatively stable and continuous rise suggests a gradual closing of the gap. The analysis highlights the importance of contextual factors, such as economic crises and global policy shifts, in shaping academic interest and research output. These findings support the need for more integrative and inclusive ent-

repreneurship studies that account for gender-specific experiences and challenges across different temporal and economic contexts.

### 3.4.2. Trend Analysis Based on Current Research Areas

At the present time of the research, the analysis was made only on the scientific articles that were published in 2024 for both samples. It is reported that this year, 540 articles concerning women entrepreneurship and 1,806 articles regarding the general entrepreneurship field have been released. A look at the keywords available in these articles revealed that at least 1% of the sample presents the overlapping of concepts, which are shown in the following table.

**Table 3.** Entrepreneurship 2024 Keyword Co-occurrence

	Keywords	Co-occurrences	Total link strength	Total Co-occurrences	Co-occurrences percentage
Model 1	Entrepreneurship	563	849	3183	17,7%
	Women Entrepreneurship	144	243	2620	5,5%
	Entrepreneurship Education	102	165	2620	3,9%
	Social Entrepreneurship	87	122	2620	3,3%
	Innovation	77	162	2620	2,9%
	Entrepreneurial Intention	66	133	2620	2,5%
	Gender	65	143	2620	2,5%
	Sustainability	46	83	2620	1,8%
	Sustainable Development	45	90	2620	1,7%
Model 2	Higher Education	44	81	2620	1,7%
	Sustainable Entrepreneurship	40	74	2620	1,5%
	Smes	39	74	2620	1,5%
	Education	37	93	2620	1,4%
	Covid-19	34	64	2620	1,3%
	China	31	47	2620	1,2%
	Digital Entrepreneurship	29	59	2620	1,1%
	Entrepreneurial Ecosystems	28	48	2620	1,1%
	Social Capital	28	52	2620	1,1%
	Systematic Literature Review	25	49	2620	1,0%

**Source:** Prepared by author

The primary concepts that stand out the most based on the co-occurrence analysis of entrepreneurship articles published in 2024. This pattern is important to spotting issues and themes at the centre of entrepreneurship research. With 563 co-occurrences and a total link strength of 849, entrepreneurship is identified as the most central concept in the literature. Women Entrepreneurship with 144 co-occurrences and a total link strength of 243 has it that it becomes a focus of increasing importance in entrepreneurship studies. Entrepreneurship Education with 102 co-occurrences evidences growing academic interest in the development of entrepreneurial skills, but the co-occurrences of Social Entrepreneurship (87) highlight that the aspect of societal benefits of entrepreneurship is being studied more nowadays. Innovation is mentioned at 77 co-occurrences and a total link strength of 162, demonstrating the role of innovation as a key issue in entrepreneurship literature. Entrepreneurial Intention (66 co-occurrences) is about the intentions of people to operate business activities and gender (65 co-occurrences) refers to the gender-based issue in entrepreneurship. Likewise, Sustainability (46 co-occurrences) and Sustainable Development (45 co-occurrences) signify the preoccupation with long-term social, environmental, and economic concerns in entrepreneurship research. Higher Education, with 44 co-occurrences, stresses the pivotal role of educational institutions in entrepreneurship promotion, yet, Digital Entrepreneurship, with 29 co-occurrences, is a study that looks into the effects of technological change on the way entrepreneurs do their work. In fact, Social Capital, with 28 co-occurrences, shows the value of relationship building and networks as vital pillars studied by researchers in entrepreneurship. Finally, the Systematic Literature Review, which has 25 co-occurrences, is a mark of the systematic methods in the literature. The overall sense of the analysis is that the 2024 entrepreneurship materials not only deal with general subjects but go into deep on social, societal, and innovative approaches. It shows the greater variety of the field through the multidisciplinary of entrepreneurship research and the exploration of key concepts.

