



IE UNIVERSITY

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION /  
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DISENTANGLING GENDER IN SOCIAL  
ENTERPRISES:  
FROM ANTECEDENTS TO VENTURE OUTCOMES.

—

ENTENDIENDO EL GÉNERO EN LAS EMPRESAS  
SOCIALES: DE ANTECEDENTES A RESULTADOS.

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SEGOVIA, 2020



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de antecedentes a resultados.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This doctoral dissertation explores the role of gender in the creation and development of social enterprises. The first chapter establishes the need for research at the intersection of women entrepreneurship and social enterprises. The second chapter discusses the role of gender in social entrepreneurship's research by providing a systematic overview of the literature. This chapter is useful in providing a guide for the remaining chapters in that it helps to understand how women, in terms of their gender, affect the development of social enterprises. This leads to the third chapter whereby means of a single-case study, we aim to examine the role and impact of women leading social enterprises. In order to gain a comparative perspective, the fourth chapter highlights the contextual factors affecting social entrepreneurs through a critical approach to the study of the interrelation between gender and social entrepreneurship. Finally, the last chapter develops the main conclusion of this dissertation: women make a difference in social forms, confirming that gender indeed influences entrepreneurial leadership in social ventures. This last chapter also lays the ground for future research and implications for practice.

## RESUMEN

Esta tesis doctoral explora el papel del género en la creación y desarrollo de las empresas sociales. El primer capítulo presenta la necesidad de estudiar la intersección entre mujeres emprendedoras y empresas sociales. El segundo capítulo trata del papel del género en la investigación sobre emprendimiento social, proporcionando para ello una revisión sistemática de la literatura. Este capítulo sirve de guía para los capítulos restantes en tanto en cuanto permite comprender cómo las mujeres, en términos de género, afectan al desarrollo de las empresas sociales. Esto nos lleva al tercer capítulo, en el que, mediante un estudio de caso único, pretendemos examinar el papel y el impacto de las mujeres que se encuentran al frente de las empresas sociales. Con el fin de obtener una perspectiva comparativa, el cuarto capítulo destaca los factores contextuales que afectan a los emprendedores sociales. Para ello se ha aplicado un enfoque crítico que permite estudiar la interrelación entre género y emprendimiento social. Para finalizar, el último capítulo desarrolla la conclusión principal de la presente tesis: las mujeres marcan la diferencia en las formas sociales, lo que confirma que el género sí influye en el liderazgo emprendedor de las empresas sociales. Este último capítulo sienta asimismo las bases para posteriores estudios e implicaciones prácticas.

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## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Because of the involvement of human subjects, the IRB approval from IE Research Committee was obtained before the interview referred to in Chapter 2 was conducted.

Overall, scrupulous consideration of ethical guidelines was in place during the whole research process to date.

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# CHAPTER 1.

## INTRODUCTION

### **Thesis overview**

[T]he term 'gender', which was first coined by psychologists and then used by feminists to get away from the biologicistic referent of the word sex, is now virtually synonymous with the latter word. Yet by using [the word] gender, we are using a shorthand term which encodes a very crucial point: that our basic social identities as men and as women are socially constructed rather than based on fixed biological characteristics. (Young, 1988, p. 93)

The relation of gender and business has been the object of different research avenues but in the entrepreneurship arena it has not been considered of high importance (Ratten, Ramadani, Dana, Hisrich, & Ferreira, 2017) and gender has been mainly considered a variable in entrepreneurship research (Cromie, 1987). Still, the latest findings that claim the influence of gender over a person's attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making process (Ratten et al., 2017) have revamped the interest towards a new view of gender as an influence (Marlow, 2020). Furthermore, the rising of women at the forefront of economic growth coupled with the rising of women-led ventures has triggered a new interest in entrepreneurship research to deepen our understanding of its gendered nature (Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2004a, 2004b). This new perspective of gender led to an update of its definition as "social practices and representations associated with femininity and masculinity" (Ahl, 2006, p. 544).

It also called for the use of a gendered perspective to study the influence and role of gender in entrepreneurship (Jennings & Brush, 2013). As Acker (1990) claims: “Gender is not an addition to ongoing processes, conceived as gender neutral. Rather, it is an integral part of those processes, which cannot be properly understood without an analysis of gender” (p. 146).

Feminist scholars (Ogbor, 2000) have argued the need to employ a critical feminist stance to overcome the dominant men’s narratives and discourses that bias entrepreneurship research and practices (Nilsson, 1997). To cap such perceptions, Bailey, Leo-Rhynie, & Morris (2000) call researchers to “adopt feminist approaches to building theory and knowledge” (p. 1). Similarly, Martin (2003; 2006) calls to study how femininities and masculinities are enacted, and Marlow (2014; 2020) proposes that gender critique prevail over the “bias embedded within current theorizing” (2020, p. 1). Finally, Pecis (2016) calls to apply a “doing and undoing gender approach” (p. 2118) as a way to overcome gender blindness and allow “researchers to capture the shaping and performing of specific notions of gender” (p. 2119). Despite this shift in research analyses within the entrepreneurial arena, former entrepreneurial gender research largely consists of studies comparing men and women (Henry, Foss, & Ahl, 2016). As a result, there is a prevailing view of entrepreneurship that leads to skewed knowledge such as that men exhibit a higher level of entrepreneurial intention (Goktan & Gupta, 2015) or that, overall, men are more interested in pursuing entrepreneurial avenues (Díaz-García & Jiménez-Moreno, 2010).

This thesis is hence inspired by a social construction of gender and engages in the conversation to consider innovation—in our case, social innovation—“as

a gendered social practice” (Pecis, 2016, p. 2118) that affects its development and performance. Additionally, the concurrent growing recognition of the importance of the role women play in the entrepreneurial process (Sullivan & Meek, 2012) and of the influence of gender in business behaviors (Ferreira, Fernandes, & Ratten, 2017) have set the stage for more research into women-led enterprises. Our research takes a proactive stance concerning the appreciation of the role played by women in ventures within the social entrepreneurial context.

### **Women entrepreneurship and social enterprises**

A step forward for research on women entrepreneurs was posited by Brush, De Bruin, & Welter (2009) through the development of their gender-aware framework to promote their study. Since then, much of the literature on women’s entrepreneurship has mainly followed two paths. On one hand, one research avenue emphasizes the contextual elements affecting women’s entrepreneurship (De Bruin, Brush, & Welter, 2007). On the other, the effort has focused on the challenges experienced by women and how to overcome them to foster women entrepreneurship, and thus diversity, from an economic development point of view (Jamali, 2009).

That men and women differ in motivations for starting a venture has been known for a while. Back in 1992, Brush observed that differences between men and women business owners had been found in educational and occupational background, approach to venture creation and business goals and performance. More recently, Malach-Pines & Schwartz (2008) concluded that empowerment

was one of the reasons that motivated women to start their own venture. Similarly, Petridou, Sarri, & Kyrgidou (2009) concluded that women are driven by a will to improve their work-life balance. Still, other researchers such as Sarri & Trihopoulou (2005), have noted fundamental similarities between men and women entrepreneurs, most notably in terms of key motives, such as the desire for independence or self-achievement, or the tendency to have an internal locus of control.

The objective of this chapter is to set the stage for more research around women entrepreneurs in the context of social entrepreneurship.

Social entrepreneurship and in particular its main stream —social enterprises— are growing areas of practice that underpin women’s increasing influence. In this study, *social entrepreneurship* is understood as “the activity developed by individuals or groups of people to create, sustain, distribute and/or disseminate social or environmental value in innovative ways through enterprise operations, which could be either a social enterprise, non-profit, private or public institution” (Granados, Hlupic, Coakes, & Mohamed, 2011, p. 198-199). While a *social enterprise* is defined as “an organizational form with primarily social drivers that undertakes innovative business operations to be auto sustainable and guarantees the creation, sustainment, distribution and/or dissemination of social or environmental value. Therefore, economic drivers are means to a social end, not the end in itself” (Granados et al., 2011, p. 199).

This growing presence of women in social enterprises is partly explained by their care-giving nature. Women are driven to set up social ventures as a means

to “social provisioning, maintaining relationships, helping others and helping nature” (Hechavarria, Terjesen, Ingram, Renko, Justo, & Elam, 2017, p. 5).

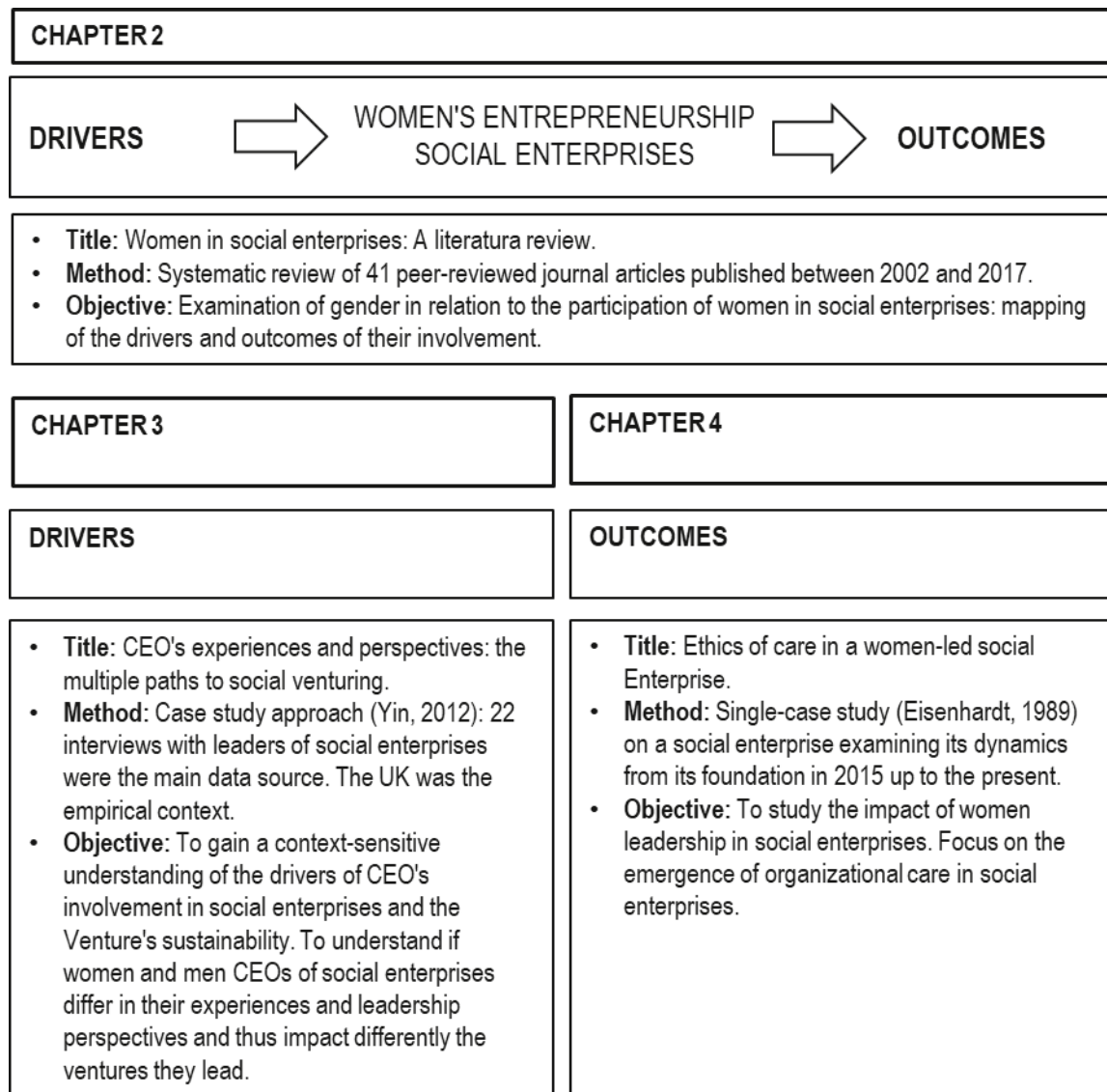
In focusing on how social entrepreneurship promotes certain gender balance, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) provides an interesting gender breakdown of the world’s social entrepreneurs, estimating that “55 percent [are] male and 45 percent are female” (Bosma, Schøtt, Terjesen, & Kew, 2016, p. 5). Although the gender gap between men and women is smaller in social enterprises than in commercial entrepreneurship (Terjesen, Bosma, & Stam, 2016), men-led ventures still outnumber those led by women.

Despite the rising interest, research to date assessing whether gender is truly a determinant factor that drives women’s involvement in social businesses has been anecdotal (Hechavarria, Ingram, Justo, & Terjesen, 2012). Furthermore, scant attention has been paid to (a) the link between the notions of gender and social enterprises and (b) how the involvement of women in social enterprises is enacted and constitutes an integral part of the social enterprise’s outcome. In this study, the concept of outcomes follows the definition coined by Campopiano, De Massis, Rinaldi, & Sciascia (2017) in their study of women’s involvement in family firms: “Outcomes are any effect derived or engendered through the involvement of women” (p. 5). Thus, by providing an examination of gender in relation to the participation of women in social enterprises, we aim to assess both the nature and the impact of their involvement in social enterprises.

## Overview of chapters

In order to guide the research, there is an overarching question through the thesis: Is gender a lens or a variable in the discourse and research of women and social enterprises? This question led to the organization of research as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

*Figure 1.1. Research model (authors' compilation).*



Chapter 2 presents our efforts to unveil the state of the art in women's entrepreneurship within the social enterprise arena. A systematic literature

review was conducted of articles published between 2002 and 2017, totaling 41 peer-reviewed journals. The examination of gender in relation to the participation of women in social enterprises led to a unique categorization of women's involvement depicting its drivers and outcomes from an economic and non-economic standpoint. This categorization led to an understanding of the contextual factors affecting women as entrepreneurs in social enterprises. Furthermore, it led to partially answering the research question: at the motivational level, gender is "just" a variable that drives involvement similarly to other variables such as religion, family, etc. However, when looking at the outcomes of women's involvement, our research unveils that gender is a lens and should be used as a context to study how women impact the companies they lead. Finally, our review exposes that there is indeed an underlying link between the drivers and outcomes of women's involvement in social enterprises. For women, the social entrepreneurship start-up process is an upward journey: as the venture evolves women become more business-like and so do their ventures.

This second chapter is thus useful in providing a guide for the following chapters, as it raises important questions. Based in the discussion above, the third chapter aims to further our understanding of the underlying drivers-outcomes relationship by looking in particular at the entrepreneurial drivers of both men and women social entrepreneurs and their influence on the venture's performance (see the study model on figure 1.2). Hence, this chapter contextualizes social entrepreneurship through a gender approach exploring whether women and men CEOs perceive and experience a similar involvement

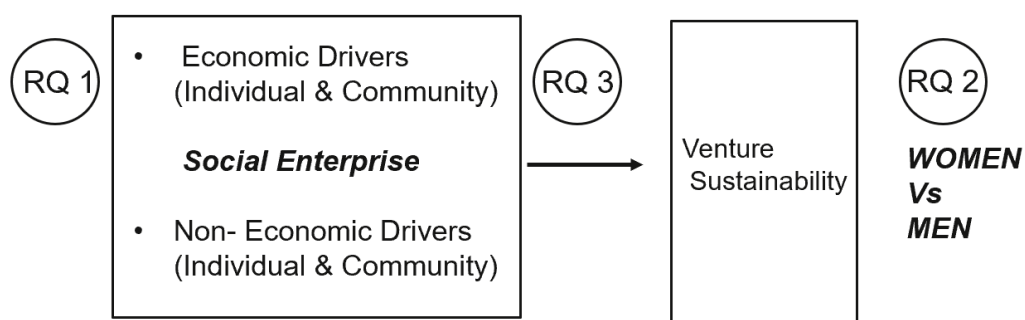
in social ventures. By observing the differences in their participation through a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) approach, the study seeks to develop a more critical approach to study the interrelation between gender and social entrepreneurship. In particular, we examined the intertwined factors influencing involvement in social enterprises and the role of gender in shaping the formation and management of social ventures by highlighting the differences between women- and men-led social ventures' performance in terms of venture survival. Furthermore, the results will suggest an answer to the following underlying research questions around the role of gender in social ventures:

RQ1: Are men and women driven by the same motives when starting a venture? How does gender affect entrepreneurial drivers in social ventures?

RQ2: Do men and women impact similarly the social enterprises they lead?

RQ3: Do the drivers influence venture sustainability? What role does gender play in the social venture's sustainability?

*Figure 1.2 Study model for Chapter 3 (authors' compilation).*



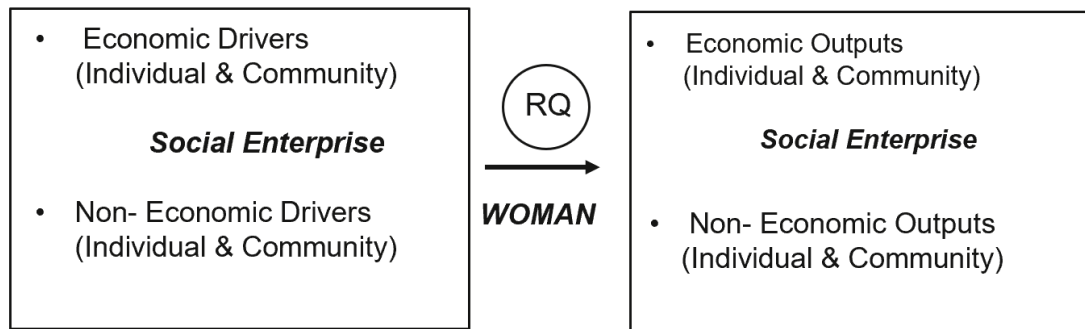
Our findings confirm the premises derived from the former chapter. On one hand, that gender is an important variable affecting the motivation to start a social enterprise, along with other important variables such as personal history,

family, etc. On the other hand, that when CEOs engage in managing the social ventures, gender as a lens emerges both in the design of the business model to achieve the intended social impact, and in the way tensions derived from the hybrid nature of social enterprises are managed, ultimately impacting the ventures' sustainability. Finally, our results have shown that, in general terms, gender fully mediates the relationship between drivers and venture's outputs.

This leads us to reflect on whether women are better social entrepreneurs than men. The results showed that both men and women can succeed as social entrepreneurs, but women are more successful social entrepreneurs in terms of venture survival. This can partly be due to the fact that men are more driven by economic and individual drivers. Hence, when there is a mismatch between their motives for launching a social venture and the outcomes they perceive from it, they prefer to discontinue the business and move on.

This discussion provided an additional research question for a new study, which constitutes Chapter 4 of this research: How do women affect the development of social enterprises? What is specific about the social business context that warrants the causal relationship between a woman's specific characterization of leadership and the social venture she leads?

Figure 1.3. Study model for Chapter 4 (authors' compilation).



In this fourth chapter, a single-case study is used to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of women leading social enterprises. Adopting an ethics-of-care point of view (Gilligan, 1995; Noddings, 2002), we analyze when, and how a woman CEO impacts the social enterprise she launches and manages from inception to scale-up phase. The study examines how a woman CEO built a caring organization to facilitate the harmonization of the hybrid goals in the social enterprise. It also addresses the emergence processes whereby care comes to be practiced in an organization and the impact these care practices have on organizational performance.

Examining the founder and CEO's evolution as a caring leader, driven by her own motivational factors and aspirations to contribute to society's development, allowed us to look at how this impacted the organizational life cycle and development characteristics of her venture. Furthermore, it influenced the current business growth and development of the venture into a sustainable one with a business model that fosters the scaling of its social mission. Our empirical findings made it evident that the founder's gender attitudes and motivations imprint the venture's development for value creation and sustainability. And, though the study's scope could be expanded to a wider

population, it contributed to confirm former findings in our initial study in Chapter 3, namely, that gender impacts the outcome of women's involvement in social enterprises.

Regarding gender-managerial leadership performance, this study highlights that women perceive leadership in a transformational style (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration), which is in line with former research by Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen (2003). The exhibition of this managerial leadership style allowed the social entrepreneur to launch the company and grow it in a caring manner that impacted venture performance. Additionally, it fostered a caring yet empowered organizational environment that promotes innovation, proactivity, and collective risk-taking. As asserted formerly by Palalić, Ramadani, Dana, & Ratten (2018), "employees in such environment, have a chance to transform themselves into prospective leaders in organizations" (p. 263).

Finally, in Chapter 5 we discuss how our findings inform future research for scholars already researching women's entrepreneurship and social enterprises. This closing chapter also emphasizes the practical implications of our studies and motivates readers to appraise the role of women both in social enterprises and society at large.



# CAPÍTULO 1.

## INTRODUCCIÓN

### **Perspectiva general de la tesis**

[E]l término *género*, acuñado inicialmente por psicólogos y usado posteriormente por los feministas para alejarse del referente biológico de la palabra *sexo*, es en la actualidad prácticamente sinónimo de esta última palabra. Sin embargo, al usar [la palabra] *género*, estamos usando una abreviatura que codifica un aspecto crucial: que nuestras identidades sociales básicas como hombres y mujeres son producto de una construcción de carácter social, más que de unas características biológicas fijas. (Young, 1988, p. 93)

La relación entre género y negocios ha sido objeto de distintas perspectivas de investigación, pero en el ámbito del emprendimiento no se ha considerado de particular relevancia (Ratten, Ramadani, Dana, Hisrich y Ferreira, 2017) y se ha considerado el género principalmente como una variable en la investigación sobre el emprendimiento (Cromie, 1987). No obstante, los últimos hallazgos que reivindican la influencia del género en las actitudes, comportamientos y procesos de toma de decisiones de una persona (Ratten et al., 2017) han revitalizado el interés por considerar el género como una influencia (Marlow, 2020). Por otra parte, el ascenso de las mujeres al frente del crecimiento económico unido al incremento de empresas lideradas por mujeres ha provocado un interés renovado en la investigación sobre el emprendimiento con

el fin de profundizar en su componente de género (Bruni, Gherardi y Poggio, 2004a, 2004b). Esta nueva perspectiva de género dio lugar a que se actualizara su definición como «prácticas sociales y representaciones asociadas con la feminidad y la masculinidad» (Ahl, 2006, p. 544). Asimismo, hizo un llamamiento a usar una perspectiva de género para estudiar la influencia y el papel del género en el emprendimiento (Jennings y Brush, 2013). En palabras de Acker (1990): «El género no es un añadido a los procesos actuales, concebidos como neutros respecto al género. Más bien es una parte integral de dichos procesos, que no pueden comprenderse adecuadamente sin un análisis de género» (p. 146).

Los académicos feministas (Ogbor, 2000) han alegado la necesidad de aplicar una mirada feminista crítica para superar las narrativas y discursos dominantes de los hombres que sesgan la investigación y las prácticas sobre el emprendimiento (Nilsson, 1997). Para limitar dichas percepciones, Bailey, Leo-Rhynie y Morris (2000) llaman a los investigadores a «adoptar enfoques feministas para crear teoría y conocimiento» (p. 1). De igual modo, Martin (2003; 2006) hace un llamamiento a estudiar cómo se plasman las feminidades y masculinidades, y Marlow (2014; 2020) propone que la crítica de género prevalezca sobre el «sesgo integrado en las teorías actuales» (p. 1). Por último, Pecis (2016) llama a aplicar un «enfoque de composición y descomposición del género» (p. 2118) como forma de superar la insensibilidad o los sesgos al género y permitir que «los investigadores plasmen los procesos mediante los cuales se forjan y se ponen en práctica los diferentes roles de género» (p. 2119). A pesar de este cambio en los análisis de investigación en emprendimiento, con

anterioridad la mayoría de las investigaciones sobre género en emprendimiento consistía en comparativas de estudios de hombres y mujeres (Henry, Foss y Ahl, 2016). El resultado es una visión predominante del emprendimiento que provoca un conocimiento distorsionado, como que los hombres muestren una mayor actitud emprendedora (Goktan y Gupta, 2015) o que, en general, los hombres tengan mayor interés en perseguir la vía emprendedora (Díaz-García y Jiménez-Moreno, 2010).

Nuestra tesis, por tanto, se inspira en la construcción social del género y participa en la conversación para considerar la innovación (en nuestro caso, la innovación social) «una práctica social de género (Pecis, 2016, p. 2118) que afecta a su desarrollo y rendimiento. Asimismo, y en paralelo, el reconocimiento cada vez mayor de la importancia del rol que desempeñan las mujeres en el proceso emprendedor (Sullivan y Meek, 2012) y de la influencia del género en los comportamientos empresariales (Ferreira, Fernandes y Ratten, 2017) sientan las bases para que haya más investigación sobre las empresas dirigidas por mujeres. Nuestra investigación adopta una actitud proactiva respecto al reconocimiento del papel desempeñado por las mujeres en empresas dentro del contexto de las empresas sociales.

## **Emprendimiento de mujeres y empresas sociales**

Brush, De Bruin y Welter (2009) dieron un paso adelante en la investigación sobre las mujeres emprendedoras al desarrollar un marco conceptual con perspectiva de género con el fin de promover su estudio. Desde entonces, gran parte de la literatura sobre emprendimiento de mujeres ha seguido

principalmente dos vías. Por una parte, una línea de investigación hace hincapié en los elementos contextuales que afectan al emprendimiento de mujeres (Bruin, Brush y Welter, 2007). Por otra parte, se han centrado los esfuerzos en los desafíos a los que han de hacer frente las mujeres y en cómo superarlos para fomentar el emprendimiento de mujeres, y por ende también la diversidad, desde el punto de vista del desarrollo económico (Jamali, 2009).

Que hombres y mujeres se diferencian en los motivos por los que crean una empresa es sabido desde hace tiempo. Ya en 1992, Brush observó que existían diferencias entre empresarios y empresarias en cuanto a su educación, experiencia profesional y la forma en la que plantean la creación de una empresa, los objetivos y el rendimiento de la misma. Más recientemente, Malach-Pines y Schwartz (2008) concluyeron que el empoderamiento era una de las razones que motivaban a las mujeres a crear su propia empresa. Petridou, Sarri y Kyrgidou (2009) concluyeron asimismo que las mujeres se mueven por el deseo de mejorar su conciliación entre vida laboral y personal. No obstante, otros investigadores, como Sarri y Trihopoulou (2005), han señalado similitudes fundamentales entre mujeres y hombres emprendedores, y empresarios, más concretamente en cuanto a los motivos principales, como el deseo de independencia o autorrealización, o la de ejercer poder y control.

