

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Special Issue

### **Entrepreneurship Beyond Ideologies: Decolonisation of Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Digital Transformation in the Emerging Economies – A Gendered Perspective**

### Guest editors

Dr. Charlotte Felix-Faure\* – IDRAC Business School

Dr. Fiona Armstrong Gibbs - Liverpool John Moores University

Dr Bridget Irene - De Montfort University, UK

Prof. Jessica Lichy – IDRAC Business School

For more information regarding the special issue please contact\*: [c.felixfaure@idrac-bs.fr](mailto:c.felixfaure@idrac-bs.fr)

### Submission Information

Opening date for submissions: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 .

Deadline for submissions: 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2025

Submitted articles must not have been previously published, nor should they be under consideration for publication anywhere else when submitted to or while under review for this journal. Therefore, please select 'original' for type of submission and 'yes' for special issue then select 'Entrepreneurship Beyond Ideologies' from the drop-down.

For submission guidelines, please refer to GWO's Author Guidelines here: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/14680432/homepage/forauthors.html>.

For questions about the submission system please contact the Editorial Office at [gwooffice@wiley.com](mailto:gwooffice@wiley.com).

## **Problem Identification**

The field of management and organizational studies has long been criticized for its predominantly Western-centric and outdated perspective, particularly Anglo-American (Emery & Trist, 1960; Kingston, 2014). Research in post-colonial theory, critical development studies, and critical management studies have highlighted that management knowledge has been primarily produced in North America and the United Kingdom, often neglecting the experiences, practices, and opinions of individuals and organizations from the rest of the world (Mazzocchi, 2006; Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2020). This neglect stems from a historical perspective that studied and interpreted non-Western societies from Western perspectives, despite significant cultural and value differences within and between these societies – including the degree of individualism and collectivism, with Western cultures leaning towards individualism and non-Western cultures, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, embracing collectivism (Naudé, 2022)

These imbalances are manifest in the world of scientific publishing, where the promotion of Western values have led to significant disparities in power dynamics and the distribution of resources based on gender and other social dimensions. Specifically, women entrepreneurs in emerging economies face these disparities even more acutely, as the concept of entrepreneurship itself carries a masculine and patriarchal subtext that obscures the role and experiences of others doing entrepreneurship (Lichy, 2023; Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2020; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). Gender inequalities and unequal resource distribution persist in technology entrepreneurship, with transactional networking norms often reinforcing exclusion and patriarchal male-dominance in social networks (Wheadon & Duval-Couetil, 2021).

## **Scope of the call**

To address these issues and encourage engagement, this call invites scholars to contribute research on how we can decolonize and degenderise sustainable digital transformation for

entrepreneurs in emerging economies. By prioritising the use of post-colonial and post structural epistemologies that explore the gendered structures and specific experiences of women and non-binary entrepreneurs which may hinder their engagement with technology adoption in their ventures. The call also emphasizes that this is vital for the sustainable entrepreneurial activities that contribute to economic development and recovery in emerging economies, especially those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This call invites all contributions with a gendered lens that are related to many topical issues facing entrepreneurs in emerging economies. Specifically, focussing on the diverse activities of women entrepreneurs and start-up leaders, many of whom have challenged the ‘industrial policy’ approach to economic development in their regions, exploring ways to harness the power of digital transformation for unlocking new business (cf., Irene, 2016; 2017). These women are breaking the glass ceiling by innovating in digital transformation, embracing sustainable approaches, and setting an example for future generations. This call offers an opportunity to publish research, insights, and strategies that can empower marginalised entrepreneurs, challenge western centric views of entrepreneurship and equally important, that can contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth and development in emerging economies. It encourages research and discussions in these areas, in order to foster meaningful progress toward gender equality, inclusivity, and sustainable entrepreneurship. Thus, the subsequent special issue will serve as a platform to address critical issues related to inclusive entrepreneurship, decolonization, and degenderization of digital transformation in entrepreneurship.

### **Theoretical Underpinning**

The field of management and organisational studies have in recent years been criticised for their characteristically Westo-centric (particularly Anglo-American) posture (Jack et al., 2011; Murphy & Zhu, 2012; Prasad, 2003). Research in fields such as post-colonial theory, critical development studies, and critical management studies have pointed out that management knowledge has been predominantly produced in and for North America and the United Kingdom. Thus, ignoring, silencing, and undermining the lived experiences, realities, practices, and opinions of people and organisations from the rest of the world (Banerjee &

Linstead, 2004; Currie et al., 2008; Dar & Cooke, 2008; Fougère & Moulettes, 2012; Prasad, 2003).