**Table 4.** Women Entrepreneurship 2024 Keyword Co-occurrence

	<b>Keywords</b>	<b>Co-occurrences</b>	<b>Total link strength</b>	<b>Total Co-occurrences</b>	<b>Co-occurrences percentage</b>
Model 1	Women Entrepreneurship	151	151	789	19,1%
	Gender	136	182	638	21,3%
	Entrepreneurship	131	173	638	20,5%
	Women	28	51	638	4,4%
	Innovation	17	36	638	2,7%
	Social Entrepreneurship	17	19	638	2,7%
	Entrepreneurial Intention	15	19	638	2,4%
	Challenges	13	20	638	2,0%
	Smes	13	17	638	2,0%
	Economic Growth	12	22	638	1,9%
	Entrepreneurship Education	12	16	638	1,9%
	Self-Employment	10	19	638	1,6%
	Sustainability	10	16	638	1,6%
Model 2	Systematic Literature Review	10	21	638	1,6%
	Women Empowerment	10	8	638	1,6%
	India	10	13	638	1,6%
	Africa	9	10	638	1,4%
	Bibliometric Analysis	9	13	638	1,4%
	Developing Countries	9	24	638	1,4%
	Culture	8	13	638	1,3%
	Empowerment	8	14	638	1,3%
	Self-Efficacy	8	15	638	1,3%
	Social Capital	8	12	638	1,3%
	Startup	8	13	638	1,3%
	Intersectionality	8	12	638	1,3%
	China	7	9	638	1,1%
	Institutional Theory	7	6	638	1,1%

The analysis of the co-occurrence of women entrepreneurship articles released in 2024 is an avenue to garner a comprehensive insight into the prevalent themes and research priorities in this area. This investigation pointed out the enhancement of attention on gender-related issues and the exceptional challenges that women encounter in startup business development. Women Entrepreneurship frequently at the top of the list as the keyword with 151 co-occurrences, making up 19.1% of the total co-occurrences. The second place is held by Gender, which is notably close with 136 co-occurrences (21.3%) and then comes Entrepreneurship, bringing 131 co-occurrences (20.5%), all of which, according to the statistics, highlight the association of these words in the corresponding documents. Experience shows the importance of gender issues in women's entrepreneurship studies. The other substantial keywords are Women (28 co-occurrences, 4.4%), which are indicative of the focus on women's position and experiences in entrepreneurship, and the keyword Innovation (17 co-occurrences, 2.7%), which operates as evidence of the role of innovative methods in improving the condition of women entrepreneurs. In the same way, the keyword Social Entrepreneurship (17 co-occurrences, 2.7%) displays the influence of women-led businesses on the society. Additional keywords include such as Entrepreneurial Intention (15 co-occurrences, 2.4%) and Challenges (13 co-occurrences, 2.0%), which together point to the rationale behind women entrepreneurs and the issues that they experience, which typically differ from others. Furthermore, Smes (13 co-occurrences, 2.0%), Economic Growth (12 co-occurrences, 1.9%), and Entrepreneurship Education (12 co-occurrences, 1.9%) stand for the economic and the educational aspect of women entrepreneurship. The enlightening keywords that portray such as Self-Employment (10 co-occurrences, 1.6%), Sustainability (10 co-occurrences, 1.6%), and Women Empowerment (10 co-occurrences, 1.6%) capture the thrust of the literature on women's independence and sustainable enterprises. The identification of India's name (10 co-occurrences, 1.6%) and Africa (9 co-occurrences, 1.4%) as geographic terms includes regional viewpoints in the studies about women entrepreneurship. For instance, the keywords Developing Countries (9 co-occurrences, 1.4%) and Social Capital (8 co-occurrences, 1.3%) decrie the significance of the contextual and relational factors in enabling women entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the emergence of themes like Intersectionality (8 co-occurrences, 1.3%) and Institutional Theory (7 co-occurrences, 1.1%) are indicators of the widening theoretical spectrum in the discipline. To conclude, the exploration of the facets of women's entrepreneurship will be at the forefront of research in 2024,

which makes it a dynamic field with the major topics being gender issues, social impact, and empowerment. The finding sheds light upon the fact that it is necessary to continue investigating women entrepreneurship in various contexts and integrating it with general entrepreneurship training.

#### **4. Discussion**

The comparative analysis reveals the unique contributions of both women entrepreneurship and general entrepreneurship literature. While the former highlights gender dynamics and social impacts, the latter emphasizes systemic and economic factors. Bridging these streams offers a more integrated and inclusive understanding of entrepreneurial activity, as Marlow & McAdam (2012) suggested.

The network visualization of women entrepreneurship showcases themes like empowerment, gender, social capital, and sustainability, revealing its multidimensional nature. Keywords such as gender diversity, feminism, and intersectionality underscore how systemic inequalities shape women's entrepreneurial experiences. These findings are consistent with Brush et al. (2009), who highlight institutional discrimination and limited resources as persistent barriers. However, unlike earlier research focusing mainly on barriers, this study also emphasizes empowerment and agency as transformative forces.