El objetivo de este capítulo es sentar las bases para que se investigue más sobre las mujeres emprendedoras en el contexto del emprendimiento social.

El emprendimiento social, y en especial su principal vertiente —las empresas sociales— son áreas de actuación que cimientan la creciente influencia de las mujeres. En este estudio se entiende por *emprendimiento*

*social* «la actividad desarrollada por personas o grupos de personas con el fin de crear, mantener, distribuir y/o divulgar valor social o medioambiental de modos innovadores a través de operaciones empresariales, que podrían ser una empresa social, una organización sin fines de lucro, o una institución pública o privada» (Granados, Hlupic, Coakes y Mohamed, 2011, p. 198-199). Por su parte, *empresa social* se define como «forma organizativa con motivaciones principalmente sociales que adopta operaciones empresariales innovadoras para ser autosostenible y que garantiza la creación, el sostenimiento, la distribución y/o divulgación de valor social o medioambiental. Los factores económicos, por tanto, son un medio para un fin social, no el fin en sí mismo[s]» (Granados et al., 2011, p. 199).

Esta creciente presencia de mujeres en las empresas sociales se explica en parte por su naturaleza cuidadora. Las mujeres se ven motivadas a crear empresas sociales como un medio para «prestar servicios sociales, cultivar relaciones, ayudar a otras personas y ayudar a la naturaleza» (Hechavarria et al., 2017, p. 5).

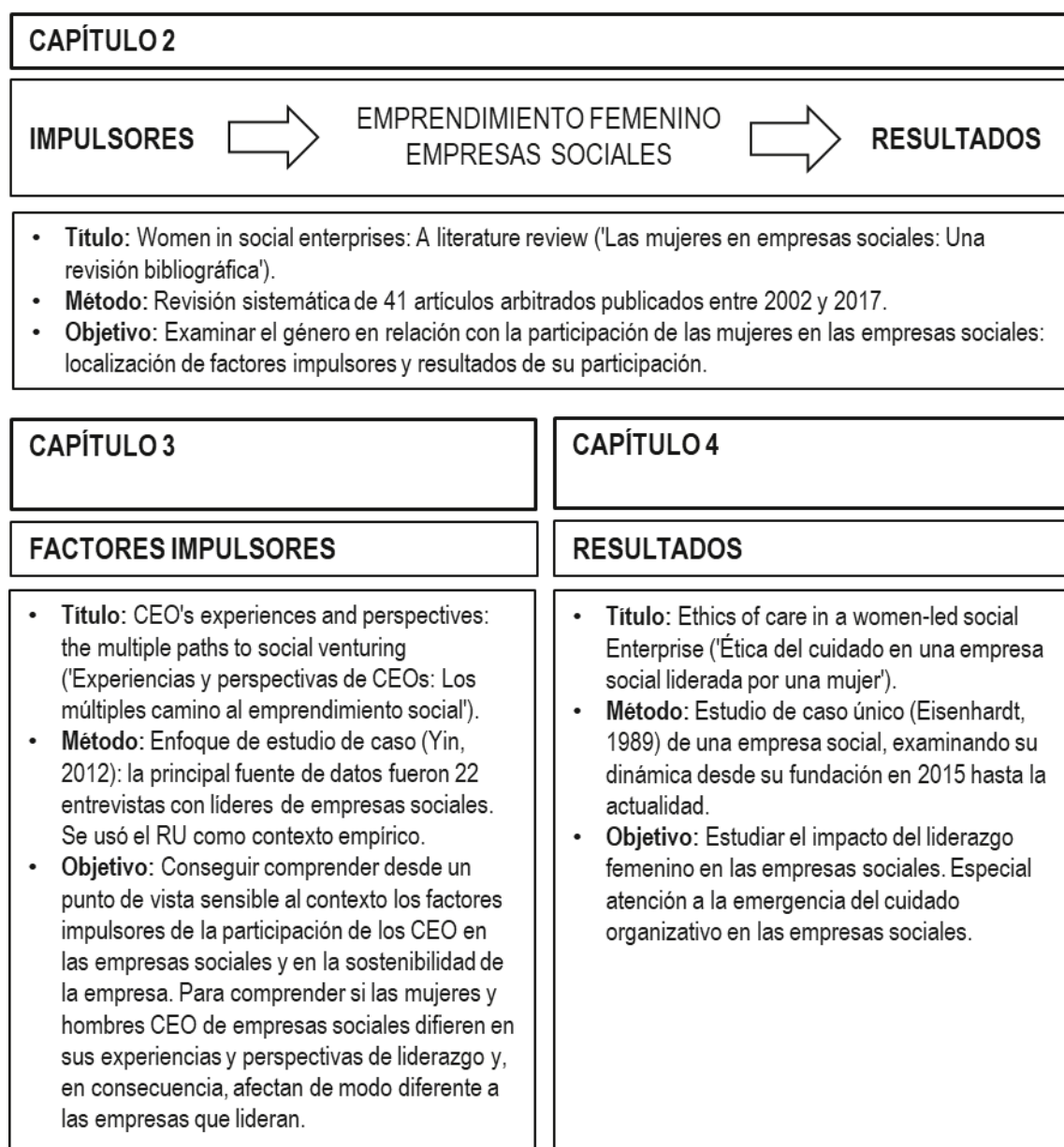
Al centrarse en cómo el emprendimiento social promueve un cierto equilibrio de género, el Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) proporciona un interesante desglose por género de los emprendedores sociales del mundo, y estima que «el 55 % [son] hombres y el 45 % son mujeres» (Bosma, Schøtt, Terjesen y Kew, 2016, p. 5). Aunque la brecha de género entre hombres y mujeres es menor en las empresas sociales que en las comerciales (Terjesen, Bosma y Stam, 2016), las empresas dirigidas por hombres siguen superando en número a las dirigidas por mujeres.

A pesar del creciente interés, hasta el momento la investigación para valorar si el género es en efecto un factor determinante en la participación de las mujeres en las empresas sociales ha sido anecdótica (Hechavarria, Ingram, Justo y Terjesen, 2012). Por otra parte, se ha prestado escasa atención a (a) la relación entre el rol de género y empresas sociales y (b) cómo se desarrolla la participación de las mujeres en las empresas sociales y cómo esa participación supone un elemento fundamental en el resultado de la empresa social. En este estudio, el concepto de resultados sigue la definición proporcionada por Campopiano, De Massis, Rinaldi y Sciascia (2017) en su estudio sobre la participación de las mujeres en las empresas familiares: «Los resultados son cualquier efecto derivado o generado a través de la participación de las mujeres» (p. 5). Así, pues, al proporcionar un examen del género en relación con la participación de las mujeres en las empresas sociales, pretendemos valorar tanto la naturaleza como el impacto de su participación en dichas empresas.

### **Descripción general de los capítulos**

Existe una pregunta común que sirve de hilo conductor a toda la tesis: ¿Es el género una lente o una variable en el discurso y la investigación sobre las mujeres y las empresas sociales? Esta pregunta llevó a organizar el estudio como se muestra en la Figura 1.4.

Figura 1.4. Modelo de investigación (compilación de las autoras).



El Capítulo 2 presentan nuestros esfuerzos por descubrir la situación actual del emprendimiento de mujeres dentro del ámbito de la empresa social. Se llevó a cabo una revisión sistemática de artículos publicados entre el 2002 y el 2017, sumando un total de 41 revistas arbitradas. El examen del género en relación con la participación de las mujeres en las empresas sociales dio lugar a una categorización única de la participación femenina que reflejaba sus

motivaciones y resultados desde puntos de vista económicos y no económicos. Esta categorización dio lugar a la comprensión de los factores contextuales que afectan a las mujeres como emprendedoras en empresas sociales. Asimismo, dio lugar a una respuesta parcial a la pregunta de investigación: a nivel de motivación, el género no es más que una variable que impulsa la participación de modo similar a otras variables como la religión, la familia, etc. Sin embargo, cuando se observan los resultados de la participación femenina, nuestra investigación revela que el género es una lente y debería usarse como contexto para estudiar cómo influyen las mujeres a las empresas que dirigen. Por último, nuestra revisión revela que existe de hecho una relación subyacente entre los factores que motivan e impulsan la participación femenina en las empresas sociales y los resultados de la misma. Para las mujeres, el proceso de puesta en marcha de una empresa social supone un proceso ascendente: a medida que la empresa evoluciona, las mujeres se vuelven más comerciales y lo mismo les ocurre a sus empresas.

El segundo capítulo, por tanto, resulta útil como guía de los siguientes capítulos, ya que plantea interesantes preguntas de investigación. Basándose en el anterior debate, el tercer capítulo pretende contribuir al conocimiento de la relación subyacente entre factores impulsores y resultados observando en particular los factores que motivan a ambos emprendedores y emprendedoras sociales, y la influencia de los mismos en el rendimiento de la empresa (véase el modelo de estudio en la figura 1.5). Así pues, este capítulo contextualiza el emprendimiento social a través de un enfoque de género al explorar si las y los CEO perciben y experimentan una participación similar en las empresas

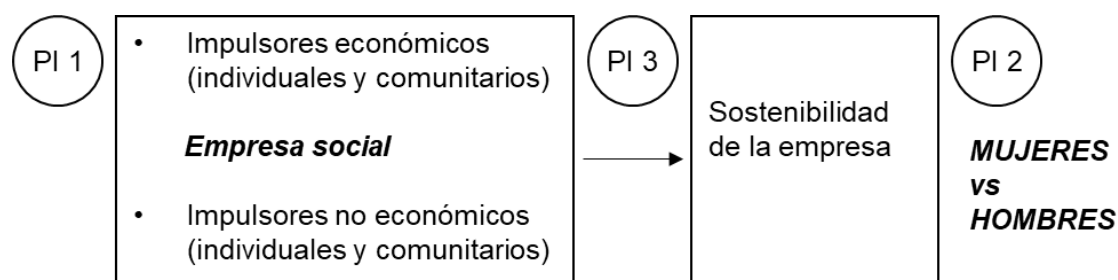
sociales. Mediante la observación de las diferencias en su participación a través de un análisis cuali-cuantitativo comparado (QCA), el estudio busca desarrollar un enfoque más crítico para estudiar la interrelación entre género y emprendimiento social. En concreto, examinamos la interrelación entre los diferentes factores que influyen en la participación en las empresas sociales y la función que desempeña el género en la formación y la gestión de las empresas sociales haciendo especial hincapié en las diferencias de rendimiento (entendido como supervivencia de las empresas) entre las empresas dirigidas por hombres y las dirigidas por mujeres. Por otra parte, los resultados sugerirán una respuesta a las siguientes preguntas de investigación relacionadas con el rol del género en las empresas sociales:

PI1: ¿Se mueven hombres y mujeres por los mismos motivos a la hora de poner en marcha una empresa? ¿Cómo afecta el género a los factores impulsores del emprendimiento social?

PI2: ¿Afectan e influyen de modo similar los hombres y mujeres a las empresas sociales que gestionan?

PI3: ¿Influyen los factores impulsores en la sostenibilidad de la empresa?  
¿Qué papel desempeña el género en la sostenibilidad de la empresa social?

*Figura 1.5. Modelo de estudio para el Capítulo 3 (compilación de las autoras).*

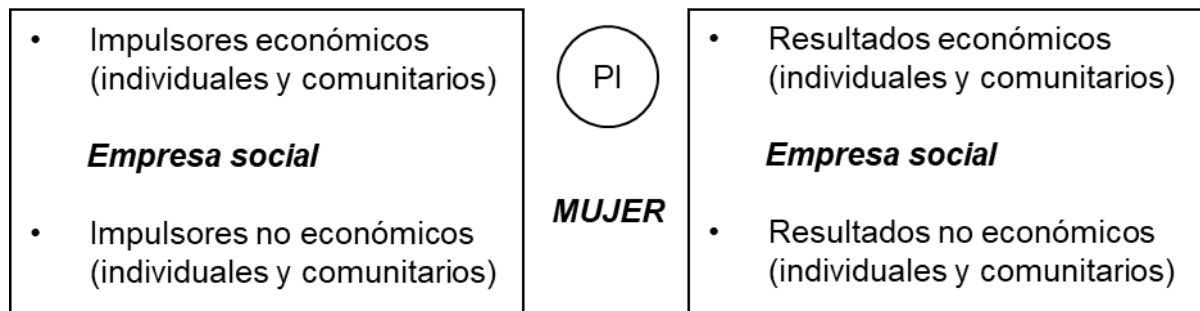


Nuestros hallazgos confirman las premisas derivadas del capítulo anterior. Por una parte, que el género es una variable importante que afecta a la motivación para lanzar una empresa social, junto con otras variables relevantes como la historia personal o la familia. Por otra parte, que en la gestión de las empresas sociales el género como lente aflora tanto en el diseño del modelo empresarial para alcanzar el impacto social deseado como en la forma en que las tensiones derivadas de la naturaleza híbrida de las empresas sociales se gestionan y afectando en última instancia a la sostenibilidad de la empresa. Por último, nuestros resultados muestran que, en general, el género interviene plenamente en la relación entre factores impulsores y resultados de la empresa.

Esto nos lleva a reflexionar sobre si las mujeres son mejores emprendedoras sociales que los hombres. Los resultados mostraron que tanto hombres como mujeres pueden tener éxito como emprendedores sociales, pero que las empresas sociales lideradas por mujeres tienen mayor ratio de supervivencia. Esto puede deberse en parte a que los hombres se mueven más por motivaciones económicas e individuales. Así pues, cuando existe un desajuste entre aquello que les llevó a poner en marcha una empresa social y los resultados de la misma, los hombres prefieren discontinuar la empresa y pasar página.

Esta discusión proporcionó una pregunta de investigación adicional para un nuevo estudio, que constituye el Capítulo 4 de esta investigación: ¿Cómo afectan las mujeres al desarrollo de las empresas sociales? ¿Qué elemento específico existe en el contexto empresarial social que garantiza la relación causal entre el tipo de liderazgo de una mujer y la empresa social que dirige?

Figura 1.6. Modelo de estudio para el Capítulo 4 (compilación de las autoras).



En el cuarto capítulo se usa un único caso monográfico para comprender más en profundidad el efecto de las mujeres que dirigen empresas sociales. Adoptamos una perspectiva de ética del cuidado (Gilligan, 1995; Noddings, 2002) para analizar cuándo y cómo una CEO afecta a la empresa social que crea y gestiona desde sus inicios hasta escalarla. El estudio examina cómo una CEO construyó una organización comprometida para facilitar la armonización de los objetivos híbridos en la empresa social. Asimismo, aborda los procesos por el que emerge el cuidado y el compromiso a través de la organización y el impacto que estas prácticas tienen en el rendimiento organizativo.

Examinar la evolución de compromiso y cuidado como líder de la fundadora y CEO, que se movía por sus factores motivacionales y aspiraciones personales para contribuir al desarrollo de la sociedad, nos permitió observar cómo esto influía en el ciclo de vida de la organización y en desarrollo de características específicas de su empresa. Por otra parte, esto influyó en el crecimiento del negocio y su desarrollo hasta convertirse en una empresa sostenible con un modelo empresarial que fomenta el escalado de su misión social. Nuestros hallazgos empíricos ponían de manifiesto que las actitudes de género y las motivaciones de la fundadora dejan su impronta en la capacidad de creación de valor y sostenibilidad de la empresa. Y, si bien se podría haber abarcado una

población mayor en la investigación, el estudio contribuyó a confirmar hallazgos de nuestro estudio del Capítulo 3; en concreto, que el género influye y afecta al resultado de la participación de las mujeres en las empresas sociales.

Respecto a la relación entre género y desempeño del liderazgo directivo, este estudio destaca que las mujeres perciben el liderazgo en su vertiente transformacional (influencia idealizada, motivación inspiradora, estimulación intelectual y consideración individual), lo cual concuerda con investigaciones anteriores de Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt y Van Engen (2003). La exhibición de este estilo de liderazgo directivo permitió a la emprendedora social crear la empresa y hacerla crecer de una manera cuidadora (*caring*) que afectó al rendimiento de la empresa. Asimismo, la empresa fomentó un entorno organizativo comprometido a la vez que empoderado que promueve la innovación, la proactividad y la asunción conjunta de los riesgos. Como ya habían afirmado Palalić, Ramadani, Dana y Ratten (2018) anteriormente: «los empleados que se encuentran en ese entorno tienen una oportunidad de transformarse a sí mismos en potenciales líderes de organizaciones» (p. 263).

Por último, en el Capítulo 5 abordamos cómo nuestras conclusiones pueden guiar futuras para los académicos que ya se encuentren investigando el emprendimiento de mujeres y las empresas sociales. Este capítulo de conclusión hace asimismo hincapié en las implicaciones prácticas de nuestros estudios y motiva a los lectores a valorar el papel y rol de las mujeres tanto en las empresas sociales como en la sociedad en general.

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## **CHAPTER 2.**

# **GENDER - FROM VARIABLE TO LENS IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISES: A LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA FOR WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN SOCIAL VENTURES**

### **Abstract**

The link between gender and social enterprises remains relatively under-researched. In this paper, through a systematic review of 41 peer-reviewed articles published between 2002 and 2017, we provide a broad examination of women's involvement in social enterprises. Our review helps to map and categorize this emerging theme by clustering existing contributions in two topics drivers and outcomes. As a result, several research gaps are singled out, inducing new theoretical and methodological suggestions where gender lens is the context and research locus.

### **Keywords**

Women's involvement, gender, social enterprises, systematic literature review, context, lens, future research.

## **Introduction**

Social entrepreneurship is a growing arena that underpins women's increasing influence. As a result, the gender gap is smaller in social enterprises, with an estimated "55 percent [are] male and 45 percent are female" (Bosma, Schøtt, Terjesen, & Kew, 2016, p. 5). Previous research has highlighted the care-giving nature of women as one of the main drivers of their social entrepreneurial involvement. Indeed, social enterprises have been seen as a vehicle for "helping others and helping nature". As such, there is a consensus around the idea that social enterprises proliferate in sectors such as social care, education and health, with a strong traditional presence of women (Addicott, 2017).

Despite the rising interest among practitioner's research to date to empirically assess women's involvement in social enterprises has been anecdotal (Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2004; Hechavarria, Ingram, Justo, & Terjesen, 2012). Prior reviews have been useful to start mapping this emerging research on women in social enterprises (Granados, Hlupic, Coakes, & Mohamed, 2011; Lehner & Kansikas, 2013; Smith, 2013, or Fotheringham & Saunders, 2014), although their narrow scope is insufficient to define the participation of women in social enterprises and move the field forward.

Our review is particularly timely because there has been increased attention from scholars to the emerging research of women in social enterprises, with most articles of this rising topic published during the period 2012 to 2018. Thus, it calls to take stock of the accumulated research to date of women in social enterprises and offer significant contributions. Furthermore, despite the

significant academic growth, scant attention has been paid to fully understand “the nature of women’s contribution and impact in this sector” (Marlow, 2014, p. 111). Hence, this paper aims to systematically assess women’s involvement in social enterprises: how it is enacted and which outcome it entails.

By providing an examination of the participation of women in social enterprises, we aim to understand whether there are significant and differential drivers that make women more attracted than men to social enterprises. And by depicting the roles they play, their management and leadership style, we aim to highlight how they impact their ventures, ultimately contributing to the previous literature on women entrepreneurship.

We follow this goal through an overarching question, trying to understand whether, as Marlow (2014) asserted, gender is a lens in the discourse and research of women and social enterprises or, on the contrary, it should be merely considered a variable. It is through this question that we will be able to draw a line between drivers and outcomes. There are several merits in pursuing such an examination.

First, the latest systematic literature review conducted on social entrepreneurial intention (Tan, Hahn, & Xuan, 2019) highlighted that only one of the reviewed articles, Salhi (2018), covered the process from social entrepreneurial intention to the behavior of the entrepreneurs. Concluding that social entrepreneurial intention does not determine behavior. By using a gendered approach, we aim to further explore the link between motivations and behaviors to surface the impacts women have in their ventures. Similarly, among popular press, practitioners have begun to document good practices of women-

led social business with the aim to create “a more gender-inclusive sector” as “women represent an untapped potential to create sustainable growth and address environmental and social issues” (Py & Barthélemy, 2019, p. 2). Our review hence tries to empirically assess if there are significant differences in women’s involvement in social enterprises that support the call for specific measures that promote women’s presence in this sector.

The review’s main contribution is the mapping and clustering of existing research into two main topics: drivers and outcomes. In doing so we also unfold the mechanisms underlying the drivers-outcomes relationship that characterize women’s involvement in social enterprises. Along with these two main contributions, we aim to take the academic debate to the next step through the identification of major research gaps and potential future research agenda.

## **Literature review methodology and descriptive findings**

The importance of developing a systematic literature review (SLR) as an enabler of a holistic reflection and synthesis of the current state of a research field has already been discussed (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003).

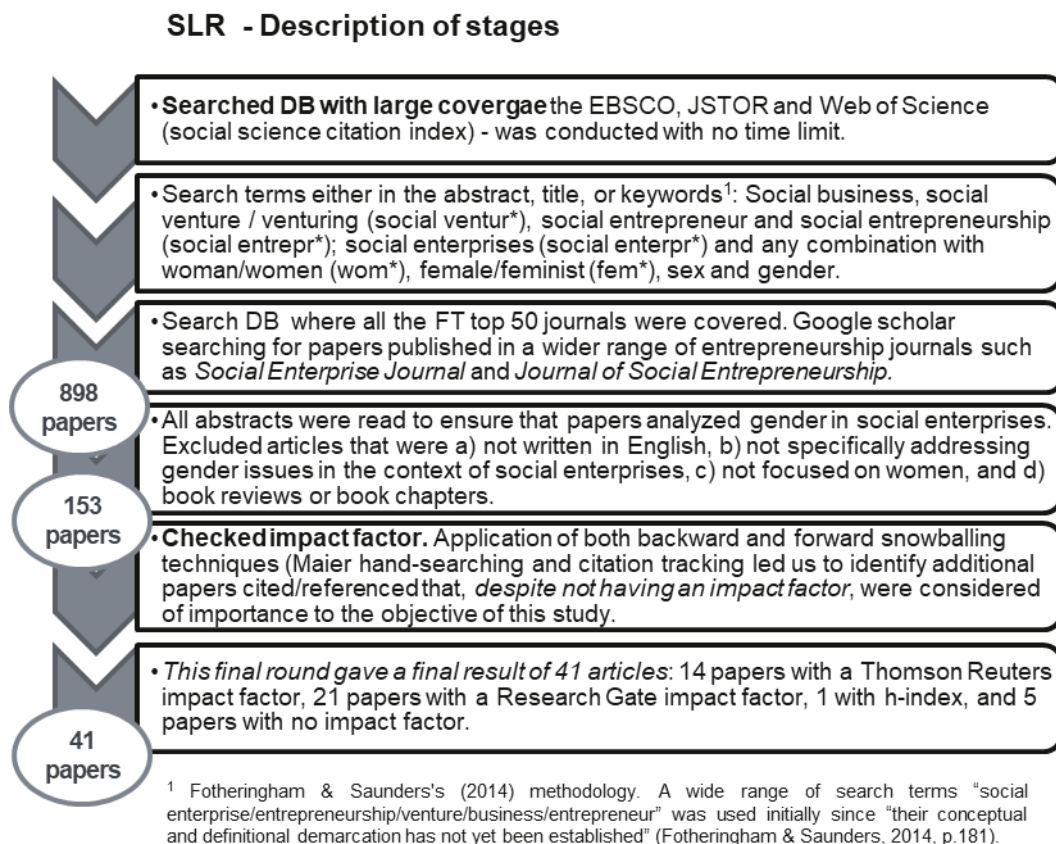
To start, in our paper, we use definitions of social entrepreneurship coined by Granados et al. (2011) as a starting point: “Social entrepreneurship is the activity developed by individuals or groups of people to create, sustain, distribute and/or disseminate social or environmental value in innovative ways through enterprise operations, which could be either a social enterprise, non-profit, private or public institution.” (p. 198-199). Furthermore, a “social enterprise is an organizational form with primarily social drivers that undertakes innovative

business operations to be auto sustainable and guarantees the creation, sustainment, distribution and/or dissemination of social or environmental value. Therefore, economic drivers are means to a social end, not the end in itself.” (p. 199).

Using these definitions, and with the purpose of identifying the relevant literature, we performed a systematic literature review. This way, the selection process started by combining three databases: the EBSCO, JSTOR, and Web of Science databases, chosen due to their wide coverage of journals. A bibliometric analysis was conducted in the databases for journal articles published, with no time limit, containing the following search terms either in the abstract, title, or keywords: social business, social venture/venturing (social ventur\*), social entrepreneur, social entrepreneurship, and social enterprises (social enterpr\*), and any combination with woman/women (wom\*), female/feminist (fem\*), sex, and gender. Following Fotheringham & Saunders’s (2014) methodology, a wide range of search terms including “social enterprise/ entrepreneurship/ venture/ business/ entrepreneur” was used initially, since “their conceptual and definitional demarcation has not yet been established” (Fotheringham & Saunders, 2014, p. 181).

Figure 2.1 highlights the steps throughout the SLR process —from scoping the study to the final iteration— by means of a prism chart.

Figure 2.1. Description of the SLR process and stages.



This first search yielded 514 papers. Additionally, the same search was run in other highly used databases where all the FT top 50 journals were covered, in addition to a Google Scholar search for papers published in a wider range of entrepreneurship and corporate governance journals such as *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, *International Journal of Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, *International Small Business Journal*, *Journal of Family Business*, *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, *Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development*, *Nonprofit management and leadership*, *Small Business Journal*, and *Social Enterprise Journal*. By searching these databases,

and after integrating all the results and eliminating duplicate documents, this led to an initial collection of a total of 898 papers identified.

These 898 abstracts were read to ensure that the papers analyze gender, in any sense, in social enterprises. This first filter left 153 pieces of research. At this stage, a second iteration was done to review whether the articles truly fulfilled the criteria. In this second round, we excluded articles that were a) not written in English, b) not addressing specifically gender issues in the context of social enterprises, c) not focused on women (as a result of using broad search terms such as sex or gender) and d) book reviews or book chapters.

Finally, in a third iteration, we limited the sample review to articles published in established peer-reviewed journals. In this last round, we checked whether they belonged to a journal with an acknowledged "Impact Factor" (IF) as these are a recognized measure of importance and quality of the journals. In any case, we did not limit our research to high value IF journals, as we wanted to have a broad base of journals to study emergent themes surrounding the role of women in social enterprises. However, the application of both backward and forward snowballing techniques (Maier, Meyer, & Steinbereithner, 2016) and hand-searching and citation tracking (Adams, Jeanrenaud, Bessant, Denyer, & Overy, 2016) in our systematic literature review, led us to identify additional papers cited/referenced, that though they did not have an impact factor, were considered of importance to the objective of this study. Appendix 2.A. shows the distribution of the 41 articles ranked by impact factor.