Historically, colonial powers (the West) viewed and studied non-Western (or former colonies from Western perspectives (Fougère & Moulettes, 2011). This, despite the fact that the worldviews, values, and cultures of these societies have a number of differences. One of the main differentiators is the degree of individualism and collectivism of these societies, and how that has an impact on epistemology, ontology, and axiology. Western civilisations are known to be less collectivist, while the non-Western ones, such as those of Sub-Saharan Africa, tend to be less individualistic. Therefore, Western values embrace independence, rationality, and autonomy, while non-Western societies embrace interdependence, communality, and values of harmonious co-existence (Chilisa, 2012; Metz, 2020).

Research focusing on North-South interactions, and power dynamics of a highly unbalanced nature, is particularly relevant for studying the interaction of Western concepts with Southern realities (Calas & Smircich 1999). Postcolonial perspectives decentralize subjectivity and question the equivalence of categories, or social markers, in other societies (Calas & Smircich 1999). They criticize narratives of "origins" in Western theories that might have excluded "natives", attributing to them markers such as "primitive", "traditional" or "less developed" (Felix-Faure & Klapper, 2024 - forthcoming). Studying entrepreneurship in contexts where resources are scarce or inaccessible deepens our fundamental understanding of entrepreneurship, and more broadly of management and business (Neal 2017; Felix-Faure, 2021).

Women entrepreneurs in emerging economies, in addition to having their lived experiences undermined by the Westo-centric, patriarchal entrepreneurship discourses, are subjected to a concept of entrepreneurship that is masculine in nature. The concept of entrepreneurship itself, though it is presented as gender-neutral, consists of a gender-subtext which masks maleness and therefore perpetuates the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity (Bruni et al. 2004). Undoubtedly, to study entrepreneurs in action while ignoring the gendered structure of the entrepreneurship concept is to validate the 'gender blindness' that renders masculinity invisible and anchoring it as the universal parameter of entrepreneurial action. Thus, making it the norm and standard model in which every entrepreneurial act must comply.

The apparent structure of power relations connecting different population groups (DiTomaso, et al., 2007) and the unequal distribution of resources based on gender and other social dimensions including, norms, attitudes, and ideologies concerning the role of women and non-binary entrepreneurs in society (Acker, 1992) are made evident in the context of technology entrepreneurship. For example, transactional networking in technology entrepreneurship is normalised while its (white) masculinist underpinnings are obscured by the rhetoric of 'gender neutrality' adopted by intermediary organisations (i.e., incubators and accelerators). Social networks then become a primary mechanism of exclusion from the labour market (Christopherson, 2009; Lutter, 2015) and are reinforced by societal gender norms about who can become a technology entrepreneur and engage in innovation processes (Schott & Cheraghi, 2014). “Maintaining white male network connections appears to provide significantly greater access to job information and high-status contacts than female- and minority-dominated networks. As such, gender and race segregation in social networks help to consolidate the resources advantages of white men, while also limiting female and minority access to these resources” (McDonald, 2011: 328).

Women's entrepreneurship in emerging economies is apparently the most important economic and social phenomenon currently being explored (Karim et al., 2022). Women entrepreneurs can make a key positive contribution to business creation (Sarpong et al., 2022) and financial growth (Hechevarría et al., 2019), as suggested by recent research (Vershina et al., 2020). A good understanding of entrepreneurship in different contexts is essential in order to determine whether and to what extent entrepreneurs contribute to economic growth and development economic development (Deng et al., 2020; Welter, 2011).

Businesses that implement digital transformation can reap many benefits, such as redesigning organisational structure, improving operational efficiency, enhancing customer experience, improving competitiveness, developing innovative business models and reducing operating costs (Garzoni et al., 2020). These benefits help SMEs to successfully adopt digital transformation, improve management efficiency and deliver goods and services.

In general, the benefits of adopting digital transformation for SMEs create good business opportunities, good conditions for building a culture of innovation, improve corporate governance and make effective use of government support and partnerships. These are favourable conditions for SMEs to clearly identify the determining factors for the application

of digital transformation. These conditions above, are most likely to occur within the context of developed countries, emerging country entrepreneurs face numerous hardships, and women are even more disadvantaged. Therefore, a more context sensitive digital entrepreneurship efforts may be encouraged so that the women may reap the many benefits it may bring.