The role of social capital, as conceptualized by Coleman (1988) and Bourdieu (1986), remains central. Women leverage networks, mentorship, and informal support systems where institutional backing is weak. This highlights how access to intangible resources facilitates participation. Furthermore, the integration of social and sustainable entrepreneurship in women-led initiatives aligns with global development goals (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). Nevertheless, the low visibility of keywords like "sustainable development" indicates the need for greater integration into mainstream discourse.

Geographic diversity is apparent in the keyword network, with references to regions like India, Africa, and Latin America. This supports Welter & Smallbone's (2011) call for contextual entrepreneurship research that accounts for cultural and socioeconomic variation. Despite some progress, the literature still lacks sufficient representation from underexplored regions and themes such as innovation and high-tech entrepreneurship. This gap is especially notable when comparing the women entrepreneurship literature with general entrepreneurship, where innovation is a more dominant theme (Drucker, 1985; Schumpeter & Nichol, 1934).

Structural constraints continue to limit women's participation in advanced sectors (Marlow & McAdam, 2013; Carter & Shaw, 2006). Bridg-

ing this divide requires interventions aimed at increasing access and equity. Methodologically, the field has advanced through bibliometric and systematic reviews, indicating a move toward evidence-based scholarship (Tranfield et al., 2003). This shift supports more reliable knowledge accumulation and addresses the fragmentation of prior research.

Entrepreneurship literature overall presents a dynamic and evolving field, encompassing social, corporate, and gender-related themes. The strong presence of corporate and social entrepreneurship confirms the relevance of Mair & Marti's (2006) and Zahra & Covin's (1995) perspectives. Yet, women's issues remain relatively isolated from discussions around innovation and technology, reinforcing the need for integration (Ahl & Marlow, 2012).

Innovation and entrepreneurial self-efficacy also emerge as essential dimensions. Schumpeter & Nichol (1934) emphasized innovation's role in addressing economic challenges, while Bandura's (1986) theory highlights how belief in one's ability influences entrepreneurial outcomes. The growing attention to sustainability and climate change further aligns with Dean & McMullen (2007), who advocated for incorporating societal concerns into entrepreneurial frameworks.

Keyword trends reveal persistent imbalances. General entrepreneurship emphasizes macro-level issues such as institutions and ecosystems, while women entrepreneurship is shaped more by structural equity and empowerment. Although both datasets include terms like innovation and social entrepreneurship, gender-specific keywords are scarce in the general literature. This supports Ahl's (2006) critique of gender-neutral approaches that overlook women's distinct challenges.

To overcome fragmentation, future research should integrate gendered insights into general frameworks and incorporate systemic enablers like institutions into women-focused research. Scholars such as Welter & Smallbone (2011) and Marlow & McAdam (2013) caution against isolating women entrepreneurship, noting that doing so can reinforce stereotypes. Blenker et al. (2011) further advocate for mutual learning between both streams to enrich entrepreneurship theory and practice.

Themes such as sustainability, social entrepreneurship, and digital transformation appear in both datasets, albeit unevenly. This overlap provides fertile ground for interdisciplinary collaboration. For instance, emphasizing empowerment from women's research could complement economic innovation in the general stream, encouraging a more holistic perspective on impact.

Fisher et al. (2010) and Eddleston & Powell (2012) highlight that gender-sensitive approaches improve policy design and practical interventions. By integrating these perspectives, we can construct a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. This study's findings contribute to this goal by showing how women entrepreneurship literature addresses gendered challenges, while general entrepreneurship offers broader systemic insight.

In sum, fostering cross-pollination between both literatures—combining economic and social lenses—can lead to more robust and equitable entrepreneurship research.

## 5. Conclusion

This study conducted a comparative bibliometric analysis to examine the conceptual and thematic differences between the fields of women entrepreneurship and general entrepreneurship. By analyzing 29,096 articles and more than 40,000 keywords indexed in the Web of Science until 2025, the study revealed distinct research patterns across the two domains. While women entrepreneurship literature was found to focus more on topics such as empowerment, gender, social capital, and intersectionality, the general entrepreneurship literature prioritized innovation, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and institutional frameworks.

The keyword co-occurrence and trend analyses highlighted not only the increasing academic interest in women entrepreneurship but also the relative underrepresentation of gender-sensitive themes in mainstream entrepreneurship studies. Additionally, the separate analysis of 2024 publications enabled the identification of emerging topics and helped illustrate how the two fields are currently evolving.

The findings emphasize the need to foster greater integration between the two fields and to support a more inclusive understanding of entrepreneurship. Future research should continue bridging these conceptual gaps and explore how gender dynamics intersect with broader entrepreneurial processes.

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