This final round resulted in 14 papers having a Thomson Reuters Impact Factor, 21 papers having Researchgate Impact Factor, 1 with h-index, and 5

papers with no impact factor. The list of journals that published at least 2 academic journals is reported in Table 2.1. Other contributions also came from journals specific to general management, entrepreneurship, and small businesses.

*Table 2.1. Academic journals with more than one paper on women's involvement in social enterprises.*

<b>Journal</b>	<b>Number of articles</b>
<i>International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship</i>	4
<i>Nonprofit Management and Leadership</i>	3
<i>Social Enterprise Journal</i>	3
<i>International Journal of Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation</i>	3
<i>International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business</i>	2
<i>Journal of Social Entrepreneurship</i>	2

Table 2.2 lists the theoretical perspectives employed in at least two articles. The variety of lenses adopted reflect the multidisciplinary and multi-theoretical approach to studying gender in social enterprises. Still, around 56% of the identified articles do not explicitly state the adopted theoretical perspective. The full list of the theoretical perspectives adopted can be found in Appendix 2.B.

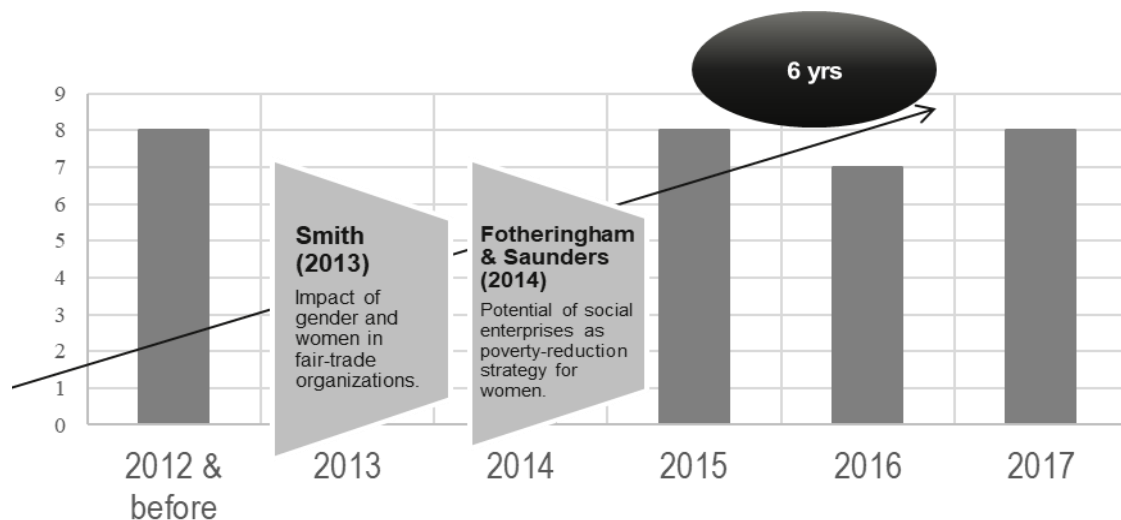
*Table 2.2. Theoretical perspectives explicitly adopted in at least two papers.*

<b>Theoretical perspective</b>	<b>Number of articles</b>
Feminist theory	3
Theory of planned behavior	3
Empowerment theory	2
Social identity theory	2
Social exchange theory	2
Stakeholder theory	2

The rising interest in the topic is reflected in the fact that most articles were published during the period 2012 to 2018. As Figure 2.2 shows, the literature on women’s involvement in social enterprises has grown exponentially since the beginning of the millennium. In particular, the first reference in our literature review goes back to 2002 when Handy, Kassam, & Renade (2002) studied the factors influencing women’s involvement as entrepreneurs in Indian NGOs. Since then, women’s involvement in social enterprise has gained a strong momentum as a topic of academic inquiry, coupled with a recent greater attraction and interest among practitioners.

Figure 2.2 below shows the relationship between articles and years of publication. The detailed list can be found in Appendix 2.A.

*Figure 2.2. Number of articles on women’s involvement in social enterprises.*



Methodology-wise, Table 2.3 shows that most of the identified papers are empirical (35), while only a few are conceptual (6). Within the empirical papers, more than half adopt a qualitative method (20), 15 studies rely on a quantitative approach and none employ mixed methods. The predominance of qualitative

over quantitative methods is in line with the methods used in research in social entrepreneurship at large.

*Table 2. 3. Classification of the 41 articles on women's involvement in social enterprises by type of study.*

<b>Type of study</b>	<b>Number of articles</b>
Conceptual	6
Empirical	35
-Qualitative	20
-Quantitative	15

In terms of sample size, as presented in Table 2.4, 80% of the quantitative papers have samples equal to or larger than 100 cases, whereas 50% of qualitative studies are based on samples with less than 10 cases. Being Asia and Europe the most prevalently present geographic contexts.

In the following lines hereinafter, we conduct an exhaustive review of the content of the literature.

*Table 2.4. Sample size of the 35 empirical articles on women's involvement in social enterprises.*

<b>Sample size</b>	<b>&lt;10</b>	<b>10-99</b>	<b>100-500</b>	<b>&gt;500</b>
Qualitative (n=20)	10	8	1	1
Quantitative (n=15)		3	6	6
<b>Total (n=35)</b>	10	11	7	7
<b>%</b>	29%	31%	20%	20%

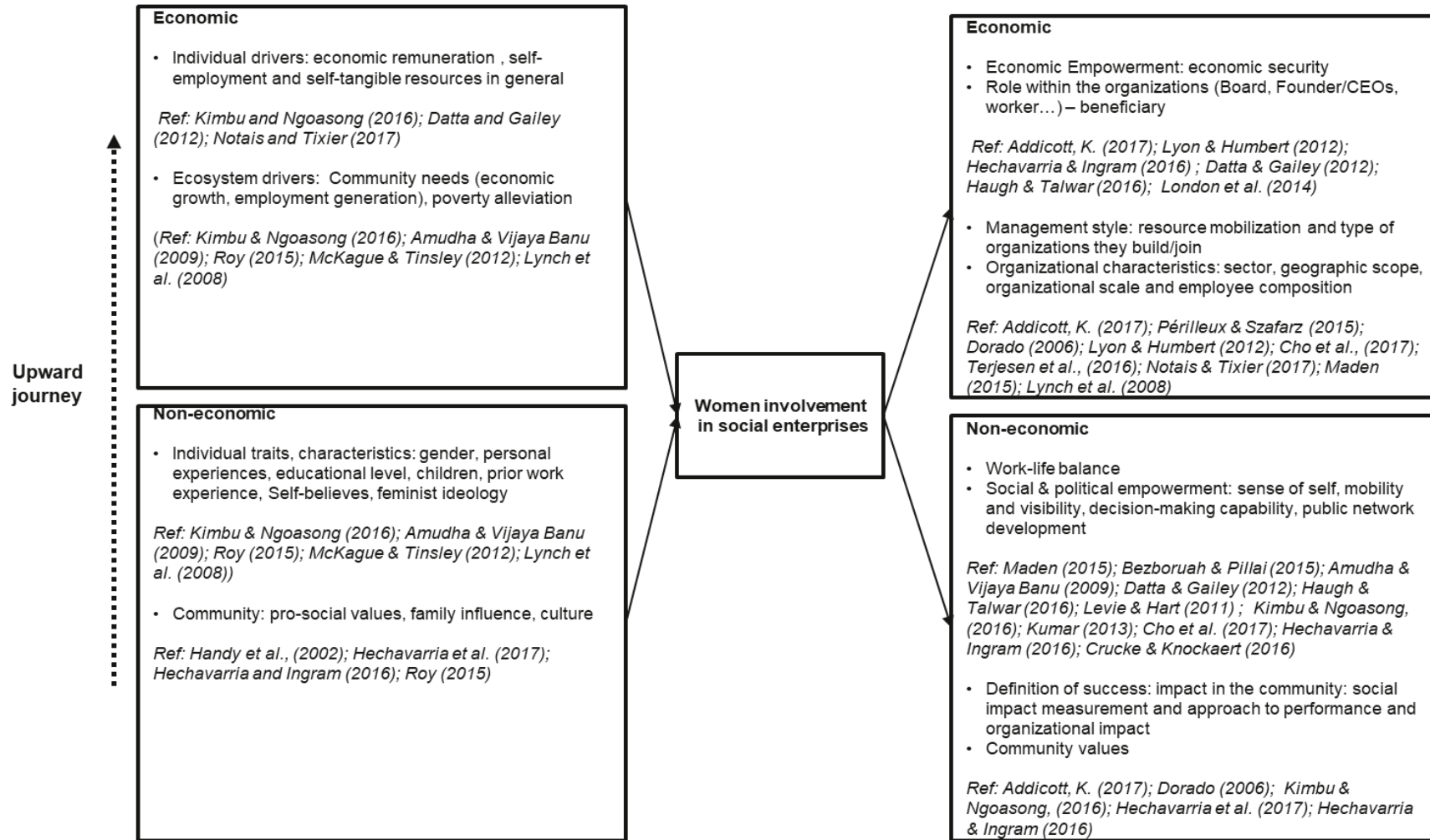
## **The state of the art**

After reviewing the empirical and methodological aspects of the extant research, we wanted to examine the participation of women in social enterprises from a rounded standpoint. To understand how their motivation to start a social business influences the outcomes of their participation. For our analysis, we drew on Campopiano, De Massis, Rinaldi, & Sciascia's (2017) conceptualization of women's involvement "[a]s a behavior, which is influenced by some specific drivers and is able to produce outcomes at firm, family and individual levels" (p. 3). Hence, we organized the selected articles by clustering them into two different levels, drivers, and outcomes,

Our review revealed that women's involvement in the social entrepreneurship start-up process, from opportunity identification to implementation, is an upward journey: as the venture evolves women become also more business-like and hybrid in their goal-setting process. Understanding the concept of business like an array of dimensions from rhetoric, to organizational processes and business goals (Dart, 2004). Moreover, women's participation in social enterprises, at both drivers and outcomes' level, could be depicted with respect to the degree to which they related to an economic or non-economic indicator. And to a certain extent the degree to which they are individual- or community-based. However, disentangling individual and community impact can be difficult, as various facets of the women's involvement outcomes are interrelated: their own process of becoming business-like correlates with the managerialization of the venture. Figure 2.3 below reports

the realm of drivers and outcomes for women's involvement in social enterprises.

Figure 2.3. Drivers and outcomes for women's involvement in social enterprises (authors' own schema).





### *Entry-level: motivation and drivers*

For the scope of identification of the motivations that promote both, social and entrepreneurial intentions, we refer here to drivers as “as any factor that has an impact on women’s involvement” Campopiano et al. (2017, p. 3).

#### Non-economic drivers

Non-economic drivers are key to women’s involvement in social enterprises. Within this category we identified community drivers that coupled with individual women’s feminist beliefs of equity and social justice, for women play a critical role in women’s decision to start a social venture.

At the communal level, we find the influence of the exo-context (cultural, economic, and social and political ecosystem) where the social entrepreneur lives. Female social entrepreneurs are motivated by “perceptions of community needs, and desire to provide services to others” (Handy et al., 2002, p. 141). Scholars such as Hechavarria, Terjesen, Ingram, Renko, Justo, & Elam (2017) have focused on the influence of ethics theory (Flanagan & Jackson, 1987), both ethics of care (in terms of nurturing) and justice (as fairness) drive the involvement of women in social enterprises, which explains how cultural pro-social values related to ethics of justice drive a transformational desire to create new opportunities within society. Besides, there is a strong family influence that lays the ground for pro-social values (Hechavarria et al., 2017). In particular, family previous entrepreneurial experience and family volunteering experience in the social sector have a positive influence on the development of social

entrepreneurial intentions (Handy et al., 2002, Sastre-Castillo, Peris-Ortiz, & Danvila-Del Valle, 2015)

At the individual level, several studies (Handy et al., 2002; Hechavarria & Ingram, 2016), identify that individual traits and characteristics (such as gender, personal experiences, educational level, number of children, work training, age, religion, self-beliefs, ideology, feminist ideology) may influence women's involvement in social enterprises. In the following lines, we highlight the specific findings that are more relevant to our study.

First, the effect of gender over the development of social entrepreneurial intentions is mixed. Previous research (Cukier, Trenholm, Carl, & Gekas, 2011, Van Ryzin, Grossman, DiPadova-Stocks, & Bergrund, 2009; and Witkamp, Royakkers, & Raven, 2011) recognize gender as a determinant variable for social entrepreneurial intention to be developed. In particular, Hechavarria et al. (2012) empirically tested that there is a gender divide in social entrepreneurship concluding that "males are more likely to pursue traditional economic entrepreneurial activity than females; additionally, females are more likely to engage in social and environmental entrepreneurial activity than males" (Hechavarria et al., 2012, p. 144). Still, a recent study conducted by Sastre-Castillo et al. (2015) on the profiling of social entrepreneurs found no empirical support when investigating if women show greater social orientation in their projects than men. On the contrary, their study highlighted the role that high self-transcend values play in the development of social entrepreneurial orientation, whereas people with high self-enhancement value are more inclined towards commercial entrepreneurship.

Secondly, another driver analyzed was the effect of personality traits, as a collection of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are unique to a person (Boz & Ergeneli, 2014), in the development of social entrepreneurship intention. Still, the evidence is inconclusive since only one of the reviewed papers by Maden (2015) highlights the importance of women entrepreneur's personality traits such as hardworking, risk-taking, and self-confidence, as factors influencing the involvement of women in entrepreneurship.

Third, the related concept of women's aspirations is also recognized as a driver. Women's desire for self-actualization, independence, and implementation of their own ideas constitute an important driver for their entrepreneurial intentions at large. When the aspirations are coupled with personal motivations such as the need for achievement, locus of control, sense of competence, there is a positive influence towards the social arena (Lortie, Castrogiovanni, & Cox, 2017; Yangui & Jarbou, 2013).

Last, individual beliefs are essential in determining women's careers. Handy et al. (2002) explored the factors influencing women's involvement through a feminist theory lens (Mirchandani, 1999). They concluded that feminist beliefs, understood as a concern for equity and social justice related to gender inequality, have a strong influence over the involvement of women. Similarly, Hechavarria & Ingram (2016) conclude that women undertake entrepreneurial social ventures as a means to face existing structural factors, spurred by their conviction that women's issues are key for social justice.

### Economic drivers

Community economic empowerment is considered an important driver of women's involvement in social enterprises. On one hand, the community's financial distress, hunger, and poverty fuel the will to generate extra income and employment both for the household and the community at large. As illustrated by a respondent in one of the papers analyzed, "I use my business to help the poor. Right now, I'm training three [apprentices] how to weave these slippers. In future they can weave slippers and supply to the shop and earn money" (Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016, p. 74). Securing resources is the driving factor for women's involvement in social projects is central in Amudha & Vijaya Banu's (2009) microfinance study. They described how access to microfinance allows women first to start a social venture and second to bring about economic development for the community where they operate —typically poor and low-income households. Similarly, McKague & Tinsley (2012) study the impact of women's involvement as workers in social enterprises —in this case as sales agents— as a resource to alleviate poverty in rural low-income communities. Finally, Lynch, Elliott, & Brock (2008) provide insights into the role of social enterprises in creating job opportunities for rural women.

Therefore, examining the economic elements at organizational and population levels brings evidence on the role of community empowerment as an economic driver. Still, while some authors underline the positive aspects of the participation in microfinance institutions, others, notably the more recent studies, view them critically, leading today to a shift in research focus away from microfinance towards social entrepreneurship as an empowerment vehicle.

The review however showed that evidence about the influence of individual economic drivers is inconclusive. While elements such as the will for economic remuneration or financial independence stemming from the lack of a steady job or well-paid full-time employment (Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016) have been documented as contributing to the development of the entrepreneurial intentions, evidence on their clear-cut power effect over the development of social motivation is lacking. Studies investigating those effects adopt mostly an empowerment theory lens (Kabeer, 1999). For example, Datta & Gailey (2012) explored how the need to access resources and economic empowerment is a strong motivator for women to join social cooperatives, especially in a resource-constrained developing country. In addition, Notais & Tixier (2017) through a combination of the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1987, 1991) and motivational lens, explore how “push factors” such as lack of employment are determinants of social entrepreneurial intentions in deprived areas.

#### *Take-off level or “impact/outcome-level”*

We followed a similar process with the outcomes, understood as “any effect engendered by women’s involvement” (Campopiano et al.2017, p. 3): reviewing the selected articles and assigning each of them to one of the two categories: non-economic and economic. Overall, our review highlighted that research on the impact of women’s involvement in social enterprises has increased continuously since the last decade, and in view of recent developments, is more relevant than ever. Our review of the outcomes revealed that, even though men and women are mostly driven by the same motivation to start a social venture,

their involvement translates in different management styles and ultimately in different types of companies that they build.

### Non-economic outcomes

When it comes to non-economic outcomes, the research shows evidence pointing towards the causal relationship between the individual social entrepreneur's objectives and the organizational ones. Several possible outcomes of women's presence in social enterprises are found. At the venture level, some scholars find that women's vision and mission influence how the community's needs are operationalized and ultimately the definition and measurement of success at venture level. Moreover, Hechavarria et al. (2017), through an ethics theory lens, find that female-led social ventures are influenced in the outcomes they produced at community level, by both the individual values and gender of the social entrepreneurs. Similarly, Addicott (2017) finds that women managers view success mainly in terms of community and local development.

Another result of female social entrepreneurial entry is the role of diversity as a cornerstone in social enterprises in terms of a unique employee composition of gender, racial, ethnic, and professional backgrounds. Cho, Kim, & Mor Barak (2017) acknowledged that in social enterprises women presence and representation in top management teams is higher than in other organizations, while Lyon & Humbert (2012) find out that women-dominated boards work in sectors such as youth and childcare, which have traditionally had a higher penetration of women representation.

Still, only one study (Cho et al., 2017), reviewed the link between diversity and organizational performance. Through an optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) and the guidance of the social identity theory lens (Tajfel, 1982), the authors conclude that women outnumber men in terms of employees within the social enterprise, and that female representation in top management is higher within these ventures. Still, even though their research showed that the prevalence of diversity in social ventures leads to stronger business results, and the theoretical arguments point toward positive effects of diversity, there is a need for further research in favor of diversity-performance. For example, further exploration of the organizational tensions that diversity may bring on group cohesion and dynamics (Crucke & Knockaert, 2016), or the link between diversity and social enterprise performance, exploring if diversity plays a mediating role between women's involvement in social enterprises and ventures' performance.

Beyond the community or organizational outcomes, the review highlighted that women's involvement also shapes non-economic individual outcomes such as work-life balance (Hechavarria & Ingram, 2016) and individual empowerment. Only two contributions (Haugh & Talwar, 2016; Datta & Gailey, 2012) study through an empowerment theoretical framework (Kabeer, 1999) the relationship between social enterprises and individual empowerment outcomes such as ability to make their own decisions, access to resources, and sense of achievement. However, there are divergent views regarding the specific role that empowerment plays within social enterprises. Haugh & Talwar (2016) claim that empowerment is a mediator whereas Datta & Gailey (2012) claim that

empowerment is an outcome itself of women's involvement in social ventures. Therefore, despite its importance, given the polarized and inconclusive empirical evidence more comprehensive in-depth and fine-grained analysis of women's empowerment is needed.

### Economic outcomes

Effects on the impact of women's involvement in at the company and community dimension can be examined on two levels: the type of organizations women built and their management style. Past research shows there is inconclusive evidence to assert that women's involvement fosters a specific type of organizational form or structure or that gender correlates somehow with hybridity practices in social ventures. On one hand, several studies (Dorado, 2006; Addicott, 2017) state that at the early stages profit is secondary for the women founders and the organization is a just path to alleviate a social problem. And only as the venture grows organizational sustainability comes into play and success evolves to be defined by achieving both social and economic objectives. On the other, one study highlights the importance of social enterprises as a purposeful organizational structure chosen by women as "an innovative response to challenging social problems where mission and market are intertwined in a hybrid organization" (Lynch et al., 2008, p. 229).

Comprehensively, one study revealed that there are sectors that are typically stereotyped for women employment, such as youth and childcare (Lyon & Humbert, 2012). Sectors with a strong presence of women such as microfinance, employment service, social care, education, and health are also

the object of analysis by Cho et al. (2017) and Addicott (2017). One contribution by Terjesen, Bosma, & Stan (2016) highlights the influence of the geographic scope on women's involvement in social enterprises: "Women are more likely to start social ventures in the following countries: Malaysia, Lebanon, Russia, Israel, Iceland, & Argentina" (p. 243)

Finally, we could not find conclusive evidence whether the organizational scale is a gendered characteristic. Only Addicott (2017) highlights the importance to consider the organizational scale as a factor affected by women's involvement in social enterprises. And although empirical evidence is scarce, we argue that the size of the organizations in the review is more a reflection of how social enterprises are organized into small and medium-sized organizations.

When it comes to management style, women's involvement has a positive effect on the ventures. On one hand, Hechavarria & Ingram (2016) demonstrate that gender impacts the choice of organizational form; in particular, women are more likely to pursue social organizational forms that emphasized femininity such as "expressiveness, connectedness, relatedness, kindness, supportiveness and trust" (p. 250).

In line with former findings of female leadership styles (Eagly & Johnson, 1990) women's involvement in social enterprises entails a shared leadership and participative decision-making style often referred to as important for "relation-building and collaboration" (Addicott, 2017, p. 81). Périlleux & Szafarz (2015), through the application of the leadership theory (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Eagly & Johnson, 1990), found that social enterprises led by women exhibit a "less directive style... more democratic than their male

counterpart...” (Périlleux & Szafarz, 2015, p. 6). Similarly, Addicott (2017) reveals that women-led social enterprises put a strong focus on employee development through relationship-building, collaboration, coaching, and mentoring in an aim to empower “the whole organization, not just one person” (p. 85). Moreover, Maas, Seferiadis, Bunders, & Zweekhorst (2014) found that women social leaders may recognize the importance of successful relationship-building and network-creation as a source of information and resources earlier than their male counterparts. Still, from the effects outlined in the review, there is little conclusive evidence of whether the outcomes of women’s leadership style are specific to social ventures or, on the contrary, similar to the ones exhibited by women leading commercial ventures.

Overall, there is scarce information to assert that women’s involvement in social enterprises promotes (or hinders) venture performance. Only Lyon & Humbert (2012) predicted that initiatives established by women yield a greater impact. One of the reasons for the lack of research regarding the link between management style and performance may be due to the difficulties in obtaining micro-data to conduct the analysis (Périlleux & Szafarz, 2015) since the population of women entrepreneur is not very large.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, women’s involvement in social enterprises influences the conceptualization of success. As women embrace the social startup process as a means to an end, success is viewed not on an individual level—even though evidence acknowledged that both economic security in terms of access to tangible resources—and empowerment are two of the individual economic outcomes of women’s involvement in social enterprises

(Datta & Gailey, 2012; Haugh & Talwar, 2016), success for women leaders is defined and measured in terms of community and local development (Addicott, 2017). As such, Périlleux & Szafarz (2015) detected that “female managers are less inclined than men to define career success in terms of promotion” (p. 33), and Hechavarria & Ingram (2016) concluded that while men tend to pursue economic objectives such as status and wealth, women tend to prioritize non-economic goals and outcomes. The review highlighted that this is even more pronounced at the early stages of the venture. Thereafter, as the women evolve in their startup process, so do the ventures, sustainability then comes into play and economic goals start being incorporated in the strategy-setting process.

Reflecting upon whether and how the accumulated work on the drivers and outcomes of women’s involvement in social enterprises could case female and general entrepreneurship scholars think differently about the goal-setting process in women-led ventures. Furthermore, it may also help characterize and measure outcomes variables by economic and non-economic indicators to have a rounded view of success as a dynamic construct that evolves with the startup and is influenced by the life-course events experienced by the entrepreneur.

## **Discussion and suggestion for future research agenda**

The review highlights several areas where a significant contribution is being made to our understanding of women’s involvement in social enterprises, as well as areas where evidence is fragmented, areas with possible sources of inconsistencies in previous research, and areas with little empirical evidence which future research should attempt to address. For the purpose of a

comprehensive review, we will summarize the key contributions pertaining to three foundational questions (see Table 2.5).

*Table 2.5. Foundational questions, overarching answers, and specific illustrative findings within women’s involvement in social enterprises. (Schema as per Jennings & Brush, 2013)*

<b>Foundational question</b>	<b>Overarching answer</b>	<b>Specific illustrative findings</b>
Is gender a lens in the discourse and research of women and social enterprises?	Yes and no: at the drivers’ level gender is considered a variable. But at the outcome level, gender is used as a lens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•At the drivers’ level gender is a variable that influences the social entrepreneurial intentions among others such as family, values, religion, personal history. At the outcomes’ level women manage and ultimately impact their social enterprises differently</li> </ul>
Do female social entrepreneurs tend to enact specific strategic, organizational, and managerial practices within their ventures?	Primarily, yes: in general, social ventures headed by women tend to be a vehicle to solve an existing problem in the community not an end in itself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•In women-led ventures, it is possible to link the drivers and to the outcomes of their involvement</li> <li>•For women social entrepreneurs the entrepreneurial process is an upward one: from social focus to a hybrid focus</li> <li>•Women’s will to solve an existing problem is the trigger to launch a social venture</li> </ul>
Does women’s motivation to start a social business influence the outcomes of the ventures?	Yes: According to the review, in female-led social ventures, success is a dynamic outcome that evolves with the start-up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Women tend to bound the concept of success to the specific motivation to set up the social venture.</li> <li>•Women are likely to emphasize social value creation at the early stages. As the venture grows, women start valuing financial goals. But always as a means to an end: the more financially sustainable the company is the greater the social outcome it will reach.</li> </ul>

Is gender a lens in the discourse and research of women and social enterprises? First, the main contribution relates to the examination of gender in relation to the participation of women in social enterprises. After systematically assessing the participation of women in social enterprises, the evidence pertaining to this question is mixed. The research highlighted that there is a

constant tension as to whether gender is a lens or a mere variable in the study of women's contribution and impact in the social entrepreneurship discourse and more narrowly in the mainstream topic of social enterprises. The answer to this tension is two-fold: first of all, at the motivational/drivers' level, gender is considered a variable. This variable is either included as a control variable in empirical studies or as an independent variable, usually among others such as family, role models, values, religion, and personal history. But secondly and crucially, at the outcome level, gender is used as a lens. As such, the review identifies that women impact and manage social enterprises (Maas et al., 2014; Périlleux & Szafarz, 2015; Addicott, 2017; Cho et al, 2017) in a different way. This leads us to conclude that, at the outcome level, gender is a lens and should be used as a context to study when and how women impact social enterprises (Addicott, 2017; Périlleux & Szafarz, 2015; Dorado, 2006; Lyon & Humbert, 2012; Cho et al.,2017; Terjesen et al.,2016; Notais & Tixier, 2017; Maden, 2015; Lynch et al., 2008).