To encourage engagement in these issues, this call invites contributions that can provide an overview of the need to address the challenges entrepreneurs face, especially linked to colonial and masculine epistemologies, to effectively engage in technology adoption in their business. This is essential for sustainable entrepreneurial activities for economic development and recovery of emerging economies that were severely impacted by the COVID 19 Pandemic. We therefore encourage the submission of contributions aiming to cover a wide range of topics such as (but not limited to):

- Sustainable Digital Transformation and Gendered Entrepreneurship
- Decolonisation of sustainable digital transformation: inclusivity, equitable access, cultural diversity
- Sustainability of digital entrepreneurship socially and environmentally
- Transactional Networking and Social Networks in Technology Entrepreneurship
- Decolonising Entrepreneurship Policy: local, national, and international contexts
- Policy interventions: gender disparities, anti-discrimination, funding processes
- Equitable support systems: mentorship, networking opportunities, resources
- Gender Inequality and Inequity and Digital Entrepreneurship
- Gendered Entrepreneurship in Digital, Cultural, and Institutional Contexts
- Digital Entrepreneurship in the informal sector
- The Role of Gender in Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies
- Resources, funding and support for Women and minorities in Technology Entrepreneurship
- Deconstructing Accepted Notions About Masculine and Feminine Notions in Digital Entrepreneurship
- Gendered Experiences of Entrepreneurs in Business incubators

## References

- Banerjee, S.B. and Linstead, S., 2004. Masking subversion: Neocolonial embeddedness in anthropological accounts of indigenous management. *Human relations*, 57(2), pp.221-247.
- Bruni, A., Gherardi, S. and Poggio, B., 2004. Doing gender, doing entrepreneurship: An ethnographic account of intertwined practices. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 11(4), pp.406-429.
- Calás, M.B., Smircich, L. and Bourne, K.A., 2007. Knowing Lisa? Feminist analyses of gender and entrepreneurship. *Handbook on women in business and management*, pp.78-105.
- Currie, G., Humphreys, M., Ucbasaran, D. and McManus, S., 2008. Entrepreneurial leadership in the English public sector: paradox or possibility?. *Public Administration*, 86(4), pp.987-1008.
- Cheraghi, M. and Schott, T., 2014. Size, diversity and components in the network around an entrepreneur: Shaped by culture and shaping embeddedness of firm relations. *State of the art applications of social network analysis*, pp.339-358.
- Dar, S. and Cooke, B. eds., 2008. *The new development management: Critiquing the dual modernization*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Deng, W., Liang, Q., Fan, P. and Cui, L., 2020. Social entrepreneurship and well-being: The configurational impact of institutions and social capital. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 37, pp.1013-1037.
- Emery, Frederick & Trist, Eric (1960). Socio-technical systems. In: Churchman C.W., Verhulst M. (Ed.) *Management Science Models and Techniques*, Oxford, UK: Pergamon, p 83-97.
- Felix-Faure, P. C. R. (2021). *Fostering Inclusive Entrepreneurship in South African Townships: A Contextual Analysis* (Doctoral dissertation, Université Grenoble Alpes; University of Witwatersrand (Afrique du Sud)).

- Felix-Faure P. C. & Klapper R. (2024). The Influence of Path Dependence on Entrepreneurial Behaviour in Relation to Apartheid Institutional Legacies within South African townships. *Revue d'Entrepreneuriat/Review of Entrepreneurship*
- Figuroa-Domecq, C., de Jong, A., & Williams, A. M. (2020). Gender, tourism & entrepreneurship: A critical review. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 84(June). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.102980>
- Fougère, M. and Moulettes, A., 2011. A postcolonial reading of Hofstede's culture's consequences. In *Against the grain: Advances in postcolonial organization studies* (pp. 276-301). Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Fougère, M. and Moulettes, A., 2012. Disclaimers, dichotomies and disappearances in international business textbooks: A postcolonial deconstruction. *Management Learning*, 43(1), pp.5-24.
- Garzoni, A.; De Turi, I.; Secundo, G.; Del Vecchio, P. Fostering digital transformation of SMEs: A four levels approach. *Decis. Sci.* 2020, 58, 1543–1562. [CrossRef]
- Ge, T., Abbas, J., Ullah, R., Abbas, A., Sadiq, I., & Zhang, R. (2022). Women's entrepreneurial contribution to family income: innovative technologies promote females' entrepreneurship amid COVID-19 crisis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 828040.
- Hechavarria, D., Bullough, A., Brush, C. and Edelman, L., 2019. High-growth women's entrepreneurship: Fueling social and economic development. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 57(1), pp.5-13.
- Karim, S., Kwong, C., Shrivastava, M. and Tamvada, J.P., 2023. My mother-in-law does not like it: resources, social norms, and entrepreneurial intentions of women in an emerging economy. *Small Business Economics*, 60(2), pp.409-431.
- Kingston, W. (2014). Schumpeter and the end of Western Capitalism. *Journal of Evolutionary Economics*, 24(3), 449-477.
- Kuschel, K., Ettl, K., Díaz-García, C., & Alsos, G. A. (2020). Stemming the gender gap in STEM entrepreneurship—insights into women's entrepreneurship in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 16(1), 1-15.
- Lichy, J. (in press). Understanding the impact of cultural dynamics on millennial entrepreneurs' work practices in transition economies, *Management International* (accepted 03 August 2023).