Do female social entrepreneurs enact specific strategic, organizational, and managerial practices within their ventures? In general, women embrace social entrepreneurship as a vehicle to solve an existing problem in the community not an end in itself. By linking drivers and outcomes in the analysis, our second contribution is the realization that, for women social entrepreneurs, the entrepreneurial process is an upward one from social to hybrid ventures.

At the early stages, the will to solve an existing social problem in the community is the trigger for women to launch a social enterprise. They embrace the social venture as a vehicle to solve an existing problem in their community,

not a destination. Hence, elements such as recognition, social prestige, or dissatisfaction with their previous job are not critical elements for their involvement. As Hechavarria et al. (2017) stated, “[g]ender significantly affects the venture founders’ goals (...) a proxy for ethics of care and justice which leads entrepreneurs to emphasize one type of value creation goal over another” (p. 28). However, as the venture grows, and the company establishes how to tackle the social problem along the value chain (e.g. hiring and training unemployed or disadvantaged people) business sustainability comes into play. The entrepreneur starts focusing on the business side of it such as securing enough money to scale the company and building organizational skills. Finally, at the scale-up stage, women realize hybridity is essential, and prioritize both social and financial objectives through the management of the company.

Do women’s motivation to start a social business influence the outcomes of the ventures? According to the review, in female-led social ventures success is a dynamic outcome that evolves with the start-up, and it is bounded by the specific motivation to carry out the venture and by gender differences. As noted above, not all goals can be expected to have the same weight during the life of the venture (Hechavarria et al., 2017). Rather, women entrepreneurs adapt the concept of success to the specific goals that vary throughout the life of the venture: As the venture grows, the motivation also evolves beyond a pure social impact goal as other objectives, especially economic, come into play and there is a need to balance both social and financial objectives through the management of the company. “Profit maximization only became very important

as their enterprises became profitable and started expanding” (Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016, p. 72).

### *Future research agenda*

This review represents a first attempt to map the mechanism in which women impact and shape social enterprises. Moreover, it has allowed us to identify some research gaps and their corresponding research questions outlined hereafter as future research opportunities (see Table 2.6).

*Table 2. 6. Suggested directions for future research on women’s involvement in social enterprises (authors’ own schema).*

Research Gaps	Research Questions	Potential Directions for Research
RG#1: The mechanism in which women impact and shape social enterprises is under-researched and undertheorized	RQ#1A: How is gender is played out in social enterprises and how it should be analyzed? RQ#1B: Is gender a proxy for ethics?	- Trying to assert in which cases and circumstances in the research of social enterprises gender is more a variable and in which gender is more lens - Using gender as a context to widening empirical research of the underlying mechanism through which women impact and shape social ventures
RG#2: Studying the reciprocal link between the social venture’s goals and women’s involvement in social enterprises	RQ#2A: Does gender impact the likelihood to start hybrid ventures from inception? RQ#2B: When and how does the “coupling” occur between social and financial goals in women-led social ventures? RQ#2C: How does women’s involvement affect goal setting and pursuit in the social enterprise? RQ#2D: How does women’s involvement in affect the social versus financial sustainability balance due to social venture’s hybridity? RQ#2E: Which specific elements of women’s management and leadership style in social ventures promote or hinder venture performance? RQ#2F: Does diversity play a mediating role between women involvement in social enterprises and the venture performance or on the contrary diversity is to be considered an outcome of women’s involvement?	- Exploring through an ethics theoretical lens how gender affects the reciprocal link between drivers and outcome in social ventures - Developing models that explain the successive achievement of both types of outcomes: social and financial in hybrid ventures - Conceptualizing the concept of success in social ventures: measuring outcome variables by economic and non- economic indicators - Empirically testing the link between diversity and organizational performance in social enterprises - Questioning the extent to which women’s management style determines ventures’ performance
RG#3: Analyzing the interrelationship between women’s life-course events and their involvement in social ventures.	RQ#3A: How do life-course events affect women’s involvement in social ventures throughout the different stages of the enterprise: from launch-to scale-up.	- Exploring whether women social entrepreneurs are especially likely to engage in behaviors typically associated with feminist beliefs - Women tend to bound the concept of success to the specific motivation to set-up the social ventures

The first major research gap concerns the mechanism by which women impact and shape social enterprises. The review leads to the conclusion that, when looking at drivers' level, standalone gender is a variable, whereas the analysis of the outcomes suggested that gender is a lens. Thus, future research could try to assert in which cases and circumstances gender is more a variable and in which it is more a lens. Although we note recent progress, those articles that take gender into consideration when looking at organizational characteristics of the social enterprises mostly focus on the impact on characteristics such as sector/industry type and organizational scale. Still, the impact of women's involvement is to date relatively under-researched and undertheorized. The first important implication is a call to leverage and integrate new theoretical lenses that will allow for theory development and empirical research on how gender is played out in social enterprises and how it should be analyzed. In particular, future research could use gender as a context to widening empirical research for greater precision of the underlying mechanism through which women impact and shape social enterprises. As London, Dell, Amore, Rothstein, & DeSimone (2014) stated, there is a need for future research to explore the relation of the entrepreneur's gender, past experience, and impact in further detail.

Furthermore, to advance knowledge of how women impact social enterprises, research could look into how women prioritize and incorporate business-like goals into their venture. Providing empirical evidence over the factors that promote each type of goals will thus shed light on the research question raised: Is gender a proxy for ethics? We anticipate that gender is very

likely a proxy for ethics of care and justice that influences the definition women social entrepreneurs have of success, how they operationalize the community needs (women are more likely to pursue social organizational forms) and the way success is measured. This is in line with Hechavarria et al. (2017) previous research findings: “Gender significantly affects the venture founders’ goals (...) a proxy for ethics of care and justice which leads entrepreneurs to emphasize one type of value creation goal over another” (p. 28). A complementary research direction could consider asserting in which cases and circumstances gender is more a variable and in which gender is more lens, instead of viewing both of them as static and standalone concepts.

The analysis of extant research also highlights a dearth of studies on the reciprocal link between the social venture’s goals and women’s involvement, as a second research gap. Theories that discuss the links between one’s beliefs, values, and behaviors, such as Ajzens’s (1987, 1991) theory of planned behavior or Flanagan & Jackson’s (1987) ethics theory, represent a fertile lens to understand the effect of gender on the reciprocal link between drivers and outcomes. Thus, a compelling research question concerns the differences in the rationale for prioritizing social venture over financial sustainability and the founding of hybrid organizations<sup>1</sup>. In particular, does gender impact the likelihood of starting hybrid ventures from inception?

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<sup>1</sup> By ‘hybrid organizations’ we understand those that encompass dual identities and institutional logics (Battilana & Lee, 2014) and that successfully manage both social and financial goals to achieve the intended impact.

Our review concluded that, for women, the start-up entrepreneurship process is an upward one from social to hybrid ventures, but there is a need for a more comprehensive and evidence-based understanding of the goal-setting process. As such, the conceptualization of success is a dynamic outcome that evolves with the start-up: from the will to solve an existing social problem in the early stages to the coexistence of economic and social goals in the long run. This suggests another relevant question: when and how does the “coupling” occur between social and financial goals in women-led social ventures? The use of an ethical view in social enterprises, coupled with feminist beliefs of equity and social justice, offers relevant perspectives of how and why women prioritize social goals versus economic goals at the early stages of the ventures.

Similarly, future studies could further develop insights into how women’s involvement affects goal setting and pursuit in social enterprises. The collective aspect of a community needs to be fulfilled not only to drive women’s social entrepreneurial intentions but also to infuse the type of projects they set up. Hechavarria & Ingram (2016) empirically demonstrated that female gender stereotypes lead them towards social organizational forms. Similarly, Cukier et al. (2011) stated that gender influences the definition of success, which calls for a deeper understanding of the conceptualization of success in social enterprises and its link to the goal-setting process for men and women.

Therefore, these findings call for future research that relates concepts of gender and performance; translating into interesting opportunities to undertake a gender review more broadly to study women’s and men’s different approaches to performance measurement. Additionally, research should go beyond

documenting performance measurements for social and financial goals and potential tensions among them and aim to understand when and how the “coupling” occurs between social and financial goals in social ventures. In so doing, it would provide relevant gender-related insights for social enterprises struggling to balance both social and economic goals.

Of all the aspects connected to the performance of social enterprises, there is little conclusive evidence of the specific elements that promote or hinder venture performance. Our conclusion at the outcome/impact level that gender is a lens leads us to anticipate that women manage social enterprises differently (strongly collectivistic leadership style, promotion of diversity...), which results in an interesting research question: Do the specific elements of women’s management and leadership style in social ventures promote or hinder venture performance? Scholars argue that women’s entrepreneurial management style within social ventures is strongly collectivistic. In fact, interpersonal networks of women social entrepreneurs, both formal and informal, provide the required resources (human, capital, knowledge sharing, training, mentoring, or role modeling) to successfully develop an entrepreneurial practice. In this line, the review shows the challenges women face in managing social enterprises and their dual objectives. However, previous research falls short in concluding whether these challenges are gender-driven. The need to exhibit management skills such as business planning, acumen, and marketing was highlighted as central in order to manage the dual objectives of social enterprises “being innovative, and risk-taking [and their] ability and capacity to take chances, identify and develop opportunities, and try things out through piloting” (Addicott,

2017, p. 83). Still, the review shows there is little conclusive evidence in current research that women's management style determines venture performance, hence providing fruitful opportunities for new research to broaden the general understanding of the impact of women social entrepreneurs' leadership and management style.

For example, although the role of diversity as both driver and outcome of women's involvement in social enterprises has been identified in the review, it still deserves attention in future research. Our analysis showed that only two of the studies looked at the link between diversity and organizational performance in social enterprises. A potential direction for future research could empirically test this link, mainly, because our review showed that the effects of organizational diversity on social enterprise performance are polarized. The nature of social enterprises with their competing goals (social vs economic) requires a diverse team that provides both an entrepreneurial/business background and experience in non-profit and social. Studies from Cho et al. (2017) recognize the impact of such organizational diversity on performance, and likewise Crucke & Knockaert (2016) highlight the role of diversity as a "source of knowledge, information, and expertise, leading to improved performance" (p. 772). Yet, Cho et al. (2017) also show that social enterprises do not actively implement diversity management policies, mostly due to a lack of organizational policies and mandates to promote diversity. Equally, Crucke & Knockaert (2016) raise awareness over the potential organizational tensions that diversity may bring which reduce its cohesiveness ability if goals are not aligned to the diverse stakeholders.

As already mentioned in theoretical terms, we call to leverage and integrate new theoretical lenses. As such existing theories such as fault line theory (Zanutto, Bezrukova, & Jehn, 2011) and optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991), offer an arena for interesting research opportunities to advance knowledge on organizational diversity in social enterprises. Likewise, social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) could also be integrated with the above theories to exemplify additional aspects of diversity and women's involvement in social enterprises (Hogg & Reid, 2006).

The last research gap identified was the scarce attention given to the chrono-context. A focus on the interrelationship between women's life-course events and their involvement in social ventures may be relevant to this research. Especially in the footsteps of how life-course events experienced by women social entrepreneurs offer novel insights into how changes and evolution of women entrepreneurs affect their likelihood to engage in specific behaviors associated with feminist beliefs.

Finally, the review of the involvement of women in social enterprises prompted a methodological research avenue to further understand the two-way causality of the relationship between the gender of the social entrepreneur and the characteristics of the social venture.

On one hand, despite recent calls for a shift in methodology (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2011), social entrepreneurship research is still dominated by qualitative research methods, mainly case studies, that rarely triangulate with non-qualitative data sources (archival data and secondary sources). Future research should use longitudinal datasets as well as analytical techniques that

allow for accounting and hypothesizing on the relationships between the social entrepreneurs' leadership style and firm-level outcomes such as social venture performance, including the potential moderating effect of gender in between. Future research may promote the application of multi-level methodologies (e.g. firm-level and country-level) to appropriately analyze nested structures, multi-level relationships, or cross-level interactions. This approach would allow, for example, the discussion on the effect of informal and formal institutional contexts in the development of women's social entrepreneurial intention.

## **Conclusion**

The state of art in social entrepreneurship shows an increasing academic interest in the motivation of women to start social ventures and the outcomes derived from their involvement. The present study reviews the literature on women's involvement in social enterprises by means of an SLR that made it possible to map the field and link forms of research in an innovative way. Our review aims to expose the mechanisms underlying the drivers-outcomes relationships that characterize women's involvement in social enterprises. As a result, women's involvement is categorized according to a thematic drivers-and-outcomes framework comprising four dimensions: economic, non-economic, individual, and community.

This review evidenced that gender has experienced substantial evolution in social entrepreneurship research since 2002. In the early stages, the interest of research was grounded in the analysis of the participation of women in NGOs and microfinance institutions (Handy et al. 2002, Amudha & Vijaya Banu, 2009).

Later on, scholars investigated gender in the context of social enterprises, in particular focusing on the profiling and motivations of social entrepreneurs (Dorado, 2006; Levie & Hart, 2011). More recently, the latest wave has been emphasizing the outcomes of women's involvement and placing more emphasis on gender in social enterprises (Périlleux & Szafarz, 2015; Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016; Haugh & Talwar, 2016; Hechavarria & Ingram, 2016; Cho et al., 2017; Hechavarria et al., 2017). Furthermore, gender is a central context which in many ways affects the outcome of women's involvement in social enterprises. We insist that gender be embraced as the context and research locus in future studies, so scholars can generate new and meaningful insights to advance the debate of when gender is played out in social enterprises and how it should be analyzed. We believe that considering this gender-context can provide a deeper understanding of the underlying link and causal relationship between drivers and outcomes, thus helping not only to explain why women persevere in their pursuit of alleviating a community social problem, but also to develop a comprehensive approach in strategy formulation, implementation, and performance management to scale the intended social impact.

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## Appendix 2.A.

### Classification of the reviewed articles by impact factor.

Academic journal	Impact factor* (TR)	Type of impact factor	Number of articles
<i>Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice</i>	4,916	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>World development</i>	3,99	Researchgate IF	1
<i>Journal of Management Studies</i>	3,962	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>Public Administration Review</i>	3,473	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>	3,194	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>Journal of Strategic Innovation and Sustainability</i>	3	H-index	1
<i>Small Business Economics</i>	2,421	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>	2,354	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship</i>	2	Researchgate IF	4
<i>Entrepreneurship &amp; Regional Development</i>	1,776	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal</i>	1,312	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>Journal of Social Entrepreneurship</i>	1,63	Researchgate IF	2
<i>Non-Profit Management and Leadership</i>	1,236	Thomson Reuters IF	3
<i>Social Enterprise Journal</i>	1,21	Researchgate IF	3
<i>Public Money and Management</i>	1,133	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>Int. Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business</i>	1,1	Researchgate IF	2
<i>Gender in Management: An International Journal</i>	1	Researchgate IF	1
<i>Asia-Pacific Business Review</i>	1	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>Business History</i>	0,83	Thomson Reuters IF	1
<i>International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation</i>	0,82	Researchgate IF	1
<i>Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship</i>	0,75	Researchgate IF	1
<i>International Journal of Voluntary-VOLUNTAS</i>	0,72	Researchgate IF	3
<i>International Journal of Organizational Analysis</i>	0,7	Researchgate IF	1
<i>Local Economy</i>	0,65	Researchgate IF	1
<i>Asian Social Work and Policy Review</i>	0,52	Researchgate IF	1
<i>International Journal of Research in Commerce and Management</i>	0,46	Researchgate IF	1
<i>Academy of Management – Annual Meeting Proceedings</i>	0,43	Researchgate IF	1
<i>International Journal of Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation</i>	N/A	Researchgate IF	3

\* As of 2018.

## Appendix 2.B.

### Summary of literature search results on theoretical perspectives explicitly mentioned in the 41 articles reviewed.

Theories	References from the review	Theories	References from the review
<b>Cultural Theory (1)</b>	Hechavarria & Ingram (2015)	<b>Empowerment theory (2)</b>	Datta and Gailey (2012) Haugh and Talwar (2016)
<b>Ethics Theory (1)</b>	Hechavarria et al. (2017)	<b>Stakeholder Theory (2)</b>	Bezboruah and Pillai (2015) Crucke and Knockaert (2016)
<b>Faultline Theory (1)</b>	Crucke & Knockaert (2016)	<b>Theory of Universal Values (1)</b>	Sastre-Castillo et al. (2015)
<b>Feminist Theory (3)</b>	Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan (2016) Fotheringham and Saunders (2014) Hechavarria and Ingram (2016)	<b>Theory of Planned Behavior (3)</b>	Lortie et al. (2017) Notais and Tixier (2017) Tiwari et al. (2017)
<b>Network Theory/ Social Capital Theory (1)</b>	Maas et al. (2014)	<b>Leadership and Role Congruity Theory (1)</b>	Périlleux and Szafarz, (2015)
<b>Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (1)</b>	Cho et al. (2017)	<b>Organizational Theory (1)</b>	London et al. (2014)
<b>Social Identity Theory (2)</b>	Cho et al. (2017) Lortie et al. (2017)	<b>No theory directly stated (23)</b>	Amudha & Vijaya Banu (2009) Cukier et al. (2011) Dorado (2006) Handy et al. (2002) Lemaire et al.(2017) Maden (2015) Marlow (2014) Perriton (2017) Roy (2015) Vohra (2017) Walk et al. (2015) <i>Entrepreneurship Framework</i> Addicott (2017) Kumar (2013) Haugh & Talwar (2016) Nageswari (2014) Terjesen et al. (2016) <i>Social Entrepreneurship Framework</i> Datta & Gailey (2012) Fotheringham & Saunders (2014) Kimbu & Ngoasong (2016) Levie & Hart (2011) Lyon & Humbert (2012) Nageswari (2014) Van Ryzin et al. (2009) Wirtz & Volkmann (2015) Witkamp et al. (2011)

## Appendix 2.C.

### Summary of reviewed papers per year of publication

Year / # articles	References from the review
<b>2012 &amp; before N=11</b>	Handy et al. (2002) Dorado (2006) Lynch et al. (2008) Amudha & Vijaya Banu (2009) Van Ryzin et al. (2009) Witkamp et al. (2011) Cukier et al. (2011) Levie & Hart (2011) Lyon & Humbert (2012) Datta & Gailey (2012) McKague & Tinsley (2012)
<b>2013 N=2</b>	Kumar (2013) Yangui & Jarbou (2013)
<b>2014 N=5</b>	Fotheringham & Saunders (2014) London et al. (2014) Maas et al. (2014) Marlow (2014) Nageswari (2014)
<b>2015 N=8</b>	Bezboruah & Pillai (2015) Hechavarria & Ingram (2015) Maden (2015) Périlleux & Szafarz (2015) Roy (2015) Sastre-Castillo et al. (2015) Walk et al. (2015) Wirtz & Volkmann (2015)
<b>2016 N=7</b>	Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan (2016) Crucke & Knockaert (2016) Haugh & Talwar (2016) Hechavarria & Ingram (2016) Kimbu & Ngoasong (2016) Perriton (2017) Terjesen et al. (2016)
<b>2017 N=8</b>	Addicott (2017) Cho et al. (2017) Hechavarria et al. (2017) Lemaire & Maalaoui (2017) Lortie et al. (2017) Notais & Tixier (2017) Tiwari et al. (2017) Vohra (2017)

## **CHAPTER 3.**

### **CEOs' EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES: THE MULTIPLE PATHS TO SOCIAL VENTURING**

#### **Abstract**

Gender plays an important role in the development of social entrepreneurial intentions, similar to the influence exerted by other variables such as family, role models, or personality traits. Indeed, gender shapes the type of impact that social entrepreneurs have in their ventures. Through a qualitative comparative analysis approach, we study how gender is an essential contextual element that shapes social entrepreneurs' experiences and perspectives. Using data from 22 qualitative interviews with social entrepreneurs located in the UK, we examine the link between the drivers of their involvement and their ventures' sustainability. Our findings indicate that women social entrepreneurs are more likely to have higher survival rates in their ventures. This may be because women social entrepreneurs exhibit higher levels of will to solve an existing problem in their community combined with low levels of individual-driven motives such as the search for economic empowerment.

#### **Keywords**

Women; Female entrepreneurship; Contextualizing entrepreneurship, Social enterprises; Context; Gender; Qualitative comparative analysis; Venture survival

## **Introduction**

Social entrepreneurship is understood as “the activity developed by individuals or groups of people to create, sustain, distribute and/or disseminate social or environmental value in innovative ways through enterprise operations, which could be either a social enterprise, non-profit, private or public institution” (Granados, Hlupic, Coakes, & Mohamed, 2011, p. 198–199). Furthermore, a social enterprise is designed from inception to combine social and economic goals, and to consider the last ones as the channel to the final social aim.

[A] social enterprise is an organizational form with primarily social drivers that undertakes innovative business operations to be auto sustainable and guarantees the creation, sustainment, distribution, and/or dissemination of social or environmental value. Therefore, economic drivers are means to a social end, not the end in itself. (Granados et al., 2011, p. 199).

In the last decade, increased attention has been paid to the study of the role of context in the development of entrepreneurial initiatives. Understanding “context” as the “circumstances, conditions, situations, or environments that are external to the respective phenomenon and enable or constrain it” (Welter, 2011, p. 167). As such, context is of great importance in enabling the interaction of behavioral and cognitive factors, sometimes related to gender so as to influence entrepreneurial intentions (Bandura, 1991). First, a broad spectrum of research contextualizing social entrepreneurship has focused on the geographic, historical and institutional factors that shape the development of social

entrepreneurial ventures (Grant, 2008; Defourny & Nyssens, 2012; Newth & Woods, 2014; Rivera-Santos, Holt, Littlewood, & Kolk, 2015; Diochon & Ghore, 2016; Douglas, Eti-Tofinga, & Singh, 2018; Sengupta, Sahay, & Croce, 2018). This stream of research focuses primarily on the understanding of the complexities of national and international institutional environments around social entrepreneurship. The second line of research in this realm lies in the influence of the socioeconomic and cultural, political, market, and institutional contexts in social entrepreneurship (Mair & Martí, 2006; Bacq & Janssen, 2011; Littlewood & Holt 2018).

Research to date has been anecdotal in assessing whether gender is truly a determinant factor that drives women's involvement in social businesses. García-Lomas & Gabaldón (2020) examined gender concerning the participation of women in social enterprises and their research concluded that, at the motivational level, gender is a variable that drives entrepreneurial involvement similarly to other contextual variables such as religion or family. On the contrary, at the outcome level, the authors concluded that gender influences the entrepreneurial practices, aims, and strategies of social ventures (García-Lomas & Gabaldón, 2020). To date, a number of studies have explored the interface of gender, entrepreneurial style, and context (Brush, De Bruin, & Welter, 2009; Sullivan & Meek, 2012; Ratten, Dana, & Ramadani, 2017; Baker & Welter, 2018; Welter, Baker, & Wirsching, 2019). Still, few studies (Levie & Hart, 2011) have examined the influence of gender under the context of the individual, the entrepreneurial process, and the social venture organization to

further understand the differences between men- and women-led social enterprises.

Acknowledging this dual role of gender, this study focuses on when and how gender as a contextual element influences social entrepreneurial activities by exploring social entrepreneurs' experiences and perspectives. To this end, we examined in a subset of 22 social enterprises the specific combinations of drivers of social entrepreneurial involvement that should be promoted in order to achieve venture sustainability.

This study contributes to existing research by casting new light on the intertwining of contextual factors that influence social entrepreneurship. While previous work by Salhi (2018) emphasized that personal and contextual variables do not affect social entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors, our results show that gender, as an element of the context, influences intentions, behaviors, and ultimately the venture's sustainability.

The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows. We first review the state of the art in contextual entrepreneurship, focusing particularly on social entrepreneurial intentions and the potential association between drivers and venture sustainability. We, then, next describe the methodology and data used for the empirical analysis. This is followed by a discussion of the results and a reflection of the implications for social entrepreneurship research and practice. The chapter concludes by highlighting the main contributions to knowledge and theory and suggesting potential areas for future research.

## **Theoretical framework**

Back in 2011, Bacq & Janssen (2011) asserted that “the influence of the external environment on the individual, the process and the organization has only received little, if not to say no, attention in the social entrepreneurship literature” (p. 387). Fast-forward ten years and though there has been a stronger research effort on that side (Grant, 2008; Welter, 2011; Defourny & Nyssens, 2012; Newth & Woods, 2014; Littlewood & Holt, 2015; Rivera-Santos et al., 2015; Diochon & Ghore, 2016; Douglas et al., 2018; Sengupta et al., 2018), there is still a long road ahead. Furthermore, it is relevant to link social venture performance to gender in the context of the individual and the organizational process. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to improve the understanding of the influence of gender on social entrepreneurial intention, activities, and performance.

### *Social entrepreneurship intentions*

Since Bandura (1991) claimed the importance of context in the influence of behavioral and cognitive factors over the entrepreneurial intentions, the debate about which factors affect entrepreneurial intentions has been central to social entrepreneurship studies (Mair & Noboa, 2005; Mair & Martí, 2006). Furthermore, *entrepreneurial intention* as a construct is defined as “a self-acknowledged conviction by a person that they intend to set up a new business venture and consciously plan to do so at some point in the future” (Thompson, 2009, p. 676). Adopting this construct to the social arena, Social Entrepreneurship Intention (SEI) is the individual conviction to start an

organization to create a social change in the society (Bosch, 2013; Chipeta & Surujlal, 2017; Prieto, 2011; Liñán & Favolle, 2015). Leveraging on the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) that highlights the influence of intentions as a predictor of individual behaviors, Ahuja, Akhtar, & Wali (2019) proposed a comprehensive model of the factors influencing social entrepreneurial intention and how they interplay. In their model, gender, education, and age are control variables and personality is considered the most important factor influencing the desire to become a social entrepreneur, followed by “attitude towards behaviour, subjective norms, social capital, human capital, perceived behaviour control, self-efficacy, perceived desirability, and perceived feasibility”.

Furthermore, García-Lomas & Gabaldón (2020) developed a model in which the array of drivers and outcomes of women’s involvement in social enterprises were mapped, drawing a link between them. In their study, they used the definition by Granados et al. (2011) to guide their research:

A social enterprise is an organizational form with primarily social drivers that undertakes innovative business operations to be auto sustainable and guarantees the creation, sustainment, distribution and/or dissemination of social or environmental value. Therefore, economic drivers are means to a social end, not the end in itself.  
(p. 199)

Through a systematic literature review (García-Lomas & Gabaldón, 2020) depicted two categories of drivers promoting women’s involvement in social enterprises: non-economic and economic drivers. On one hand, the influence of

the non-economic factors, in the form of exo-context elements (family, culture, economic and social and political ecosystem) where the entrepreneur lives and the will to solve an existing problem in the community, coupled with individual feminist beliefs of equity and social justice and individual personality traits and characteristics. On the other hand, economic factors included communal and individual elements. On the communal side, economic empowerment, the will to revert the community financial distress, unemployment and promote poverty alleviation are considered. On an individual level, elements such as economic remuneration and financial independence, self-employment, and self-tangible resources (need to improve work-life balance, a steady job, and autonomy) are included. After reviewing the extant literature, the authors concluded that in the discourse and research of women and social enterprises gender is a variable at the drivers level but a lens at the outcome level:

At the drivers' level gender is a variable that influences the social entrepreneurial intentions among others such as family, values, religion, personal history. At the outcome level, women manage and ultimately impact their social enterprises differently. (García-Lomas & Gabaldón, 2020, p. 42)

### *Contextual influences shape entrepreneurship and survival relationship*

The interplay between intentions and ventures' success has been of relevance in management literature since 1981, when Mitchell (1981) described the predicting role of intentions over venture outcomes such as survival and growth. Studies that seek to explore the interplay between drivers and venture

success need to tackle the issue of dealing with multiple levels, i.e. the context of both individual and environment. For example, Ciavarella, Buchholtz, Riordan, Gatewood, & Stokes (2004) focus on the influence of the entrepreneur's personality on venture survival, finding no relation between the entrepreneur's openness and long-term survival. To go beyond the cause-and-consequence perspective that venture performance is a context-specific outcome (Aldrich, 2009; Welter, 2011; Box & Larsson Segerlind, 2018) study the relationship between new venture survival (understood as over 3 years) and the social context with a particular focus on the influence of the gender composition of the founding teams. In their study, they conclude that "ventures founded by teams have a higher probability of surviving but show no overall team gender homogeneity/heterogeneity effect... but the clearest negative effect is found for female solo start-ups" (Box & Larsson Segerlind, 2018, p. 1). We build on former research on the relationship of gender structures and the context of entrepreneurship (Holmquist & Carter, 2009, Welter, 2011) to study the interplay of gender and the individual entrepreneurial context, the process, and the organization of the social venture.

We draw specifically on recent work by García-Lomas & Gabaldón (2020) on social venture's involvement instead of a more traditional entrepreneurial intention model for the following reasons. First, this study aims to assess potential combinations of drivers linked to superior venture sustainability, and García-Lomas & Gabaldón (2020) drew a link between the drivers and outcomes in social enterprises. This model called for use of gender as a lens to explain the influence and impact of social entrepreneurs' involvement. Second, we wanted

to fill the gap in the arena of research on women's entrepreneurship to go beyond the mere individual traits and include gender contextual factors (Ahl, 2006; Achtenhagen & Tillmar, 2013; Hughes, Jennings, Brush, Carter, & Welter, 2012), including both individual characteristics and motivational perspectives. This is in line with former calls to enlarge research on social entrepreneurship intention to include both individual dimensions (push and pull factors) as well as collective, social, and environmental dimensions (Notais & Tixier; 2017). Third, the definition of entrepreneurial intention (Thompson, 2009) applied in the social arena refers mainly to a self-acknowledged conviction to set up a social business, or to pursue a career in the social sector, whereas we wanted to apply a broader model that allowed us to capture the intertwining factors that influence social entrepreneurship beyond the individual's perceptual characteristics.

## **Research methodology**

### *Study design: Sample and data collection*

Drawing on a population of 22 founding CEOs<sup>2</sup> of social enterprises located in the United Kingdom with whom one of the authors had direct or indirect contacts, our study aims to develop insights as to how gender potentially affects the entrepreneurs' involvement in social enterprises. A qualitative approach was adopted since this method is most suitable when the research is grounded in

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<sup>2</sup> Social entrepreneurs that launched their businesses and at the time of the interview were the acting CEO.

the people's experience and cannot be viewed in static terms (Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth, & Keil, 1988).

In the first stage, we conducted semi-structured interviews with the social entrepreneurs to gain insights on their individual visions, the venture's mission, and the contributing factors to the development of their social ventures. Semi-structured interviews are considered an appropriate method to collect data, given that perceptions are not directly observable (Patton, 2014). The interviews, of 60 minutes each on average, were conducted throughout the year 2014/2015 on the premises of the social enterprises. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim and checked for accuracy by one of the authors and loaded into Nvivo8 qualitative software. Where applicable, archival data such as the CEOs LinkedIn profiles, and the company websites were used to complement the information on the components of vision and mission statements.

#### *Data, conditions, and analysis*

The next stage involved conducting a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) (Ragin, 1987) to assess whether there are differences that can be identified between the men- and women-led ventures. In recent years, QCA has had a higher adoption as a research methodology in social science including the entrepreneurial arena (Beynon, Jones, & Pickernell, 2016; Wu & Huarng, 2015). This data analysis works well with small samples and we applied it to identify potential combinations of economic and non-economic drivers linked to superior

venture sustainability —measured in terms of venture survival over three years after foundation—.

Step 1. Definition of the outcome of interest and the relation of causal conditions.

The outcome of interest is the current sustainability (status) of the company measured by the survival of the company (beyond 3 years). In addition, the study uses five antecedent conditions, which are within the limit of 8 established by Ragin (2009). The choice is motivated by our understanding of the phenomenon of social entrepreneurial intention and involvement. As can be seen in Table 3.1, besides the inclusion of the drivers of involvement in social enterprises as antecedent conditions, one additional control was considered, namely gender. This variable is expected to shape the status of the company and consequently contribute to the emergence of different patterns.

*Table 3. 1. Details of the outcome and antecedents' conditions promoting the survival of social enterprises (compiled by the authors based on García-Lomas & Gabaldón's (2020) classification).*

Attribute	Symbol	Definition
<b>Outcome STATUS</b>	STAT	Venture survival over three years after foundation.
<b>NON-ECONOMIC COMMUNITY</b>	NEC	The social entrepreneur is driven by the will to solve an existing problem in the community. Coupled with the combined influence of a pro-socially oriented family and exo-context at large.
<b>NON-ECONOMIC INDIVIDUAL</b>	NEI	The entrepreneur's behavior is fueled by individual career intentions and aspirations and their individual personality traits and beliefs (i.e. feminist ideology).
<b>ECONOMIC - COMMUNITY</b>	EC	A highly communal orientation fueled by the need of economic empowerment, poverty alleviation, and job security for the community where they operate strongly foster the entrepreneur's intentions.
<b>ECONOMIC - INDIVIDUAL</b>	EI	The social entrepreneurial intention is influenced by extrinsic rewards such as autonomy, economic empowerment, financial independence, and self-tangible resources.
<b>GENDER</b>	GEN	Female or Male.

## Step 2. Data Calibration

The second and central step of QCA is the calibration of data, that is, the conversion of variables into sets representing the degree of membership in a category (Ragin, 2009; Woodside & Zhang, 2013). Gender, as a binary variable, is converted into a crisp set, whereas continuous variables were transformed into fuzzy membership scores ranging from 0.0 to 1. In order to transform these variables, it is necessary to determine the anchor points for membership scores. Although Ragin (2009) originally defines three (95%, 50%, 5%), after coding the interviews, we define further gradations to fully capture the nuances of the different CEO's perspectives and experiences.

Following Basurto & Speer's (2012) guidelines for calibration, the thresholds and anchors for each of the conditions are defined and assigned to cases as detailed in Table 3.2:

*Table 3. 2. Thresholds and anchors (based on Basurto & Speer, 2012).*

Crisp Set - GENDER	Six-value fuzzy set (NEC, EC, EI, NEI)
1= Female, fully in	1= fully in
0= Male, fully out	0.8= mostly but not fully in
	0.6= more or less in
	0.4= more or less out
	0.2= mostly but not fully out
	0= fully out

## Results

### *Analysis of necessary conditions for the outcome*

Before proceeding with the analysis, a study of necessity must be performed to assess if any of the individual causal conditions needs to be present in all the

combinations that result in the outcome (venture's survival). Our results (see Table 3.2) show that none of the antecedent conditions showed a consistency score exceeding the threshold value of 0.9 (Ragin, 2009; Schneider & Wagemann, 2010), however, the antecedent condition that is almost always necessary is the non-economic community driver. This highlights the core sense-making of social entrepreneurs:

In a world that faces many social challenges and with governments that are often unable to provide solutions, motivated social entrepreneurs are often key to improving socially challenging situations. (Sassmannshausen & Volkmann, 2018, p. 1)

That is, entrepreneurs' will to solve or tackle an existing problem influences the venture's sustainability, which suggests that high levels of non-economic community drivers are key to ensure that managerial decisions and employee actions do not deviate from the original vision and mission. Furthermore, as shown in Table 3.3, the absence of individual economic drivers indicates that a low EI is almost a necessary condition for achieving high venture sustainability.

Finally, results show that, when conducting the analysis of necessities for the opposite outcome (venture failure), "gender: female" is a trivial necessary condition (coverage value is 0) whereas "gender: male" is a necessary condition (consistency value is 1) (Ragin, 2009; Schneider & Wagemann, 2010), implying that women-led ventures are less likely to fail than men's.

Table 3. 3. Summary of necessary conditions (compiled by the authors).

Condition	STAT		~ STAT	
	Consistency	Coverage	Consistency	Coverage
<b>NEC</b>	<b>0.866667</b>	0.577778	0.760000	0.422222
<b>~ NEC</b>	0.133333	0.400000	0.240000	0.600000
<b>NEI</b>	0.583333	0.466667	0.800000	0.533333
<b>~ NEI</b>	0.416667	0.714286	0.200000	0.285714
<b>EC</b>	0.566667	0.500000	0.680000	0.500000
<b>~ EC</b>	0.433333	0.619048	0.320000	0.380952
<b>EI</b>	0.150000	0.360000	0.320000	0.400000
<b>~ EI</b>	<b>0.850000</b>	0.600000	0.680000	0.400000
<b>GEN</b>	0.750000	1.000000	0.000000	0.000000
<b>~ GEN</b>	0.250000	0.23076	<b>1.000000</b>	0.769231

Note: ~ indicates absence of the condition.

**Bold** indicates the values that are above or closer to the defined threshold conditions.

Source: Compiled by the authors

#### Analysis of sufficient conditions for the outcome

Next, we analyze the sufficient conditions to see which configurations lead to venture survival. To obtain the causal paths, the Quine-McCluskey algorithm computes, using Boolean algebra, the commonalities among the potential configurations. In our case, we need to compute a truth table with 32 combinations of causal conditions potentially relevant to the attainment of the outcome. For goodness of fit, a minimum coverage value of 0.45 and a consistency value of 0.80 were considered sufficient. Due to our small sample size (n=22), we dropped those paths that had no case (Ragin, 2009).

The possible causal configurations in which the antecedent conditions correspond to the survival of the social enterprise are analyzed and interpreted in Table 3.4. This table provides a summary depiction of the results, which are presented as suggested by Ragin (2009).

Table 3. 4. Analysis of sufficiency for the survival of social enterprises (compiled by the authors).

Intermediate solution	STAT	
	1	2
Condition		
NON-ECONOMIC COMMUNITY	●	●
NON-ECONOMIC INDIVIDUAL	●	
ECONOMIC - COMMUNITY		●
ECONOMIC - INDIVIDUAL	○	○
GENDER	●	●
Raw coverage	0.4	0.366667
Unique coverage	0.216667	0.183333
Consistency	1	1
Overall Solution coverage	0.583333	
Overall Solution consistency	1	
Pathways/ Entrepreneurs	6 entrepreneurs	
	6 entrepreneurs	

Note: ●: presence of the condition; ○: absence of the condition, blank spaces indicate ambiguity

Source: Compiled by authors

Following Baumgartner (2015), we focused on the intermediate solution yield by QCA, where, by means of Boolean operators, we arrive at two different pathways that can be followed to obtain the desired outcome.

The first configuration is a combination of the absence of individual economic drivers along with the presence of non-economic community and individual drivers for female entrepreneurs. This means that the presence of high non-economic community and individual values combined in a female-led venture, together with moderate or low economic individual drivers, explains 40% of the ventures' survival rates. This combination has a unique coverage rate of 0.216. That is, the output is explained by this combination alone in 21.6% of the entrepreneurs, while its consistency is 1.

A second pathway is for female entrepreneurs that experience high levels of non-economic and economic-community drivers and an absence of individual

economic drivers. This combination has an explanatory power of 36.6 % and a similar consistency to the previous configuration with an index of 1.

Overall, the whole set of the two causal configurations has a coverage of 58% and a consistency of 100%, which means that the variation in venture sustainability of the social enterprises identified in the sample is explained exclusively by these combinations of drivers. Sample entrepreneurs of these combinations are all female entrepreneurs (id: 14, 3, 11). Both configurations share three common factors that influence venture survival: high non-economic community drivers, low economic-individual drivers, and being a woman social entrepreneur. Thus, confirming that venture survival results in a strong association between high levels of non-economic community drivers and low levels of economic-individual drivers. Significantly more noteworthy when previous research by García-Lomas & Gabaldón (2020) highlighted that, when looking at the drivers of women's involvement in social enterprises, the analysis showed a higher variation between non-economic and economic drivers than between individual and communal ones. This difference is reasonable and interpretable because of the mixed men-and-women dataset.

Moreover, we conduct two additional analyses. Concerning the influence of gender as a contextual element, we analyze whether there are any combinations of causal conditions that could explain the outcome without including the variable gender. The results confirm that without considering gender, the drivers had no explanatory power on the outcome. More specifically, there are no combinations of drivers that are sufficient to explain the venture sustainability without including gender. Confirming that gender is the sense-making context

that links drivers and outcomes in social ventures. This reinforces the work of García-Lomas & Gabaldón (2020), who argue that gender should be used as a lens when studying the impact of involvement in social enterprises. Finally, we conduct the analysis for the opposite outcome, venture failure. While results show that all cases were in men-led ventures, none of the causal paths was sufficient to explain the outcome.

Additionally, by comparing the intermediate solution and the parsimonious one in QCA, the results show that female gender is included in each term and it should almost be considered a necessary condition (Stokke, 2007). Nonetheless, the reverse relation is not always true: while the female gender is always present in both combinations, being a woman social entrepreneur does not guarantee venture survival.

## **Discussion**

Contextual entrepreneurship research (Welter, 2011) highlights the role of contextual elements in venturing activities. Similarly, our study emphasizes gender as a key element that influences social entrepreneurial intentions, behaviors, and venture sustainability.

Through the asymmetric thinking of the QCA approach, we explore the causal combinations promoting a high-level of venture survival. Our results provide evidence of two alternative pathways leading to this outcome. More broadly, our results show that the combination of women social entrepreneurs driven by the will to solve an existing problem in the community, together with low levels of economic aspirations, act as the only path to a low rate of venture

failure. This finding is in line with Granados et al. (2011) that emphasized that the initial absence of economic drivers and the presence of social drivers promote the creation and sustainment of social enterprises.

A focused and explicit discussion about gender as a contextual element revealed that gender, and more specifically being a woman social entrepreneur, is relevant in promoting venture survival. This finding is striking, given that prior research conducted by García-Lomas & Gabaldón (2020) indicates that, when looking at the drivers of involvement in social enterprises, gender is considered just another demographic variable. However, the fact that gender substantially influences the outcomes of social entrepreneurial activities implies that gender should be considered as a lens and a contextual factor in the impact of women's involvement in social enterprises.

Finally, we explore the combinations of causal conditions explaining a high level of failure of social enterprises, and no sufficient combinations were identified though it was prevalent for men entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, the results show that when male entrepreneurs are not led by a will to solve an existing problem in the community but by high levels of individual drivers when deciding to set up a social venture, this has a high impact on the future venture's sustainability.

This study contributes to the existing literature in three diverse ways. First, the study links gender as a contextual element to venture sustainability highlighting a gendered perspective, which is useful for examining the differences between men's and women's involvement in social enterprises in a more objective way (Jennings & Brush, 2013). Second, it contributes to existing

research on hybrid organizations (Battilana & Lee, 2014) by emphasizing that women, even though more socially driven at the early stages of the venture, are more likely to manage competing goals and guarantee venture survival. Third, this study uses QCA, a mixed qualitative and quantitative method, to research involvement in social enterprises, thus allowing an enhanced understanding of the causal complexity of social enterprising ventures. This is consistent with both the latest calls for methodological innovations in the field of gender and entrepreneurship research (Henry, Foss, & Ahl, 2016) and the calls to apply QCA to the study of entrepreneurship and innovation (Kraus, Ribeiro-Soriano, & Schüssler, 2018). Finally, the insights from our study offer interesting implications to policymakers that seek to foster female and social entrepreneurship, since female social entrepreneurs show a higher prevalence of social drivers and of venture sustainability. Indeed, all ventures led by women were found to have survived after the period of analysis.

As with any research, our study has limitations but also suggests opportunities for future research. First, we followed García-Lomas & Gabaldón's (2020) model to analyze the drivers promoting involvement in social enterprises instead of a more established "social entrepreneurial intention model". Our data analysis showed that many of the entrepreneurs did not self-identify themselves as "social" entrepreneurs but just as entrepreneurs, nor they had an "active entrepreneurial intention" but of resolving a social problem. Thus, the chosen model was more adequate to grasp the full spectrum of drivers in social enterprises, including both contextual and individual factors, and the multiple nuances of social entrepreneurial involvement. Second, the data collection

process was conducted through semi-structured interviews with open-end questions instead of an entrepreneurial intention questionnaire created *ad hoc*. This is the reason behind the solution coverage of “only” 0.54 (versus the traditional 0.7 or 0.8 expected in some previous entrepreneurial studies). Future studies could adopt an interdisciplinary perspective to examine women’s influence on ventures’ sustainability by researching how socially-driven women, after launching a social venture, can infuse the care mission and vision throughout the organizational team, processes, and strategy.

## **Conclusions**

Debates about the relationship between gender and entrepreneurship have occupied an important place in theoretical discussions since Ogbor (2000) argued that the discourse of entrepreneurship as a monolithic concept led to unexamined knowledge. Analogously, Jennings & Brush (2013) made the case to research on the potential gendering of social entrepreneurship to understand the role of gender in shaping the prevalence and success of social enterprises. Inspired by such approaches, this chapter takes a gendered approach to understand the intertwined of contextual factors influencing social entrepreneurship’s outputs. To this end, using QCA methodology, this study aims to reveal the causal complexity of how non-economic and economic drivers are likely to interact possibly shaping the growth prospects of social enterprises. By outlining a contrasting process in which the interface between gender and drivers influence the sustainability of the social venture in the long run, our

research suggests a relationship between a gendered context and how individuals embrace and impact social entrepreneurial opportunities.

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## Appendix 3.A

### Social Entrepreneurs' interview questionnaire

1. What is your organization - business about?
2. What is your **social mission** and how do you sustainably achieve it?
3. What **social change-impact** has your organization – business initiated?
  - a. What have been the most important barriers to that change?
4. Is there a **common purpose – vision** between you and all the people that collaborate with you?
  - a. How was that common purpose - vision made possible?
5. Is there any difference in working in this kind of organizations in terms of **leadership styles**?
6. In what sense do you consider yourself an **influential** person?
  - a. What would you say have been your most important influential resources?
7. What was your **motivation** to create your organization?
  - a. What important motivational values that you have are behind this initiative?
  - b. Where and when do you think this motivation comes from?
  - c. Who has inspired you, as a role model, in this kind of motivation?
  - d. Do you have any need, motivation, or aspiration still to fulfill?
    - i. How are you going to fulfill it?
8. Is there any **spiritual dimension** in connection with your social entrepreneurship motivation?

- a. Is there a place for **God** in this motivation?
9. Is there any **political idea or ideology** that you feel closer to?
10. All the way through this process, have there been moments of **crisis, conflict, adversity**?
- a. What kind of crisis, conflict, adversity?
  - b. How did you manage them?
11. Do you think there will be any **legacy** of what you have done after you?
- a. What kind of legacy?
12. Up until now, in this whole process, what have you **learned**?
- a. What have you learned about yourself?
  - b. What have you learned about people?
13. How can anyone identify if there is a **potential** social entrepreneur in them?
- a. What advice would you give to anyone willing to become a social entrepreneur?
14. Do you consider yourself a **happy** person?
15. **Open** question: Anything to add?

## **CHAPTER 4.**

### **CARING IN ACTION: UNFOLDING THE ROLE OF GENDER IN AN INNOVATIVE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION**

#### **Abstract**

We explore the influence of the ethics of care on building innovative organizations that tackle grand societal challenges. The hybrid nature of social enterprises with their dual goals (social and financial) facilitates the harmonization of both goals in the search for a social change. Our analysis and empirical evidence suggest that the founder's gender attitudes facilitate the translation of the original motivation from the entrepreneur to value creation. The adoption of the ethics of care perspective to explore the influence of gender on the enterprise' value creation responds to the call of adopting a feminist perspective for understanding gender differences in entrepreneurship. Through a detailed case study of a woman social entrepreneur and the development of her enterprise, we draw upon the role of the founder's gender attitudes and motivations in imprinting and innovating.

#### **Keywords**

Care ethics; Gender; Female leadership; Female entrepreneurship social enterprises

## **Introduction**

Change Dyslexia, located in Barcelona, Spain, is a start-up that has shifted in about 3 years from a university initiative in 2015 to a social enterprise with a reliable scientifically-validated methodology to detect dyslexia. The company has a clear social impact mission: “that everyone, regardless of their social status, has access to free detection and scientifically validated support (...) [It aims] to reduce the three barriers to overcoming dyslexia: ignorance, reading and writing difficulties, and low resources” (Fernández de Lis, 2017). Thus, finding new solutions to overcome dyslexia is a continuous objective for the founder and the venture’s employees. This objective could only be supported by infusing care throughout the organization, thus aligning and integrating the business model for financial sustainability and the organizational design to achieve the intended impact and avoid mission drift over time.

Social impact and financial performance have traditionally been conceptualized as opposing goals. Still, hybridity is in the core nature of social enterprises, but it is regarded as a challenge for their long-term venture sustainability. Furthermore, ever since Battilana & Lee (2014) pointed out the hybridization process social ventures face as a result of their diverging institutional logics, it has rapidly grown as a hot topic in social entrepreneurship research.

Adopting an ethics-of-care view (Gilligan, 1995; Noddings, 2002; Tronto, 1993) in the present study, we analyze when and how building a caring organization may facilitate the harmonization of both goals. Following a case study approach (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1989), we aim to explore the role of

ethics of care in a women-led social enterprise to achieve its intended common goal. Our research provides a deep understanding of the link between the social enterprise founder and its venture. Applying this frame of ethics of care, we argue that the leader's gender plays a moderating role between what drives their involvement to solve a community problem and the ventures' impact. Gender influences how care is translated from the entrepreneur into the organization to the extent it impacts the way the venture strategy is formulated and implemented, and ultimately the ventures' social impact and long-term sustainability.

To address this debated topic, research on gender in social enterprises has advanced the influence of gender in ethics highlighting this association as dynamic (Chen, Velasquez Tuliao, Cullen, & Chang, 2016). Analyzing the case of Change Dyslexia hence follows the last waves of research that emphasizes the importance of gender in social enterprises (Périlleux & Szafarz, 2015; Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016; Haugh & Talwar, 2016; Hechavarria & Ingram, 2016; Cho, Kim, & Mor Barak, 2017; Hechavarria, Terjesen, Ingram, Renko, Justo, & Elam, 2017; García-Lomas & Gabaldón, 2020), and the call to use gender as a context to generate insights on women's involvement in social enterprises. Furthermore, this case study contributes to both social entrepreneurship and ethics literature. Our main contribution is revealing the mechanisms that guide the emergence of a caring organization and its impact on its long-term sustainability. Finally, we contribute to the literature on entrepreneurship by analyzing how a woman CEO of a social enterprise can influence her venture's organizational life cycle.

The article is organized as follows. First, the theoretical background presents the dynamic female leadership perspective and its application in the field of social enterprises through an ethics theory lens. The methodology and the results related to the case study are then outlined. Finally, the discussion and conclusions sections subsequently offer the theoretical and practical contributions to the debate on the role of gender in social enterprises.

## **Theoretical background: Research on female leadership and ethics of care**

### *Social enterprises as caring organizations under the ethics-of-care frame*

Research examining the influence of ethics in social enterprises calls to apply a range of conceptual lenses to rethink the space of ethics in social entrepreneurship (Chell, Spence, Perrini, & Harris, 2016). It also calls to cross-reference and learn from other disciplines such as small business and entrepreneurship to help further out understanding of social entrepreneurship, ethics and social change (Chell et al. 2016).

Although historically, ethics-of care theory (Gilligan, 1995; Tronto, 1999; Noddings, 2002) has been related to feminism, latest research (DeMoss & McCann, 1997; Skoe, Pratt, Matthews, & Curror, 1996, Skoe, 2010) have contradicted the widespread belief that women are more inclined to be care-oriented, while male tend to pivot towards justice-orientation. Barring particularities, this theoretical lens has been applied in social entrepreneurship's research to study the drivers and motivational foundations of the social entrepreneurs (Fowler, 2000; Dees & Anderson, 2003; Miller, Grimes,

McMullen, & Vogus, 2012). Latest research follows an ethics-of-care approach to study both the goal and the process followed by social entrepreneurs to foster greater social impact. André & Pache (2016) applied this framework to understand the process of building a caring organization, from the early beginnings throughout the scale-up phase. In their study, they defined *ethics of care* “as both engaging in a particular goal —making our world better by caring about each other’s needs— and engaging in a particular process —relying on empathic dispositions and practices to fulfill each other needs”— (André & Pache, 2016, p. 661).