- Jessica Lichy: Wood, B. P. (2022). Beyond decolonising—some thoughts on the future of marketing/marketing research in the Gulf/ME/NA region. *Arab Economic and Business Journal*, 14(1), 8-16.
- Jessica Lichy: Konadu-Osei, O. A., Boroş, S., & Bosch, A. (2022). Methodological decolonisation and local epistemologies in business ethics research. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-12.
- Jessica Lichy: Weston, A., & Imas, J. M. (2018). Resisting colonization in business and management studies: from postcolonialism to decolonization. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative business and management research methods*, 1, 119-137.
- Jessica Lichy: Todd, R. (2012). Young urban Aboriginal women entrepreneurs: social capital, complex transitions and community support. *British journal of Canadian studies*, 25(1), 1.
- Jessica Lichy: Clarke, R., & Lewis, R. M. (2016). Re-configuring inclusion, decolonising practice: Digital participation and learning in Black women's community-led heritage. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, 22(2), 134-151.
- Marlow, S., & Martinez Dy, A. (2018). Annual review article: Is it time to rethink the gender agenda in entrepreneurship research? *International Small Business Journal: Researching Entrepreneurship*, 36(1), 3–22.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242617738321>
- Mazzocchi F. (2006). Western science and traditional knowledge. Despite their variations, different forms of knowledge can learn from each other. *EMBO reports*, 7(5), 463–466.  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/sj.embor.7400693>
- McDonald, S., 2011. What's in the “old boys” network? Accessing social capital in gendered and racialized networks. *Social networks*, 33(4), pp.317-330.
- Naudé, L. (2022). Identity in Sub-Saharan Africa. In *Non-Western Identity: Research and Perspectives* (pp. 11-32). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Neal, S., 2017. On the tensions of universities as a social institution—developing a comparative sociology of higher education. *Ethnic and racial studies*, 40(13), pp.2285-2292.
- Ozkazanc-Pan, B., & Clark Muntean, S. (2018). Networking towards (in) equality: Women entrepreneurs in technology. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 25(4), 379-400.
- Poggesi, S., Mari, M., De Vita, L., & Foss, L. (2020). Women entrepreneurship in STEM fields: literature review and future research avenues. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 16, 17-41.

- Prasad, A., 2003. Postcolonial theory and organizational analysis: A critical engagement. Springer.
- Sarpong, D., Nyuur, R. and Torbor, M.K., 2022. Careers of commercially successful female entrepreneurs in context of underdeveloped markets and weak institutions. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 28(3), pp.698-719.
- Suseno, Y., & Abbott, L. (2021). Women entrepreneurs' digital social innovation: Linking gender, entrepreneurship, social innovation and information systems. *Information Systems Journal*, 31(5), 717-744.
- Vershinina, N., Rodgers, P., Tarba, S., Khan, Z. and Stokes, P., 2020. Gaining legitimacy through proactive stakeholder management: The experiences of high-tech women entrepreneurs in Russia. *Journal of Business Research*, 119, pp.111-121.
- Welter, F. (2011). Contextualizing entrepreneurship—conceptual challenges and ways forward. *Entrepreneurship theory and Practice*, 35(1), 165-184.
- Wheadon, M., & Duval-Couetil, N. (2021). Token entrepreneurs: A review of gender, capital, and context in technology entrepreneurship. *Understanding Women's Entrepreneurship in a Gendered Context*, 142-170.