Caring hence emerges in social enterprises as entrepreneurs promote responsibility-based ethics through the habit of care (Tronto, 1993). At the core of this responsibility, four fundamental elements are the cornerstones of the caring disposition and practice: “attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness” Tronto (1993, p. 127). These elements are the enablers promoting the development of the caring process throughout four phases: caring about, taking care of, care-giving, and care receiving (p. 165). Invoking the traditional entrepreneurial process (Bhave, 1994), André & Pache (2016) illustrated the process for the creation of social ventures.

As such, the process starts similarly to commercial entrepreneurship; with opportunity recognition. However, for social ventures, this phase —the so-called “care about” phase— is triggered by the entrepreneur’s attentiveness and empathy to recognize a need in the community. The second entrepreneurial phase, “opportunity filtration”, is driven by the responsibility of the social entrepreneur to act upon and take care of the problem. Next, in the “venture

creation” phase, the entrepreneur manages competing demands and scarce resources to meet the needs and promote “care-giving” through the new venture. Finally, in the exchange phase, the process needs to be iterated to promote “care receiving” through network collaboration. This last phase relates to the consolidation of the venture’s strategy to achieve its mission and scale its impact.

For organizational emergence to happen, the entrepreneur’s individual care disposition needs to be generalized throughout the whole organization. The following forms of principle were identified by André & Pache (2016) as enablers of the process. First, “fostering care in all organizational members” aims to promote a caring culture throughout the organization so all employees feel legitimized as leaders of a caring organization: “all members have both the responsibility and the capacity to care (...) caring is part of their role, despite a division of labor which may formally assign care-giving to specific organizational positions” (André & Pache, 2016, p. 668). Initially, the fostering practice is to be embedded through recruitment by using caring as a hiring criteria *sine qua non*. Later on, encouraging the development of activities such as corporate volunteering as a means to promote all employee’s care disposition.

Second, “encouraging caring relationships among organizational members” shows as a principle that relates to the actions to formalize caring relationships in the form of process, coordination, roles, etc. The aim of the supportive caring networks is “to instill the idea that professional competence is compatible with being caring and being cared for in one’s job” (André & Pache, 2016, p. 670). This can be achieved when mentoring programs, training, support groups, and

so on, are part of the business as usual within the organization (McAllister & Bigley, 2002).

Finally, André & Pache (2016) define the principle of “developing an organization’s capacity to listen to different voices” as “the organization’s ability to listen to the different voices of their internal and external stakeholders” (p. 670). It relates to the ability to create and engage with different stakeholders (beneficiaries, investors, partners...) while protecting and nurturing the organization’s social mission. This principle regards the elements (network creation, interaction) required to manage tensions in a period of “intense resource dependence, bureaucratization, and pressure on outcomes” (André & Pache, 2016, p. 670).

These three forms of principle need to co-exist to promote organizational care. Serving as a broker of collaboration and information sharing practices and as keeping the venture’s strategic caring mission in place in all facets of the social entrepreneurial process.

Caring emergence is an interactive and dynamic process as organizations are continuously navigating between conflicts since their inception. However, the tensions become more present as the organization grows and scales. “As the scale-up process exposes social entrepreneurs to resource dependence, bureaucratization, and an overemphasis on outcomes, scaling up may fundamentally challenge social entrepreneurs’ ethics of care” (André & Pache, 2016, p. 668).

### *The moderating role of gender in caring organizations*

According to Eagly (2007), *leadership* has been traditionally defined in masculine terms. Eagly defines *leadership* styles as “relatively consistent patterns of social interaction that typify leaders as individuals. Leadership styles are not fixed behaviors but encompass a range of behaviors that have a particular meaning” (p. 2). In their meta-analysis study comparing men’s and women’s leadership styles, Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen (2003) concluded that female leadership style is characterized by a more transformational style coupled with engagement in contingent reward. Transformational elements exercised by women included: individualized focus, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. Whereas men, tend to exert a more transactional style characterized by the deployment of contingent rewards, laissez-faire, and exception management (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Furthermore, their study concludes that “all of the aspects of leadership style on which women exceeded men, relate positively to leaders’ effectiveness; whereas all of the aspects on which men exceeded women have negative or null relations to effectiveness” (Eagly et al., 2003, p. 569).

Moreover, in her analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of female leadership, Eagly (2007), acknowledged the influence of gender stereotypes relating to specific abilities and personality traits of men and women. Understanding as stereotypes the “beliefs about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviors of members of certain groups” (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996, p. 240). Eagly’s (2007) study was further developed by Heilman (2012), who theorized the multidimensions of gender stereotypes for both men and women.

Heilman (2012) identifies the female stereotype as characterized by a concern for others, affiliative tendencies, deference, and emotional sensitivity. Whereas men are portrayed as being oriented towards achievement, inclined to be in charge, rational, and valuing autonomy.

Regarding leadership effectiveness, women are perceived as being more effective in leadership positions that require stereotypical female characteristics such as “cooperativeness and the ability to get well with others” (Eagly, 2007, p. 6) typical from collaborative and participative environments. On the other hand, men are believed to be more effective in environments where male stereotypical characteristics as “directiveness and the ability to control others” Eagly (2007, p. 6) are highly valued. In such environments, women are not positively evaluated when they exert stereotypical male components such as directive and autocratic style (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992). This is in line with the role congruity theory of prejudice (Eagly & Karau, 2002) that proposes that the greater perceived incongruity between the gender and leadership role, the more significant gender biases and social disincentives they face. Hence, gender plays a moderating role in terms of leadership effectiveness perception, whereby both women and men are perceived as more effective leadership when they take up leadership positions congruent with their gender. For example, female leaders are perceived as effective when working in job settings such as education, social service, or government (Eagly et al. 1992).

However, Pronin, Gilovich, & Ross’s (2004) study concluded that self-stereotyping affects women, responding —conscious and unconsciously— to those gender stereotypes. As such, women that want to succeed in so-called

male environments, such as STEM careers, would go as far as disassociating themselves from any perceived female gender-based behaviors, with the aim of not being perceived as less competent in the masculine-type specific tasks. This is in line with the work by Trauth, Cain, Joshi, Kvasny, & Booth (2012), who asserted that Social Role Theory “observed a correlation between ideas people have about men and women and scientifically documented differences in social behavior and personality” (p.3).

In summary, there is a collective agreement on the influence of gendered stereotypes for both male and female leaders and how it affects both self-perception and collective perception of the stereotypically expected gender role identity (masculine or feminine).

Men are expected to display agentic characteristics (e.g. assertiveness and competitiveness), whereas women are expected to display communal characteristics (e.g. benevolence and personal regard for the individualized concerns of others). (Saint-Michel, 2018, p. 961).

The organizational caring process is not gender-neutral, but an integral part as different forms of femininities or masculinities are displayed in their specific managerial styles and in the specific interrelated elements of ethics of care: relationality, empathy, and inquiry (Hamington, 2019). Still, a widely spread practice among women leaders, including the subject of this case study, is to proactively disassociate herself from any female-gendered perspective in what constitutes a clear example of unconscious role congruity theory display in

female leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). This feminist perspective, in terms of specific attitudes and behaviors, was linked to their transformational leadership style and to the way ethics of care is infused by the female entrepreneur throughout the organization.

The application of ethics of care had already been used by Hechavarria et al. (2017) to study the relationship between social entrepreneurs and their ventures' missions, to conclude that "women entrepreneurs are more likely than men to emphasize social value goals over economic value creation goals" (p. 225). Ethics of care can provide fruitful opportunities to broaden our understanding of how femininities are enacted, how they can be leveraged to manage the hybrid nature of social enterprises, and what specific elements differentiate the way women's involvement shapes social enterprises in comparison to their male counterparts. Moreover, this aligns with the latest calls to explore "by investigating the opportunities that social enterprises can leverage thanks to their hybrid nature... and complements and advances earlier research that has mainly highlighted the managerial tensions (Pache & Santos, 2013) and ethical challenges (André & Pache, 2016) that social enterprises face" Mongelli, Rullani, Ramus, & Rimac (2019, p. 301).

## **Data and methodology**

Given our focus on the development of a caring organization, we carried out a qualitative single case study on a social enterprise where we examined its dynamics from its foundation in 2015 up to nowadays. The case study method (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1989) was chosen mainly for two reasons: (i) it provides

in-depth information emerging from the participant perception and reflection of their experience that is highly intertwined with context. Hence, qualitative research it is appropriate for the study of female leadership and the emergence of social enterprises as caring organizations since it provides in-depth contextual information (Bryman, 2004) and (ii) it “suits the goal of developing a model in an area where little data or theory exists” (Kumar & Ormiston, 2012, p. 106).

### *Data collection*

Data was gathered during November and December 2018. During this period, no major events occurred in the environment of Change Dyslexia that could affect our findings. We followed best practices in qualitative research to increase the validity and reliability of the case study (Yin, 1989), using multiple methods for primary and secondary data collection, such as theory, to guide the main interview topics (Eisenhardt, 1989), and following a traditional linear qualitative method process, where data was collected in two stages, before conducting the analysis. In the first month, we collected archival data from varying sources —newspaper articles, the company’s website, and social media—, including interviews with the founder in media sources. In the second stage, in December 2018, the field data came in through an interview conducted with the CEO and founder. The semi-structured interview followed some of the best practices in the field (Berg & Lune, 2017) and sought to explore the motivation of the CEO to launch the social enterprises, the key-decision points in her life, and how they have influenced the venture and the challenges faced since its inception. The meeting was conducted remotely by the first researcher

using Skype and recorded with videoconference software Callnote. It lasted around 2 hours.

The first researcher transcribed the interview verbatim —resulting in 27 pages of single-spaced interview transcript— and manually analyzed them along with other collected archival documents using the qualitative data analysis software Nvivo12. The data was analyzed by chronologically summarizing the content of the documents and field data collected during the meetings with the CEO. Transcribed documents were emailed to the CEO to ensure correction in the recordings and external validity. For validity purposes, data were triangulated through the combination of archival and field data. Furthermore, we followed best practices on interpretative research (Lukka, 2014) by continually moving from the theoretical etic perspective to the emic —CEO interview— empirical one to connect the theoretical insights previously obtained. Finally, information was organized according to Tronto's (1993) 4-phase model of caring for organizational care.

### *Research setting*

The research setting was Change Dyslexia, a social enterprise that is a leading actor for dyslexia detection. Change Dyslexia was founded and led by a women entrepreneur. From a theoretical standpoint, Change Dyslexia combined elements and activities that, to a large extent, seem to describe the development of caring leadership over time.

The firm was founded in 2015 by Luz Rello, the company's current CEO. She had been working on the solution before but did not want to set up the

company until the product was completely ready. Luz had dyslexia, and through her experience, she had gained evidence-based knowledge of the importance of early detection to prevent reading and writing difficulties from turning into self-esteem and primary-school adaptation and failure problems.

Dyslexia did not stop her from having a passion for linguistics, which led her to start a Ph.D. in computer science that pivoted from a focus on natural language processing to the study of dyslexia. Although Change Dyslexia was not officially founded until December 2015, when the firm was incorporated, all her efforts during the previous years were related to “fighting” dyslexia disorder.

From the launch in 2012 of Cookie Cloud: a tech startup with the sole objective of developing APPs, based on their research findings, to improve the learning abilities of kids with dyslexia. To that end, the founding team decided to offer the games for free, to reach a wider audience. One of the first apps developed by Cookie Cloud was Dysggexia: a game created to help children overcome reading and writing difficulties that has reached over 30,000 users in 70 countries. The next step was a fellowship from Carnegie Mellon University’s (CMU) department of computer science to further research dyslexia. Additionally, during this period she was elected as an Ashoka Fellow—an international network of social entrepreneurs and changemakers—. The knowledge gained thanks to the Ashoka mentorship program, coupled with the registration of a patent for a method to detect dyslexia in conjunction with CMU, led Luz Rello to register Change Dyslexia as a social enterprise at the end of 2015. They were pioneers in Spain in the launch of a free game for early detection of dyslexia using patented technology. Since its beginning, Change

Dyslexia has experienced steady growth, reaching more than 165,000 application users in over 50 countries by end of 2018.

## **Analysis and results**

The case study analysis informs about the emergence of organizational care by shedding light on the process (see table 4.1). Through an ethics-of-care lens we analyzed the combination of female leadership style(s) and stereotype exhibited by the social entrepreneur as they adapt to emerging opportunities and tensions that rise along the life cycle of their ventures and challenge their commitment to solve a social problem. Furthermore, the framework revealed a dynamic multi-level interaction between a social enterprise's founder, and the organizational life cycle and development characteristics of the ventures, such as key resource allocation and other strategic decisions. To understand this process in Change Dyslexia, it is important to develop a chronological understanding of the social entrepreneur and the venture evolution, from 2013 onwards. All the relevant data were arranged into three phases: (a) seeding the origin of Change Dyslexia: 2010–2015, (b) launching the solution into the market: 2016–2017, and (c) strategic growth: 2017–nowadays.

The following section reports the data analysis and insights of each phase, structured in the following tables. Table 4.1 summarizes the key milestones in Luz's personal life and in Change Dyslexia's organizational life cycle. Table 4.2 uses quotes to exemplify the external triggers that were key enablers of her evolution and effective personal and professional development. This evolution consequently influenced her organization's life cycle and evolution. Finally, in

Appendix 4.A quotes are used to highlight the key items that measure the leadership attributes promoting the emergence of organizational care.

Table 4. 1. Key milestones.

PHASES OF CARING PROCESS (Tronto, 1993)	CARING ABOUT	TAKING CARE OF	CARE-GIVING	CARE RECEIVING
<b>Luz's personal milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Dyslexia as a kid</li> <li>•Director suggest she changes subject</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Google Retreat - encounter con fellow researcher</li> <li>•Antonella Brogglia - suggest she is a social entrepreneur.</li> <li>Ashoka nomination and selection as Ashoka Fellow</li> <li>She does not recognize herself as a entrepreneur until: a) Ashoka nominates her as fellow; b) the product is completely ready - there is no pivoting; c) she has a proper team to develop the idea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Multitasking - researcher and entrepreneur in her spare time</li> <li>•Reactivated Ashoka fellowship - mentee at Globalizer</li> <li>•Career award - Self-stereotyping: external awards increase her recognition, competence in the subject</li> <li>•People approached her w/ collaborations: need to be loyal to the mission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Wants to ensure I/ sustainability of the firm</li> <li>•She does not consider her essential (and wants not to be) but the team is empowered on its own</li> <li>•Multiple awards/recognition: Cartier, Forbes, Cosmopolitan - she increases her recognition, competence in the subject</li> <li>•Launched Book (2018) about her experience and research (interwind personal and Blurry intertwined lines - her and the company (values).</li> </ul>
<b>PHASES OF CARING PROCESS (Tronto, 1993)</b>  <b>Change Dyslexia's organizational lifecycle milestones</b>	<p><i>Seeding the origin of Change Dyslexia: From studying Dyslexia as a Ph.D. research to the incorporation of the company (2010-2015)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•2013 - Launch of dysggexia free game to improve comprehension skills for kids with dyslexia</li> <li>•No financial/commercial goals in the development of the first app</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Social venture creation might be the option to channel in a sustainable way the "help" she wants to bring.</li> <li>•Develops the solution together with a cohesive team she puts together - they patented the detection model at CMU</li> <li>•The financial side of the business starts to be relevant a long with the growing importance of the role played by external recognition</li> </ul>	<p><i>The Launch: 2016- 2017</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Devised long-term strategy - Along with the Globalizer mentors</li> <li>•Raised funds for the development of the commercial product: Kickstart campaign: Collaborative responses to sustainability issues (product development and marketing)</li> <li>•Reverted to the company all money from awards including Ashoka stipend</li> <li>•Launched product into the market</li> <li>•Licensing agreement w/ Samsung</li> <li>•Only 2 employees - she multitasks: sales leads, back and forth US</li> <li>•Growing importance of the financial side, but still with a strong social side (benefits are invested/reverted in grants)</li> <li>•Declined to sell-off the company</li> </ul>	<p><i>Strategic growth: 2017 – nowadays</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Launch Dydetective U: paid solution to improve learning capabilities</li> <li>•Diversification (sustainability) revenue streams (3): Freemium model all revenues to be reinverted in the company to pay for scholarship (greater accessibility of the product); Dydetective Books and Luz's Book</li> <li>•Consolidation of company: HQ to BCN, increased team and diversification of roles, consolidation of sales model (public administration)</li> <li>•Improvements in the business scalability thanks to her gained business and management acumen</li> </ul>

Table 4. 2. Quotes to exemplify external triggers that acted as key enablers for effective personal and professional development of Luz and ultimately in the organizational life cycle.

PHASES OF CARING PROCESS (Tronto, 1993)	CARING ABOUT	TAKING CARE OF	CARE-GIVING	CARE RECEIVING
	<p>External validity from her Ph.D. Supervisor_ recognized academic in computer science</p> <p>“I was doing this research that had nothing to do with, with my company and I was really enjoying it and I even won several awards on it. “ Then one day my advisor said: “Why don’t you put, you know, all this knowledge that you are developing for helping people like you. And I was oh yes this is a cool Ph.D. topic. But, honestly, it was not because of doing the social mission, nothing like that. I just thought it was interesting. And that proposal from him and decision changed my life.”</p>	<p>External validity from a social enterprise expert and a widely recognized organization of the social arena_ Ashoka -</p> <p>“What happened is that I met another person who also changed my life. Her name is Antonella Broglia.” “That was in 2013 and she invited me to give a TEDx talk I gave the talk, she liked it, and then she nominated me, without asking me, to be an Ashoka Fellow. I got contacted by Ashoka. They told me: We think you are a social entrepreneur, and that you have this model. I was like, social entrepreneur, no idea what that was. And I was about to finish my Ph.D. But then I was like maybe this is an option, right instead of doing research, to set up next year a company. Like literally no idea of what was that to be a social entrepreneur, but then, during the interviews of Ashoka, I found out that maybe the, what they were describing, which is social entrepreneur was actually my, my life basically, my passion. And I was okay, maybe they are right, maybe I am this thing that I didn’t know that I was because our results were at that point that we were in many applications, not only Piruletras but in many other applications from other, other companies.”</p>	<p>External validity from Ashoka’s mentors: people with exemplar trajectories and business and social acumen</p> <p>“Ashoka put me in a program called Globalizer, which is like an acceleration program. But globally, it’s something like... very high level. I didn’t know. It was with mentors and Ashoka advisors that were very high-level, and really senior people, really very senior... they knew a lot incredibly, and I worked with these people for six months.”</p>	<p>External validity from society at large through Awards</p> <p>“I believe that the way to succeed is to be accepted so then nobody can question your work independently if you’re a woman or a man.” “Of course through this award, the <i>Princesa de Girona</i> award, I got to know other social entrepreneurs ... my goal is, now that I’m back in Spain is to start making a network and get to know more people and share stuff, challenges...”</p>

*Phase 1. Seeding the origin of Change Dyslexia: From researching dyslexia to the incorporation of the company (2010-2015)*

The academic association of Luz Rello with dyslexia started in 2010, when her Ph.D. advisor suggested that she change the subject of her thesis in computer science towards dyslexia, thereby merging her two passions: research and her interest in dyslexia. Working on a subject she was passionate about for four years brought her many returns in terms of scientific papers and multiple awards, including the 2013 European Young Researchers' Award. Shortly afterward, in 2013, she was invited to give a TEDx talk by Antonella Broglia — TEDx and Ashoka Senior Advisor—, and Luz was nominated as Ashoka Social entrepreneur, becoming an Ashoka Fellow in 2014. This same year, in 2014, the director for Human-Computer interaction at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) offered her to join the department of computer science at the university as a researcher to further work on dyslexia detection. She joined CMU in 2015 and put Ashoka on hold for the next two years.

Change Dyslexia was incorporated as a limited company in December 2015 (“social enterprise” does not exist in Spanish Law). The seed of Change Dyslexia was planted in 2012, when Luz and two friends founded the start-up Cookie Cloud to develop apps that help kids with dyslexia overcome their learning difficulties. The main milestone of this initiative was Dysegxia, a game that helps children with dyslexia to improve their reading and writing disorder. There was no business mentality behind it; it was launched as a free game and soon became a success, reaching more than 30,000 users in 70 countries and winning the Vodafone “Mobile for Good” Award in 2013. From this period Luz

acquired two key learnings: one, the need to file a patent for the technology; two, that the idea of putting the findings of research accessible to a wider audience—by enabling people to access it for free—is not enough to guarantee its long-term sustainability, it needs to be financially viable. At the time, all software developments and updates of the operating systems were done by the team of three, since they had neither an additional team nor external funding.

By the end of 2015, they patented the research for dyslexia detection developed with the research team at CMU, and Luz felt Change Dyslexia had to be incorporated. The idea that an organization had to be set up had been nurtured for a while, but it did not seem reasonable to spend money on it before having the product developed. The decision to choose a specific legal form was not clear at the time. Different options were weighted—including foundation and association—, and it was finally incorporated in Madrid as a limited company. At this time the form was not considered important, but as a means to an end: to market the solution and make it accessible to the public. The social side of the initiative carried all the weight, and in the media, Luz Rello even called her organization an NGO: “And with Change Dyslexia, the NGO that I have founded, we are putting all this intellectual property in an application, called Dyetective, which will be available as of November “ (Bassas, 2016).

*The Caring About and Taking Care of Phases:* In the early beginnings, in the stages of opportunity recognition and filtration (André & Pache, 2016), the embeddedness of Luz’s neural-like networks prompted the shift from her “caring about” to “taking care of”. Having suffered dyslexia herself as a kid, Luz had always cared about the “dyslexia cause”. However, the analysis suggests that

what prompted the evolution has always been an external validation and recognition. In particular, four were the key triggers that acted as enablers in this period.

The key life milestones had an impact on the development of the venture: both in her evolution as a leader and in the organizational lifecycle. At the initial stage back in 2010, her advisor's influence was crucial as he suggested that she switch the subject of her Ph.D. thesis in computer science towards dyslexia, given all the knowledge she already had on the subject. Since then, elements from her transformational leadership style started to become evident; inspiring motivation and intellectual stimulation were key throughout her Ph.D. The coupling of her passion for the subject resulted in more than 15 papers published and in her becoming the recipient of the 2013 European Young Research award. The awards, the idealized influence exerted by her mom as a feminist role model, and her mentor were key triggers that made her gain confidence in her knowledge and pushed her to commit and move from a caring-about phase to the taking-care-of phase. Again, in this second stage, external validation was key to prompt her to take action. It was after her encounter with Clara Bayarri in 2011, at the Google EMEA Scholar's Retreat in Zurich, that she decided to actively step forward and try to help other kids with dyslexia. Indeed, this was Luz's inspiring motivation, the catalyst to take care and collaborate to tackle the social issue. The result was a free game, an innovative way to improve comprehension skills among kids with dyslexia. However, the lack of financial and commercial goals in the development of the first app, along with the absence

of a formal structure made the scalability unfeasible. The latter represented a clear masculine leadership trait: passive management by exception.

Thereafter her encounter with Antonella Broglia and her nomination as an Ashoka Fellow prompted her to start thinking of herself as a social entrepreneur and of entrepreneurship and venture creation as a real option to channel her care-giving will in a social, yet sustainable, way. This external recognition as a potential game-changer for her disruptive work toward dyslexia detection is what prompted her to move onto the next organizational cycle: the launch of the social venture in 2016. Before that, yet another external trigger moved her out of her comfort zone—and planned strategy—: the proposal she received to join CMU's computer science department. Indeed, through a display of her characteristic intellectual stimulation, Luz saw an opportunity to further research the solution to diagnose dyslexia. This decision is also an example of female leadership traits (Eagly, 2007), as she did not feel she could or should launch the company or raise money for the product development until the model was completely tested. The landmark of this period, the filing for the patent of the detection technology, came as the result of her drive to learn and collaborate from and with others.

It is worth noting that it was her idealized influence that finally convinced Ashoka of the need for her to join CMU and to put the commencement of her fellowship on hold for two years (a first timer for the organization). Her demonstrated qualities as a role model with high ethical standards, and the way she communicated the future organizational goals and the need to research in order to close the “dyslexia loop” —from detection to treatment— was key in the decision.

## *Phase 2. The launch of Change Dyslexia (2010-2015)*

During this period, Luz was still a full-time researcher at CMU and was only able to work in Change Dyslexia in her free time. In 2016, Luz re-activated her Ashoka fellowship and joined their accelerator program, Globalizer. For three months she worked intensively with an advisory team on top-tier strategy reflecting on Change Dyslexia's key issues and strategy. This intensive work provided Luz with a long-term sustainability strategy to launch Change Dyslexia.

The first step to roll-out her strategy was to raise money to develop a commercial product and make the research findings accessible. To that aim, she decided to pre-sell the product through a crowdfunding campaign on Kickstarter. A move that resulted in a total success raising the USD 25,000 needed to do the software development for both the detection and the treatment products. In her own words: "We will use this money to give the best of us developing Dydetective (free) to detect dyslexia before it becomes a problem and Dynosaur to improve reading and writing for every child in the world" (Luz Rello, CEO Change Dyslexia). Once she reached the target money, she was in a position to pay for the development of the software. First, she had to recruit a software developer for product development, and she wanted the person to be based in Madrid. This led her to travel frequently to Madrid, where she organized different meetings with potential candidates until she came across Arturo, current CTO of Change Dyslexia, who joined in June 2016.

In 2016, Luz received the Early Career Award for contributions to research from the International Dyslexia Association and was the recipient of that year's Princess of Girona Foundation Social Award for her work to fight dyslexia

through technology. All the money received from her awards, including the potential 3-year financial stipend as Ashoka Fellow was always fully invested in Change Dyslexia.

In 2016, Change Dyslexia launched its first product into the market. Apart from the successful Kickstarter campaign, Luz closed an exclusive licensing agreement with CMU to exploit the patented detection methodology and signed a commercial communication agreement with Samsung to develop the communication campaign for the launch in December 2016. The result of this collaboration resulted in the launch of Dytective for Samsung, in Luz's words, "the first online detector that reveals the risk of having dyslexia, with 89.5% accuracy" (Luz Rello, in Bassas, 2016).

Since its incorporation in 2016, the organizational structure had evolved. In the beginning, there were only two employees: Luz, the founder and CEO (based in the USA), and the CTO, Arturo (based in Spain). Luz was leading the sales cycle end-to-end and meeting new potential leads. This entailed multiple travels back and forth from the United States to Spain in order to sign documents or meet Spanish public administration representatives to study potential future collaborations. Still, during these hectic times, she counted on an external network of collaborators that supported her.

*The care-giving phase.* Our analysis surfaced the growing importance of external triggers in female entrepreneurs. In Luz Rello's case, this trigger came in the form of the reactivation of her Ashoka fellowship and participation in the Globalizer program. This mentoring program, along with her public recognition as a social entrepreneur and game-changer, and the visibility that being the

recipient of multiple awards granted her, gave her the empowerment and confidence in her management acumen to launch the company and bring about innovative ways to attain the venture's sustainability.

It is relevant to note that this was no different than many financial and sustainability tensions that new ventures, whether commercial or social, experience. However, the differences surface in the way each type of venture overcomes those tensions. In the case of social ventures, through an entangled display of caring principles (André & Pache, 2016) that connects agents to prompt collaborative responses to sustain future viability while engaging the conflicts. Luz's experience powerfully illustrates the importance to foster care not only within the organization but also among the extended network of stakeholders. This was portrayed in the way Luz brokered existing connections and enabled interactions and exchanges through different forums for the development of the product.

But what seems so simple [took] more than 2 years of research, 7 years of data collection. 7 people [worked] in the scientific team, 30 advisors, 300 volunteers between friends, teachers, families, therapists, and users. So, we designed the tool in an iterative way taking into account the customer basically since the very beginning (...) before even, I mean, coding not even one line. (Luz Rello, CEO Change Dyslexia)

This quote is a good illustration of what André & Pache (2016) referred to as *care receiving*: “the exchange of information between entrepreneurs and their

various stakeholders that allows them to refine, adapt, and improve their products or services to reach higher levels of value reactions” (p. 663). We argue that this was possible due to her female transformational leadership’s attributes, in particular, her “inspiring motivation”, which was portrayed by her ability to articulate the vision and the future goals in an enthusiastic and motivating way, in addition to her idealized influence across a network that trusted and respected her.

Another example of how her caring nature was coupled with management acumen surfaced in the way she devised a strategy to pay for the development of the product. As such, she came up with an original way to raise money through means of a crowdfunding campaign in Kickstarter, where she emphasized that she was not asking for donations but pre-selling a product that was to help diagnose dyslexia. This is an example of a value proposition aimed at repairing the beneficiaries’ world in an efficient way (André & Pache, 2016). Similarly, when the product was commercially ready she had to think of a way to launch a strong and powerful marketing campaign. Driven by her intellectual stimulation, she came up with the idea of looking for a commercial partnership with Samsung. The fact that the company was already involved in different technological developments under the claim “#TechnologyForPurpose” undoubtedly helped this partnership come true. Therefore, Luz’s caring vision influenced the way Change Dyslexia’s commercial strategy was executed, which highlights the growing importance of social enterprise leaders in the launching and development of their ventures.

However, the journey path from a caring leader to a caring enterprise was not exempt from challenges concerning ethical decision making. As the product began earning exposure, more people approached her with potential collaborations, and loyalty to her caring principles gained importance in order not to sidetrack her and her organization from her social mission. This was the very same reason why, in 2017, she declined the offer to sell off the patent to a technology multinational; she doubted that the social mission —to make the detection product available to the wide public by keeping it free— and the fostering of the organizational caring principles would be maintained and prioritized by the new partner/buyer.

Overall, this shows how the female social entrepreneurs interweave masculine and feminine traits in their leadership style as the weight of the financial sustainability of the venture grows. The influence of the mentoring program was reflected in a growing number of traits that are more linked to transactional leadership, such as stronger attention to time management, focus on organizational efficiency, and the way she led the team through active exception management. With all, there was a strong personal imprint from Luz's caring nature, reflected in how she prioritized the ventures' social mission in her collaborations and in her philosophy to reinvest all proceedings. Indeed, this phase illustrates the nested nature of caring female leadership in social enterprise and stresses the extent to which both feminine and masculine styles are related, nested within one another.

### *Phase 3: Strategic growth of Change Dyslexia (2017-2020)*

The growth period starts with the product launch of Dytective U in May 2017, a paid solution to improve learning capabilities for kids with dyslexia, and a new step for the consolidation of the growth strategy devised through the Ashoka fellowship. During these 2 years, Luz's work leading Change Dyslexia has also been recognized on multiple occasions. She was one of 2017 Forbes' 30-under-30 and 2018 finalist for the Cartier Women's Initiative award; she also received the Women To Follow award in 2018, the Accenture Digital Lead Award in 2019, and made it into the Cosmopolitan list of most influential 50 millennials.

Luz Rello has the vision to reach 1 million children in 5 years. However, she is aware that the road ahead is not easy, and it will be difficult to land a commercial partnership similar to that with Samsung to amplify the mission for the public. This growth period brought along many changes both personally and professionally. On one hand, she moved back to Spain. On the other hand, she quit CMU and landed a job at IE Business School's computer science department. In the long-term, she wishes not to be an essential part of Change Dyslexia so she can take on a more representative institutional role and focus back on her research. To that end, the team will need to be empowered to function on its own.

During this period, as the CEO appreciates the need for shared leadership and multi-disciplinary organizational capabilities, the company's structure has consolidated. The first big step was to establish the headquarters in Barcelona, Spain, from where all members work. Currently, there are 5 people on payroll (including the CEO and founder Luz Rello) and an extended network of partners

and stakeholders (ranging from public administration to schools, therapists, and families).

The organization has been self-sustainable, and it has not yet raised any external funding from investors. Together with the Ashoka Globalizer advisors, a long-term earn-income strategy was fully rolled out in 2017: they would offer the detection game for free and charge 19 euros per month for the use of Dydetective U, the therapy platform that stimulates the linguistic development for dyslexic children through the use of games. What is original about it is not the freemium pricing model they put in place, but the fact that they actively reinvest all earnings in the company. Moreover, the money received through Dydetective U is then used to provide scholarships to families that do not have the resources to pay for the solution themselves. On top of that, they also put in place a program whereby companies, as part of their corporate social responsibility, could finance or buy one Dydetective U scholarship. The first 150 scholarships were financed by Red de Impulsores del Cambio<sup>3</sup>. In Luz Rello's words, "[a] contribution to Change Dyslexia to, on the one hand, maintain Dydetective Test so that the detection of dyslexia is always free; and on the other, create a scholarship service for people who cannot afford this app", (Elidrissi, 2017). As part of the mission of the company, on October 4<sup>th</sup> 2018, European Dyslexia Awareness Day, Luz launched *Superar la dislexia*<sup>4</sup>, a book combining both her personal experience as a kid with dyslexia and 9 years of research.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Network of Change Drivers'. This alliance consists of: Ashoka, Fundación Aquae, Fundación Acuorum, Hidraqua (Spain), Canaragua (Spain), Aguas de Cartagena (Colombia), and Aguas Andinas (Chile).

<sup>4</sup> 'Overcoming dyslexia'.

In summary, Change Dyslexia currently has three sources of income in place: the sales of Dyetective U game, the sales of Dyetective U books, and the sales of Luz's book, in addition to all the monetary prizes won by Luz throughout these years, which have been plowed back into the organization. The business model beyond the earn-income strategy was also consolidated. While the main beneficiaries of the app will still be the families, schools (a mix of public and private institutions) were their main clients. Still, it was clear to Luz that if they wanted a faster penetration of usage of the detection app and ultimately a faster scale-up of the product nationwide, the company had to pivot their efforts towards bringing the Public Administration on board. The 2-year-long commercial effort and relationship-building with the Education Board in Madrid paid off in 2018, when they finally reached an agreement to roll out 100 Dyetective schools in 2019. In the long run, the aim is that other public administrations in Spain follow the footsteps of Madrid.

*The care-receiving phase.* Change Dyslexia currently finds itself in the growth stage. Once the market has shown there is a product-market fit, the goal is to test in a wider audience that the current business and revenue model works, and prepare the company for the scale-up phase without losing sight of Change Dyslexia's care mission. Again, Luz exhibited traits characteristic from a transformational leadership style, smoothly translating her own ethics of care to the organization, infused with transactional attributes as she gained business and management acumen. Her style was characterized by masculine traits such as exercising contingent reward and exception active management with her team to gain operational efficiency. As a result, she was able to put together a

multidisciplinary team and establish procedures and organizational processes to empower the team with assigned responsibilities. However, the team did not result in a very diverse team, 80% of it being women, despite Luz's claim that the selection process was gender-neutral and the members had been selected based solely on their merit.

There is a potentially unconscious display of gender biases: as the male representative occupies the technical role in the venture (CTO), while the women are assigned to more care- and social-oriented roles, such as relationship managers with the family, therapists, and other stakeholders. Nevertheless, what is clear is that the caring nature of the individuals was an important characteristic that was taken into account throughout the recruitment process. As such, Luz was able to build a team with a shared social mission that was willing to earn a less monetary salary in favor of the emotional salary derived from helping people:

The team is aligned with the mission and I think this makes a difference in the effort that they put. They are not, I mean, of course, they are earning money, but of course, they could earn more in other companies. So, I think the fact that it has a mission... it gives them a reward that is not measurable with money but that for instance, every day, we receive, I mean, of course we receive complaints, right? But we receive emails from people saying thank you, a video from a boy, a present from a family, things like that make people happy. And I think these give a sense, they believe their work has meaning. (Luz Rello, CEO Change Dyslexia)

In addition, this stage also illustrates the female stereotypes in Luz's leadership style. As such, the values that Luz nurtured since her childhood due to her dyslexia were unconsciously infused into the organization. Principles such as efficiency, trust, autonomy, empowerment, humility, resilience, and communication are leveraged by the team on a daily basis as Change Dyslexia becomes a caring enterprise across all levels. To this end, elements of her transformational leadership style such as idealized influence, individualized focus with each team member, as well as inspirational motivation, are key enablers of the caring process in Change Dyslexia. As such, the team is encouraged to continuously propose new ideas and improvements. However, it has not always been like that:

So I think what has changed a lot leadership-wise from the beginning is delegation. I didn't delegate, I had the control over everything. And now I understand that if I want to be successful, there is no other way than to delegate, otherwise, I will be the cause of the failure of Change Dyslexia. And I want me to be the least of the causes of the failure. (Luz Rello, CEO Change Dyslexia).

This self-sacrificing attribute is another example of female stereotypes she exerts, but also the very same reason why, despite all the management improvements, she still believes the company is not ready to scale, given that the product has not a 100% product-market fit. Furthermore, once the company is ready to scale, she has decided to take a step back and go back to be a full-time researcher and teacher at a business school. Taking a more institutional-

relation role at Change Dyslexia, leveraging the extended network that she has created through her multiple awards and recognitions, to work towards her goals: first, to reach 1 million children in the next five years; second, that in the long term dyslexia is no longer seen as a disability but as a characteristic, and, ultimately, that no kid with dyslexia fails.

## **Discussion**

Following an ethics perspective, Change Dyslexia's case study highlights the relevance of ethics of care in the development of social enterprises. Building on André & Pache's (2016) model of organizational care adapted to social enterprises, we argue that social enterprises need to manage the tensions derived from their dual institutional logics and identities (Battilana & Lee, 2014) by advancing caring principles and practices into the operational systems. Therefore, exercising caring leadership is key for social enterprises' long-term sustainability in order to influence the collective network towards the achievement of common goals.

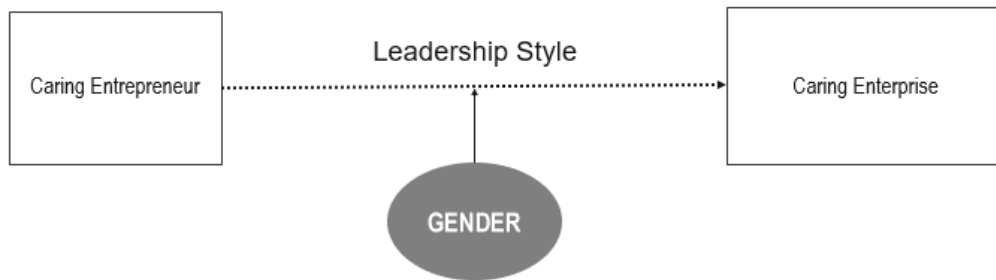
Our findings illustrate how the different stages the CEO went through as a caring leader influenced the evolution of Change Dyslexia to design a sustainable organizational and business model, but more importantly, to achieve its mission. As Luz's strategy vision evolved from purely social to a financial one, the definition of success for Change Dyslexia also evolved, and so did the ethical challenges:

Before there was no tension between business and social impact, it was only the social impact in the first year. In the second year, this tension started and now I have a clear vision that with more revenue we can make a better social impact, so revenue generation is my focus. (Luz Rello, CEO Change Dyslexia)

The development of care, crucial to navigate the challenges, was partly facilitated through the application of three forms of principle by Luz as presented by André & Pache (2016). Our findings revealed that the gender influence was crucial in the transitioning from caring entrepreneur to caring enterprise. In particular, the leadership style deployed by the social entrepreneur—transformational leadership—was influenced by both collective and self-gender stereotypes. Moreover, we argue according to the role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), that women social entrepreneurs do not exhibit only one static female leadership style. Rather, their leadership continually goes back and forth between the two forms of gender stereotypes and its respective attributes, which at times overlap. This agrees with the findings by Eagly & Carli (2007), who concluded that effective leadership is made of an androgynous mixture of traits. Similarly, it agrees with findings by Trauth et al. (2012) that represented gender stereotypes in the field of IT as feminine, masculine and gender neutral. Being included in the latter many of the skills exhibited by Luz and social entrepreneurs at large, such as dependability, adaptability, ability to handle ambiguity...

Gender is hence a moderator between the caring leader and the caring organization, some times acting as a catalyzer and others hindering the process (see Figure 4.1).

*Figure 4. 1. From caring entrepreneur to caring enterprise (adapted from André & Pache, 2016).*



This is in line with García-Lomas & Gabaldón's (2020) findings on how gender impacts the outcomes of women's involvement in social enterprises. Gender had a clear effect on the team Luz built: she promoted team diversity in her hiring practices, especially in terms of background. However, even in an unconscious manner, the pro-social positions requiring a higher level of ethics of care (nurturing the customer base) were covered by female profiles with a background in social sciences, while the technical position was fulfilled by a man with a business background.

This case study contributes to both social entrepreneurship and leadership literature, offering insightful elements for both academics and practitioners. Integrating Tronto's (1993) 4-phase caring model with André & Pache's (2016) ethics-of-care framework for social enterprises, we advance the role of care in social enterprises. This frame unfolds the process to architect, design and construct a caring organization that has a hybridity logic embedded in their nature. The case confirms the importance of transformational leadership for the

launch and growth of social enterprises in a caring yet effective manner. The findings are in line with former research that highlights, on one hand, the higher correlation of transformational leadership to venture performance (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003) and, on the other hand, that female leadership is mainly transformational in style (Eagly et al. 2003).

Although it is difficult to generalize from a single-case study what other organizations can implement, the analysis triggered relevant reflections for practitioners. The findings emphasize the hybrid nature of social enterprises that makes them “born caring”: being from inception required to be caring organizations to manage the paradoxical tensions (social vs. finance) and face the ethical challenges derived from them through balancing exploration (new products vs. services), innovative ideas, and exploitation practices (efficiency and business as usual). This suggests that the emergence of organizational caring in social enterprises is progressive and linked to both the stage of the company and the concept of success.

Our analysis underlines that, even though research no longer claims that women are more care-oriented than men (Gilligan, 1995; Noddings, 2002), women-led CEOs of social enterprises benefit the building and display of caring leadership differently than men. The case uncovers how women leaders of social enterprises work through the ethical challenges derived from their dual identity by pivoting between both objectives (economic and non-economic) throughout the different organizational stages.

Our findings provide insights into the importance of external validation for women. We find that even highly skilled women as Luz need external reward

and recognition to build up confidence. This validation acts as a trigger moving her as a person, which in turn affects the organizational life cycle of the corporation. From a policy implication perspective, this suggests that decision-makers can improve the penetration of women in the entrepreneurial arena by providing empowerment levers, such as mentoring, early on in their careers. Efforts intended to increase the number of women are not only important to improve the gender gap, but also because research has proved it makes economic sense: the fact that female leadership is mainly transformational yields significant positive outcomes in terms of higher organizational commitment, higher altruism among team members, and higher trust on the leader and the venture's mission (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Our analysis illustrates how gender is acted out in the different leadership elements of social entrepreneurs by leveraging and integrating the ethics theoretical lens to research. The current findings extend an invitation to further research the relation between women's entrepreneurial management style and their organizational performance in order to generate a deeper understanding of the moderating role of gender and under which circumstances its interaction with the leadership style positively influences organizational care and ultimately the venture's social impact.

## **Conclusion**

Challenging the traditional “either-or” belief that social impact and financial performance are mutually exclusive goals, we show that promoting care within social ventures facilitates the harmonization of both goals and prevents mission drift.

By analyzing the influence of gender at the organization level of analysis both empirically and theoretically, we found that the founder’s gender played a moderating role between what drives the individual involvement to solve an existing problem and the venture’s social impact over time. We also revealed the mechanism by which the venture’s founder translated her individual ethics of care into the organization and how this related to the venture’s long-term sustainability.

With this study, we hope to encourage social venture leaders to facilitate the emergence of organizational care in their formulation of strategies, and to stimulate research to use gender as a context to further develop insights on the impact of women’s involvement in social enterprises.

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## Appendix 4.A.

Luz's quotes to exemplify key items to measure the leadership attributes promoting the emergence of organizational care. Based on the leadership styles' model as developed by Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & Van Engen (2003).

	PHASES OF CARING PROCESS	CARING ABOUT	TAKING CARE OF	CARE-GIVING	CARE RECEIVING
FEMINE ELEMENTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP	1. Inspirational Motivation Articulates vision, inspires team, optimism about future / goals... Shows optimism and enthusiasm for goals and the future.	"My impression was now everything was solved. That nowadays, dyslexia was not a problem anymore..." "But I realized that children with dyslexia still suffer a lot, schools haven't solved the issue. So in my Ph.D. we started doing a research on how to improve reading and writing. Then our results and guidelines developed for my Ph.D. started to be integrated by other companies in their tools. So I started to see the social impact or the, or the actual impact of research."	"I got an offer from Carnegie Mellon University and the thing is that Carnegie Mellon University, the department of robotics and the department of computer science from now on, Carnegie Mellon University is CMU. CMU is one of the top computer science departments in the world. So yeah, some people in Spain do not know that. I'm like, Carnegie excels!"	"Designing the product with the people that were going to use. Many people were involved in the creation of the tool, for example, for the focus groups because the creation of the tool was iterative. We met with the people who were going to be target clients. We met with the teachers, with therapists, schools and with families and we made the focus groups on the tool to create the tool. We designed the tool taking into account the customer basically since the very beginning..." "I had this network of people before and I just tapped into it to design the product. So, everybody is happy because with change dyslexia... we came up with a business model that basically makes all these people happy." "Right now, we sell to families, professional therapists and schools and the groups that I meet recurrently with them... clear network of I think you call it stakeholders. I think it is important to have a clear map of the stakeholders and take them all into account when you design a product and a business model."	"So definitely in five years, I would like to have reached 1 million children. So, this is one of the goals that we have... And so now we have reached almost 200,000, but to get here it has been a very steep road." "I hope one day that dyslexia is not seen as a disability or as a disorder but as characteristic of a person you know, as being left-handed; this is one of the main goal. One of the main goals... And of course, the super goal is that no child with dyslexia fails."
FEMINE ELEMENTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP	2. Intellectual Stimulation Self (looks for new perspectives for solving problems and completing task) and from the team members (challenges ideas, stimulates and encourage independent thinking and creativity). How to do it best themselves.	"I mean I was super focused on research. I had no holidays for four years. It was like a super focused. I mean if you see my publications list during my Ph.D. is ridiculous. I mean here is some years that I have published like 15 papers. And won multiple awards, including the 2013 European Young Researchers' "So it was, it was, I was passionate and fascinated."	"We started to create a tool to put linguistic exercises - the results from my research - into a game." "I knew I needed to do some research to see if I can make a detection model and then you will have a whole thing: Detection plus treatment otherwise is not complete."	"I joined the Globalizer accelerator program, for three months and I worked intensively with an advisory team reflecting on key issues and devising long-term sustainability strategy for Change Dyslexia" "I came up with an idea to secure the funding for the development. I knew that people wanted the product, so I thought to myself why not presale the product and with the money of the sales develop the product."	"My values and the organizations' values are the same. And they all have to do with the fact that I had dyslexia: one is resilience because when you are a kid and have dyslexia you have to learn fast that you fail, that you have errors and that you need to stand up when you go down and understand that, and fail and stand up and that is something I've learned this since my early childhood and I think the fact that something doesn't work out, it does not stop me, I try another thing and another thing, another thing until it works out. Another value is that I assume my errors very fast, you learn to be humble and have the feet on the ground. So, I can have a hypothesis but then very fast I analyze the data and if I see it's wrong, I don't worry I just change the strategy and I say to my team let's try another thing... So, I'm applying this modus operandi to my company."
FEMINE ELEMENTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP	3. Individualized focus Employee development focus. Mentoring - coaching with empathy support each members w/ its specific needs and concerns.				"And in terms of leadership, I think it is important that the team feels part of., so when I make a decision, instead of making the decision on my own, for instance, I ask the people of my team to make a proposal. To think about the problem and then make me a proposal for the solution. And I have my own opinion also and then we discuss together. Then the decisions that we make are, we are all responsible for these decisions. I think this has been important for the team to feel 100% part of the project. I am the boss but don't think I impose too many things is more trying to make the decisions together."

	PHASES OF CARING PROCESS	CARING ABOUT	TAKING CARE OF	CARE-GIVING	CARE RECEIVING
FEMININE ELEMENTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP	LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES	<p>4. Idealized influence Role model for demonstrated qualities ethical behavior, inspires trust, respect, pride by association with him or her. Strong emotions towards the leader and identification w/ them. Communicate values, goals and the organization mission</p> <p>"My mom has always taught me that I need to be self-sustainable, that I do not need to get married or anything. that I need to make my own decisions and I don't need to depend on anyone..."</p> <p>"I've never grown up with that difference between men and women and I never thought about gender differences.</p> <p>And in computer science it is true that there are much less women than men.</p> <p>But what happens in computer science is that there are actually backfire and go against women themselves. For instance, if you have an award for women in computer science, it means that women are less capable and this is why you need to make an award only for women or if you have a conference only for women is like if you are not able to publish in a normal conference.... So there are some special conferences for women but I have only gone once to one because I was invited, but otherwise I would have never applied or anything because I don't know.... I have a feeling that it has to be equal..."</p> <p>"Of course, it is also true that when I did my Ph.D. and I had to think of the committee, I was like, no, I want one women in my committee, but this is different, this is for decision making..."</p> <p>Now I believe we need to pay attention that we need women in scientific roles.</p> <p>We need to pay attention at, at the very earliest stage of girls and to put women in power in decision making positions.</p> <p>But except from this two uh, except from these two cases, I believe that the way to succeed is to be accepted so then nobody can question your work independently or you're a woman or a man."</p>	<p>I told Ashoka please can you wait a couple of years because I need to do some research to see if I can make a detection model and then you will have a whole thing: Detection plus treatment otherwise is not complete is not an end-to-end solution. They were not convinced but then they told me, okay, we trust you. Because when we select a fellow, we are pretty sure that they are very sure about their selection process because they, in their selection process, they take into account also ethics of the entrepreneur not only if the idea is novel, if the idea has a systematic change. I have not seen many associations or organizations that take ethics into the interview process.</p> <p>The I moved to CMU and I've started doing research in dyslexia detection, it took me almost three years to get this, but we finally did it with more than 5,000 people collaborating in our research as participants"</p>	<p>"Another thing that was crucial was, I don't know how, but I have managed to always partner with the top.</p> <p>So every time that I receive an email and the proposal does not come from the very best in the given field, then I do not bother to pursue any further collaboration.</p> <p>And, and so this is how we managed, for example, partner with Samsung. And to do the launch with Samsung Spain.</p> <p>They made a spot, a publicity an advertisement that won a Cannes award a festival award!! "</p>	<p>"So there are three barriers of dyslexia in the world worldwide right now. The first barrier is that dyslexia is a hidden disability, right. The second is that dyslexia creates reading and writing difficulties, so school failure and the third barrier is an economic barrier, overcoming dyslexia is very expensive. For these barriers we have created first the detection test, so dyslexia is not a hidden disability anymore. Second, the treatment part Dytective to improve the skills of dyslexia kids, and third we have created a scholarship for people who can't afford the tools.</p> <p>Change dyslexia aims to overcome these three barriers of dyslexia. Okay? Now for each of these barriers I can tell you like a vision or a quote.... the first is that many, many people get out of the closet, dyslexia is not a hidden disability anymore and it becomes a characteristic. The second vision is that no child has school failure due to dyslexia and the third vision, there are no economic barriers in dyslexia..."</p> <p>"In the last year I would say I'm an entrepreneur, not researcher. And if I go back to [E], I mean the reason why I want to go back to academia is because I think in the future, we need academia to do novel research and to evolve.... And I also have the hope that at some point my figure won't be needed in Change dyslexia at least as it is now. So, so that is why. But now I see, I see myself as an entrepreneur. Yes. Because this is what I do all day..."</p> <p>"So this was really interesting decision because of course CMU wants the company to be there because it's easier to have a spinoff in the US and the rates of success for ventures are higher. It would have been easier for more I would have had access to funding and to the CMU network.</p> <p>But even though I know in business is better not to be romantic, I took a romantic decision: I wanted to be happy also. In the last 4 years in the US I had missed my country, my family...I find it a luxury of life to wake up and see the sun, or to have good food and be close to my family.</p> <p>I was ready to pay for those luxuries: in the US I would earn in the university probably four times more that I will earn here...So I came here looking for a work life balance...just that... nothing else..."</p> <p>"I the long run I am aiming to go either bigger and bigger. I wish Change Dyslexia is still there and if it's not there, at least in partnership with a super big company that is doing their social mission also. The reason why I have not sold Change Dyslexia is because I don't see that the social mission will be accomplished only then... If I find a very big partner who also comply with the social mission, then I will think about partnering..."</p>



## **CHAPTER 5.**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The purpose of this research is to understand the role of gender in social enterprises focusing on the intertwined factors influencing women's involvement in those corporations. Women entrepreneurs and social ventures have been informally linked over time as a form of translating the role of women in the domestic sphere to the entrepreneurial world.

Although the venture seems straight forward, "only since the mid-1990s had the women entrepreneurship project gained credibility and respect" (Marlow, Henry, & Carter, 2009, p. 139). Indeed, during the last years, the literature on entrepreneurship has discussed at length the impact of gender in venturing and its multiple levels of influence. Women's entrepreneurship is currently considered "one of the fastest-growing research areas (...) due to women having a greater role in economic decisions than they did in the past" (Ratten, Ramadani, & Dana, 2017, p. 298). However, it is not clear whether the growing phenomena and scholarly interest in the last ten years in the field of women's entrepreneurship is due to an aim to fill a historical gap in research on women entrepreneurs (Hughes, Jennings, Brush, Carter, & Welter, 2012) or due to an interest in fostering women entrepreneurship. Despite the growth in research, there is a lack of understanding of how women entrepreneurs and social enterprises are related. Moreover, the mechanism by which women impact and shape social enterprises is under-researched and under-theorized. Marlow (2020) calls for an intersectional analysis to overcome the current axiom in

research: “entrepreneurship is ‘good’ for women and society so ergo, we need more women entrepreneurs” (p. 1).

### **Contributions of this dissertation**

This research contributes to the scholarship on women’s entrepreneurship and social enterprises by following McAdam's (2013) call to posit a gendered critique to challenge current assumptions. To that end, and in order to systematically assess gender differences that influence behaviors and outcomes, we drew upon an existing debate: Is gender a lens or a variable in the discourse and research of women and social enterprises? (Marlow, 2014).

This question led the research towards three articles where we aimed to depict the motivation of women to start a social business, the outcomes derived from their involvement, and the interplay between both of them in the context of social ventures. The research unveils the role and impact of women as leaders of social enterprises using gender as a context. As a result, useful insights into women social entrepreneurs are developed along with the practical implications of fostering, attracting, and retaining women-led social ventures.

The key finding of this study is that women leaders do play a key role in the sustainability of social enterprises. This is a valuable finding for social entrepreneurship practitioners, as it confirms that gender indeed influences performance and emphasizes the role of women’s entrepreneurial capabilities to pursue the venture’s social mission while being financially sustainable.

This research has raised some important issues about the topic of women’s involvement in social ventures. In doing so, we unveiled the mechanism

underlying the drivers-outcomes relationship that characterizes women's participation in social ventures. Hence, our research contributes to the literature by exploring how women CEOs of social ventures can influence the overall corporate sustainability.

Our study sought to provide insights into the role of gender in shaping both motivations and outcomes. As a result, it posits that embracing gender as a lens and context is required to fully understand how social enterprises are managed. The conclusions from our research provide a way for social entrepreneurs to develop a comprehensive approach in strategy formulation, implementation, and performance management to scale the intended social impact. It also makes the case for the need to foster diversity and promote women's leadership positions in social ventures.

There are several challenges social entrepreneurs encounter when launching and managing their ventures, and Chapter 3 addresses some of them. This is reflected in the approach of this chapter to focus both men and women CEO's experiences and perspectives in the social arena to gain a context-sensitive understanding of the intertwined factors that influence the creation and management of new social ventures. The interface between gender and drivers is discussed in this chapter as a way of understanding how gender affects the impact and sustainability of social ventures. As there is currently a disconnection between drivers and gender, this chapter helps to detail the integral role both play in the venture's (financial) sustainability. Thus, contributing to the literature by exploring how entrepreneurs can embrace and impact the overall performance of the social venture under a gendered context. The conclusion is

that even though women are more socially-driven when they launch a venture, in the long run, they are more likely to better manage competing goals and guarantee venture survival.

There are fruitful insights from our study of a woman-led and -founded social enterprise in terms of understanding the way women lead and impact their organizations and thus influence their long-term sustainability. The prevailing view is that women-led social enterprises are born as caring enterprises, which in turn are suited to manage the paradoxical tensions derived from its hybrid nature by coupling social and financial goals. Furthermore, this study presents new perspectives about the reciprocal relationship between a social venture and its leader. On one hand, by illustrating how the leaders' personal evolution influences the organizational evolution and the way the strategy and business model are defined and deployed to achieve the intended mission. In particular, Chapter 4 illustrates how the different stages the woman leader went through as a caring leader influenced the evolution of her corporation, Change Dyslexia, to design a sustainable organizational and business model but, more importantly, to achieve its original mission. On the other hand, our results highlight the influence of gender as a mediator of the founder-venture relationship in the transitioning from caring entrepreneur to caring enterprise. The conclusions from this chapter provide evidence that promoting care within social ventures facilitates the harmonization of both social and financial goals and thus bestows on the venture a rather unique competitive edge in the long run.

## **Implications for practice**

Our research effort aims to be a reference for researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers in women's entrepreneurship and social enterprises to help attract and retain women entrepreneurs in social ventures, and to reassess the integral role and influence of women as leaders of social ventures.

The insights that surfaced in our analysis of the underlying mechanisms of women's involvement led us to assert that the gender components of social entrepreneurship deserve more attention, especially, due to the role gender plays in the type of leadership deployed and, ultimately, in the sustainability of social ventures.

Women's social entrepreneurship can help to inform practice by suggesting possible innovative strategies that women exhibit; in particular, how women can redefine the playing field by embedding the purpose, mission, and vision throughout the organization and reshaping the ventures' value proposition to navigate organizing tensions. Our study specifically identifies the moderating influence of gender in the relationship between the drivers and outcomes of the involvement in social ventures. Women can teach social enterprises, and enterprises in general, how to permeate an organizational purpose to serve as the cornerstone of the company's stakeholders' ecosystem. Furthermore, women leaders also serve as an example of how to foster and align behaviors to harmonize social and financial goals in a way that leads to a stronger venture sustainability. This could be attained by looking at different leadership patterns and behaviors in both successful and unsuccessful women-led social ventures.

Most of the existing research exploring the relationship between leadership and entrepreneurship still tend to focus on a masculine or a comparative perspective (Bryans & Mavin, 2003). Thus, more gendered-focused analyses are welcomed and needed. For example, to further research how gender as a context encourages diversity in social ventures. A particularly useful addition to the field would be research on the relationship between diversity, governance, and leadership in social enterprises and how their interaction influences the venture's performance. Our research also calls to further diversify the type of studies on women and social entrepreneurship, particularly from a geographical standpoint, so as to develop insights about the differences between the different forms of women's social entrepreneurship depending on their environment (cultural, societal, and geographic context).

Finally, our research let us advance that the social entrepreneurship startup process for women is an upward one: from a non-economic community driver that serve as a "trigger" motivation to an economic individual one. This means that women embrace social ventures as a means to an end: to solve an existing problem in the community where they operate. As a consequence, *organizational success* turns out to be an evolving concept aligned with both the stage the company is in and the motivation that led those women to launch a social venture. In the early stages, what prevails is the social goal, in line with the impact the entrepreneur aims to achieve along the value chain. As the venture grows, business sustainability earns right: the women entrepreneurs start to focus on the business side of the venture, for example, to secure enough money to consolidate business operations. Finally, in the scale-up phase,

hybridity comes into play, and both social and economic goals are equally prioritized in the management of the company. Therefore, it is essential to research the gendered perspectives in the succession process of social enterprises as the ventures evolve from launch to scale-up phase, where different management and leadership skills come into play.

The key implication from this research for policy-makers willing to move the needle forward is that paving the path for women social entrepreneurs can be a good way to promote sustainable businesses that can bring at the same time growth, individual satisfaction, and an entrepreneurial system that promotes healthy and diverse companies.

### **Future research suggestions**

Through our study, we discussed the importance of focusing on women's entrepreneurship and social enterprises. Our research allowed for an understanding of the way women entrepreneurs act in social ventures. Furthermore, it helped to further explain the origin and development of women's social entrepreneurship, identify gaps in current research, and predict the research questions that need answering and will guide future research efforts. As a result, interesting new lines of inquiry surfaced as suggestions for scholars already researching the intersection of women entrepreneurship and social enterprises. From our findings, we learned that we need to look beyond institutional perspectives and incorporate other theory lenses if we want to explain the significance of focusing on women's entrepreneurship and their organizational-level strategies deployed to achieve the intended impact.

Our contributions represent a first attempt to understand the underlying mechanisms of sustainable social ventures. A path forward for researchers is to consider social enterprises as a form of gendered activity, which would contribute to broadening our understanding of the role of gender in social enterprises. We call to leverage existing social entrepreneurship research to facilitate current research on the role of women in entrepreneurship. Our findings suggest that *success* is a fluid and changing concept in the life of a social venture and that it is highly influenced by the individual view of the venture's leader.

This dissertation paves the way for more research on women's entrepreneurship in social enterprises in several ways. For one, future research can specifically focus on the link between social enterprises and women to address new opportunities. It also identifies the need to take a more contemporary approach to the definition of social enterprises, as women extend their significance of social ventures, and business in general, as a combined multi-level system of relationships between family, community, and business. Women have a caring imperative to facilitate a win-win-win-win equilibrium: I win, the community wins, the planet wins, and it is sustainable in time, so future generations win too. Hence, researchers need to consider how this view is informing women's approach to business creation and strategy and goals formulation, and ultimately building a sustainable impact.

Currently, most research about hybridity in social enterprises has been dominated by a dual definition of social and financial venture's goals. Future research needs to connect current larger goals to extend the research about

women in social ventures. This would be helpful to extend our understanding of women in entrepreneurship and business at large. Furthermore, it would encourage scholars to focus on the emerging forms of businesses that have a social impact strategy at their core and, as a result, confers them a long-term competitive advantage.

Finally, by analyzing the importance of women's involvement in social and entrepreneurship research, a number of trends have been highlighted that merit more attention. First, the influence of gender is often related to intersectional gender analysis, but gender as the context is often overlooked in literature. We heed the call to embrace gender as a context and research locus in future studies, so scholars can generate new and meaningful insights to advance the debate on when gender is played out in social enterprises and how it should be analyzed. The changing notion of *success* in social enterprises throughout the life of the venture extends an invitation for further research, given the relevance of having definitional clarity about the concept of success and organizational performance. Our findings have stimulated more interest in women's entrepreneurial management and leadership styles and their link to venture performance.

Our analysis has summarized current research in women's social entrepreneurship and represents a first attempt to map the mechanisms by which women impact and shape social enterprises. Additionally, it states the rationale for studying this area and advances promising avenues for future research on the growing influence of women's active involvement in social enterprises, entrepreneurship, and business in general.

## **CAPÍTULO 5. CONCLUSIONES**

El propósito de esta investigación es comprender el papel desempeñado por el género en las empresas sociales, con especial foco en la interrelación de los diversos factores que influyen en la participación de las mujeres en dichas empresas. A lo largo del tiempo, se han relacionado de manera informal las mujeres emprendedoras y las empresas sociales como una forma de trasladar el papel en el ámbito doméstico de las mujeres al mundo empresarial.

Aunque parezca un cometido sencillo, «no fue hasta mediados de los 90 cuando los proyectos de emprendimiento de mujeres ganaron credibilidad y respeto» (Marlow, Henry y Carter, 2009, p. 139). De hecho, en los últimos años la literatura sobre emprendimiento ha tratado ampliamente el impacto que sobre él tiene el género, así como los numerosos niveles de influencia de este. El emprendimiento de mujeres se considera actualmente «una de las áreas de investigación de mayor crecimiento (...) debido a que las mujeres desempeñan papeles más importantes en la toma de decisiones que anteriormente» (Ratten, Ramadani y Dana, 2017, p. 298). Sin embargo, no está claro si este crecimiento, así como el consiguiente interés académico de los últimos diez años en el campo del emprendimiento de mujeres, es debido al objetivo de llenar un vacío histórico en la investigación sobre mujeres emprendedoras (Hughes, Jennings, Brush, Carter, & Welter, 2012) o se deben al interés por promover el emprendimiento en mujeres. A pesar del incremento en investigación, sigue haciendo falta comprender cómo están relacionadas las mujeres emprendedoras y las empresas sociales. Asimismo, se ha investigado y

teorizado poco sobre el mecanismo mediante el cual las mujeres impactan e influyen en las empresas sociales. Marlow (2020) hace un llamamiento a hacer un análisis interseccional que supere el axioma existente actualmente en la investigación: «el emprendimiento es ‘bueno’ para las mujeres y para la sociedad, por lo tanto, necesitamos más mujeres emprendedoras» (p. 1).

### **Contribuciones de la presente tesis**

Esta investigación contribuye a la erudición sobre el emprendimiento de las mujeres y de las empresas sociales al responder al llamamiento de McAdam (2013) a proponer una perspectiva crítica de género que cuestione las asunciones actuales. Con tal fin, y con el propósito de evaluar de modo sistemático las diferencias de género que influyen en los comportamientos y en los resultados, recurrimos a un debate ya existente: ¿Es el género una lente o una variable en el discurso y la investigación de las mujeres y las empresas sociales? (Marlow, 2014).

Esta pregunta ha llevado a desarrollar la investigación en tres artículos, a lo largo de los cuales hemos tratado de analizar y retratar la motivación de las mujeres a la hora de poner en marcha una empresa social, los resultados derivados de su implicación y la interacción entre ambos —motivación y resultados—. Bajo un contexto de género, esta investigación pone al descubierto el rol y el impacto de las mujeres como líderes de empresas sociales. Como resultado, esta investigación aporta nuevos conocimientos y consideraciones sobre las emprendedoras sociales, y sobre las implicaciones

prácticas de promover, atraer y retener las empresas sociales dirigidas por mujeres.

El principal hallazgo de este estudio es que las líderes *sí* desempeñan un papel fundamental en la sostenibilidad de las empresas sociales. Desde un punto de vista práctico este hecho es relevante, ya que confirma que el género, en efecto, influye en el desempeño de las empresas sociales. Resaltando las capacidades empresariales de las mujeres ser capaz de combinar el propósito y misión social de la empresa con la sostenibilidad de la misma desde el punto de vista económico.

La investigación ha puesto de manifiesto algunos aspectos importantes sobre la participación de mujeres en las empresas sociales. De este modo desvelamos el mecanismo subyacente a la relación entre las motivaciones/ factores impulsores y consecuencias/resultados que caracteriza la participación de las mujeres en las empresas sociales. Así pues, nuestra investigación contribuye a la literatura al explorar cómo las CEO de empresas sociales pueden influir en la sostenibilidad general de la empresa.

Nuestro estudio trató de proporcionar una nueva percepción del papel que desempeña el género tanto en las motivaciones como en los resultados. Por lo tanto, propone que es necesario adoptar el género como lente y como contexto para comprender en su totalidad el modo en que se gestionan las empresas sociales. Las conclusiones de nuestra investigación proporcionan a los emprendedores sociales una forma de desarrollar un enfoque integral en la formulación, implantación y gestión del rendimiento de estrategias a fin de escalar el impacto social deseado. Asimismo, plantea la necesidad de alentar

la diversidad y promover puestos de liderazgo para las mujeres en las empresas sociales.

Existen diversos retos a los que los empresarios sociales deben hacer frente durante la creación y gestión de sus empresas, y el capítulo 3 aborda algunos de ellos. Esto queda patente en el enfoque del capítulo, que se centra en las experiencias y perspectivas de CEOs de empresas social, tanto hombres como mujeres, para adquirir un entendimiento sensible al contexto de la interrelación de los diversos factores que influyen en la creación y la gestión de empresas sociales. La interacción entre el género y los factores impulsores se trata en este capítulo como instrumento para la comprender cómo afecta el género al impacto y la sostenibilidad de las empresas sociales. Puesto que actualmente existe desconexión entre las motivaciones/factores impulsores y el género, este capítulo permite detallar la función integral que ambos desempeñan en la sostenibilidad (económica) de la empresa, contribuyendo de este modo a la literatura al explorar cómo los empresarios pueden adoptar y afectar al rendimiento general de la empresa social bajo un contexto de género. La conclusión es que, a pesar de que las mujeres tienen un mayor impulso social al crear una empresa, a largo plazo tienen más probabilidades de gestionar adecuadamente objetivos concurrentes y garantizar la supervivencia de la empresa.

De nuestro estudio de una empresa social dirigida y fundada por una mujer pueden extraerse fructíferas conclusiones que permitan comprender la forma en que las mujeres lideran e impactan sus organizaciones e influyen por ella en la sostenibilidad de las mismas a largo plazo. La opinión predominante es que

las empresas sociales dirigidas por mujeres nacen como empresas comprometidas (*caring*), que a su vez resultan idóneas para gestionar las tensiones paradójicas derivadas de su naturaleza híbrida mediante el acoplamiento de sus metas sociales y financieras. Además, este estudio ofrece nuevas perspectivas sobre la relación recíproca entre una empresa social y su líder. Por una parte, ilustrando cómo la evolución personal de los líderes influye en la evolución de la organización y en el modo en que la estrategia y el modelo de negocio se definen y despliegan a lo largo del tiempo para alcanzar la misión deseada. En concreto, el Capítulo 4 ilustra cómo las diferentes etapas que atravesó la emprendedora y CEO como líder comprometido (*caring*) influyeron en la evolución de la empresa, Change Dyslexia, hasta diseñar un modelo organizativo y empresarial sostenible y, lo que es más importante, hasta lograr su misión fundacional. Por otra parte, nuestros resultados destacan la influencia del género como mediador de la relación fundadora-empresa en la transición de empresaria comprometida a empresa comprometida. Las conclusiones de este capítulo proporcionan evidencia de que promover el compromiso (*care*) en las empresas sociales facilita la armonización de sus metas sociales y económicas y, por ende, confiere a la empresa una ventaja competitiva bastante única a largo plazo.

### **Implicaciones prácticas**

Nuestro esfuerzo investigador pretender servir de referencia a investigadores, profesionales y a los responsables de formular políticas en el ámbito de las mujeres emprendedoras y de las empresas sociales.

Ayudándolos a atraer y retener talento emprendedor femenino en empresas sociales, así como a reevaluar el papel integral y la influencia de las mujeres como líderes de las empresas sociales.

Las conclusiones derivadas de nuestro análisis sobre los mecanismos subyacentes a la participación de las mujeres nos llevaron a afirmar que los elementos de género en el emprendimiento social merecen mayor atención, en especial por el rol que el género desempeña tanto en el liderazgo exhibido como en la sostenibilidad de las empresas sociales.

El emprendimiento social de mujeres puede ayudar a los profesionales a formular potenciales estrategias innovadoras las mujeres exhiben; en particular, cómo las mujeres pueden redefinir las reglas de juego al integrar el propósito, la misión y la visión en toda la organización, así como al reformular la propuesta de valor de las empresas para sortear las tensiones organizativas. Nuestro estudio identifica concretamente la influencia moderadora del género en la relación entre las motivaciones/factores impulsores y resultados de la participación en las empresas sociales. Las mujeres pueden enseñar a las empresas sociales, y a las empresas en general, cómo imbuir un propósito organizativo para que sirva de piedra angular al ecosistema de todas las partes interesadas de la empresa. Además, las mujeres líderes son un buen ejemplo de cómo se pueden fomentar y ajustar comportamientos que den como resultado una mayor sostenibilidad, dado que las empresas sociales se enfrentan continuamente a la armonización de las metas sociales y económicas intrínsecas a la naturaleza híbrida de sus empresas. Esto podría lograrse proporcionando ejemplos de empresas sociales dirigidas por mujeres, tanto

exitosas como no, que resalten los distintos patrones y comportamientos de liderazgo y cómo estos afectan a los resultados de las empresas sociales. La mayoría de la investigación actual que estudia la relación entre liderazgo y emprendimiento sigue centrándose en una perspectiva masculina o comparativa (Bryans & Mavin, 2003), por lo que se agradecerían y necesitarían más análisis con un enfoque de género. Por ejemplo, seguir investigando cómo el género como contexto fomenta la diversidad en las empresas sociales. Una contribución especialmente útil en este campo sería la investigación de la relación entre diversidad, gobernanza y liderazgo en las empresas sociales y cómo su interacción influye en el rendimiento de la empresa. Nuestra investigación hace asimismo un llamamiento a continuar diversificando el tipo de estudios sobre las mujeres y el emprendimiento social, en especial desde el punto de vista geográfico, con el fin de desarrollar una mejor comprensión de las diferencias entre las diversas formas de emprendimiento social de mujeres en función del entorno (contexto cultural, social y geográfico).

Por último, nuestra investigación nos permite avanzar que el proceso de creación de una empresa social tiene, en el caso de las mujeres, un desarrollo ascendente: desde las motivaciones no económicas a nivel comunidad, que desencadenan el proceso emprendedor, hasta la dimensión económica a nivel individual. Esto significa que las mujeres se embarcan en empresas sociales como un medio para un fin: solucionar un problema existente en la comunidad en la que operan. Como consecuencia, el *éxito organizacional* resulta ser un concepto en continua evolución que se adapta tanto a la etapa en que se encuentra la empresa como a la motivación que llevó a esas mujeres a lanzar

en una empresa social. En las primeras etapas, lo que predomina es la meta social, conforme al impacto que la empresaria pretende lograr a lo largo de la cadena de valor. A medida que la empresa crece, la sostenibilidad del negocio a nivel financiero gana un mayor peso: las empresarias comienzan a centrarse en el lado empresarial, por ejemplo, con el fin de conseguir suficiente dinero para consolidar el negocio. Por último, en la etapa de escalado de la empresa, la hibridez entra en acción, y se priorizan igualmente las metas sociales y económicas en la gestión de la empresa. Resulta, por tanto, fundamental investigar las perspectivas de género en el proceso de sucesión a medida que las empresas evolucionan desde la fase de creación a la de escalado, en la que intervienen habilidades de gestión y liderazgo distintas.

Para los encargados de formular políticas que impulsen avances significativos, la principal implicación que se deriva de esta investigación es que allanar el camino a las mujeres empresarias puede ser una buena forma de promover a la vez negocios sostenibles que aporten crecimiento, satisfacción individual y un sistema empresarial que fomente empresas sanas y diversas.

## **Sugerencias para futuras investigaciones**

A lo largo de nuestro estudio abordamos la importancia de centrarse en el emprendimiento de mujeres y en las empresas sociales. Nuestra investigación permitió comprender la forma en que las empresarias actúan en las empresas sociales. Asimismo, ayudó a profundizar en el origen y desarrollo del emprendimiento social de mujeres, identificar lagunas en la investigación actual y predecir las preguntas que precisan de una respuesta y que guiarán futuros

esfuerzos de investigación. Como consecuencia, surgieron nuevas e interesantes líneas de investigación que pueden servir como sugerencias a los académicos que se encuentren ya investigando la intersección entre emprendimiento de mujeres y empresas sociales. Nuestros hallazgos nos permitieron saber que necesitamos mirar más allá de las perspectivas institucionales e incorporar otras lentes teóricas si queremos explicar la relevancia de centrarse en el emprendimiento de mujeres y en las estrategias a nivel organizativo que dichas mujeres despliegan para alcanzar el efecto deseado.

Nuestras contribuciones representan un primer intento por comprender los mecanismos subyacentes a las empresas sociales sostenibles. Un posible camino a seguir para los investigadores es considerar las empresas sociales como una forma de actividad de género, lo que contribuiría a ampliar nuestra comprensión del papel que tiene el género en las empresas sociales. Hacemos un llamamiento a potenciar la investigación sobre emprendimiento social existente para facilitar la investigación actual sobre el papel de las mujeres en el emprendimiento. Nuestros hallazgos sugieren que el *éxito* es un concepto fluido y cambiante a lo largo de la vida de una empresa social y que está altamente influido por el punto de vista del empresario.

Esta investigación allana el camino para que se realice más investigación sobre el emprendimiento de mujeres en las empresas sociales de distintas formas. Primero, la investigación futura puede centrarse concretamente en la relación entre las empresas sociales y las mujeres para abordar nuevas oportunidades. Igualmente, identifica la necesidad de tomar un enfoque más

contemporáneo de la definición de empresa social, ya que las mujeres amplían su concepto de empresa social, y del negocio en general, a un sistema multinivel conjunto de relaciones entre familia, comunidad y negocio. Las mujeres tienen un imperativo de cuidado para facilitar un equilibrio en el que todos ganan: yo gano, la comunidad gana, el planeta gana y, al ser sostenible en el tiempo, las generaciones futuras también ganan. De ahí que los investigadores necesiten tener en cuenta cómo este punto de vista da forma al modo en que las mujeres se enfrentan a la creación y formulación de la estrategia y misión de la empresa y, en última instancia, consolidando un impacto sostenible.

Hasta ahora, la mayoría de la investigación sobre el carácter híbrido de las empresas sociales ha estado dominada por una definición dual de metas sociales y económicas de la empresa. En el futuro, la investigación necesita conectar objetivos actuales más amplios para ampliar la investigación sobre las mujeres en la empresa social. Esto resultaría de ayuda para aumentar nuestro entendimiento sobre las mujeres en el emprendimiento y sobre los negocios en general. Asimismo, animaría a los investigadores a centrarse en nuevas formas emergentes de negocios que llevan en su esencia una estrategia de impacto social y, en consecuencia, les confiere una ventaja competitiva a largo plazo.

Por último, el análisis de la importancia de la participación de la mujer en la investigación social y empresarial ha puesto de relieve una serie de tendencias que merecen mayor atención. En primer lugar, la influencia del género suele relacionarse con análisis de género interseccional, pero el género como contexto suele pasarse por alto en la literatura. Hemos respondido al

llamamiento para adoptar el género como contexto y foco de investigación en futuros estudios, de modo que los investigadores puedan generar nuevas y significativas contribuciones que permitan avanzar en el debate sobre el papel que desempeña el género en las empresas sociales y cómo debería analizarse este. El cambiante concepto de *éxito* en las empresas sociales a lo largo de la vida de la empresa invita a continuar la investigación, dada la relevancia de tener unas definiciones claras sobre los conceptos de *éxito* y de *rendimiento organizativo*. Nuestros hallazgos han alentado el interés en los estilos de gestión empresarial y liderazgo de la mujer y su vínculo con el rendimiento de la empresa.

Nuestro análisis ha resumido la investigación actual sobre el emprendimiento social de mujeres y supone un primer intento por delinear los mecanismos mediante los cuales las mujeres influyen y dan forma a las empresas sociales. Asimismo, establece la justificación para estudiar esta área y anticipa prometedoras avenidas de investigación para el futuro sobre la creciente influencia de la participación activa de la mujer en las empresas sociales, en el emprendimiento y en los negocios en general.

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