

***REVIEW: THE WELLBEING OF WOMEN IN
ENTREPRENEURSHIP. A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE. MARIA-
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Maria-Teresa Lepeley, Katherina Kuschel, Nicholas Beutell, Nicky Pouw & Emiel L. Eijdenberg (Eds.), *The Wellbeing of Women in Entrepreneurship. A Global Perspective*. New York: Routledge, 2019. ISBN: 9780429279836.

The Wellbeing of Women in Entrepreneurship. A Global Perspective (2019) provides a unique and detailed portrayal of the life and businesses of women entrepreneurs around the world - validating not only women's experiences as legitimate sources of knowledge, but also giving a long needed attention to women entrepreneurs and the causes and effects of their wellbeing and flourishing. This work speaks of the process of expanding and challenging the essentialist assumptions and paradigms of women's entrepreneurship research, acknowledging the vast heterogeneity of women entrepreneurs and their contingency within the spatial fabric of their everyday lives. As any social actor, women entrepreneurs are influenced by and accountable for the societal structures in which they interact –where issues like distribution of productive and reproductive roles, labour markets structures, power dynamics, culture, legislations and politics play a significant role in shaping their behaviours and the outcomes of their businesses. By attending to issues like work-life balance, family responsibilities, and job-satisfaction, among others, the authors explore business sustainability and the “multiplier effect” of the wellbeing of women entrepreneurs within their communities

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and regions. Wellbeing is broadly defined as a state “in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community” (WHO, 2014). In the fields of philosophy, ethics, health care, and psychology approaches to wellbeing have tended to be partitioned into hedonic and eudaimonic formulations -yet most entrepreneurial studies have focused on hedonic indicators (life satisfaction, happiness, positive affect), even though eudaimonic indicators may be particularly relevant to entrepreneurial pursuits. To address this issue, some scholars (see for example Ryff 2018) have highlighted key aspects of eudaimonic wellbeing (e.g., realization of personal potential, purposeful life engagement, effective management of complex environments) and their relevance for entrepreneurial studies. Chapters in this book coincide extensively with such approach to the wellbeing of women entrepreneurs; one that cannot be measured with traditional entrepreneurship standards. Such view puts greater focus on the various components of what it means to be fully functioning, providing the tools for evaluating other areas of wellbeing and for better understanding of the entrepreneurial experience.

This book has 26 chapters organised in six parts, representing different world regions (Part I. The Americas: North and Latin America; Part II. Europe: South, Central and Northern Europe; Part III. Middle East; Part IV Asia; Part V. Africa; and Part VI. Australia) and bringing together a variety of experiences of women entrepreneurs from 28 countries. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 imply a practical approach to the key concepts and notions that articulate the analysis –women entrepreneur’s wellbeing, “the multiplier effect” and business sustainability– followed by 24 chapters constituted by a critical and comprehensive analysis of the social and economic

dimensions of the wellbeing of women in entrepreneurship. Chapter 1, on “the multiplier effect” of wellbeing of women entrepreneurs, sets the precedent of this pioneer work, highlighting the importance of the wellbeing of women entrepreneurs as the need for gender-aware paradigms and frameworks to evaluate their performances and achievements. Building on these research findings, Chapter 2 presents the Entrepreneurial Sustainable Quality Management Model (EntrepSQME) as an effective way of moving from quantitative analyses of entrepreneurial success to qualitative approaches, focusing on the wellbeing of women entrepreneurs and its alignment with business success and sustainability. After this introductory remarks, the following chapters show an outstanding multidisciplinary and global approach that successfully produces a rich and vast portray of women entrepreneurs around the globe, providing an innovative assessment of the different factors that contribute to promote or impair their wellbeing and the outcomes for their businesses and communities. Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 5, Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 present diverse case studies of women entrepreneurs in United States, including the experiences of married women and the integration of entrepreneurial demands and resources with family and home (Chapter 3); the common themes that generate a sense of wellbeing amongst women entrepreneurs such as autonomy, flexibility and family relationships (Chapter 4); the experiences and challenges of women entrepreneurs in nanotechnology and STEM (Chapter 5); the different aspects of wellbeing of women entrepreneurs who find themselves as ‘trailing spouse’ expatriates (Chapter 6); and the strategies and perspectives of women entrepreneurs that have integrated wellness strategies to create sustainable wellbeing in their businesses (Chapter 7). Chapter 8, Chapter 9 and Chapter 10 are about women entrepreneurs in Chile, with an analysis of the way some of these women were able to transition from business failure to re-starting new ventures with higher levels of

wellbeing (Chapter 8); an exploration of the therapeutic dimension of the entrepreneurial activity, valued as a healing process of “doing and connecting” leading to wellbeing (Chapter 9); and an assessment of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and support mechanisms for high-growth women entrepreneurs in technology (Chapter 10). Continuing in the Latin American region, Chapter 11 includes a comprehensive analysis of the characteristics, needs and motivations of women’s entrepreneurship in the rural region of Cusco, Peru; and Chapter 12 presents a literature review that discusses the implications of empowerment and wellbeing of women entrepreneurs in the Caribbean. Chapter 13, Chapter 14, Chapter 15, Chapter 16 and Chapter 17 include the work of academics from Europe. Chapter 13 examines how previous experience of women entrepreneurs in France can influence the capacity to make their business grow, and how such experiences are moderated by gender. Chapter 14 analyses the relationship between work-family conflict and levels of wellbeing pursued by women entrepreneurs in Italy. Chapter 15 explores the relationship between relational capital and female start-ups in Italy and its effects on wellbeing. Chapter 17 utilizes boundary theory on individuals’ “life-puzzle” to study the work/non-work preferences of women entrepreneurs in Sweden. Chapter 16 and Chapter 18, on the other hand, offer a more broad perspective by analyzing the differences in perception of work-life conflict among women involved in entrepreneurial activities or other types of work utilising the Global Entrepreneurial Monitor GEM database of 32,049 women from different economic regions worldwide (Chapter 16); and presenting the findings of a literature review on women entrepreneurs’ identities and wellbeing to explain the multidimensional relationship between women entrepreneurs’ identities and their sustainable eudaimonic and temporal hedonic wellbeing with a global perspective (Chapter 18). Chapter 19 and Chapter 20 take place in the Middle East. Chapter 19

discusses the Grameen Microcredit Model aimed to poverty reduction in Turkey, showing its contribution to the improvement of women wellbeing and their consequential involvement in entrepreneurial activities. Chapter 20 is a personal account of the stories of women entrepreneurs in refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan, demonstrating the way entrepreneurship grants them the independence and opportunities they need to attain higher levels of wellbeing. Moving on to Asia, Chapter 21 explores the different dimensions of wellbeing of women entrepreneurs in India; and Chapter 22 analyses the conditions and challenges of pull and push entrepreneurial activity amongst women in Bangladesh, highlighting the heterogeneity of women entrepreneurs' experiences. Chapter 23, 24 and 25 include African countries. Chapter 23 explores the role of sustainability orientations and firm performance as indicators of wellbeing among women micro entrepreneurs in Zambia. Chapter 24 study the interplay between entrepreneurial opportunities and environment, and how survival entrepreneurship relates to wellbeing for women in Kenya. Chapter 25 focuses on the role of hired domestic helps in influencing life and business satisfaction by reducing the family-to-work conflict of men and women entrepreneurs in the Sub-Saharan context. Finally, Chapter 26 explores how gendered portrayals of entrepreneurs in mass media contribute to gender differences in entrepreneurship via two well-established, social psychological mechanisms: self-efficacy and stereotype threat.

A great merit that can be attributed to this book is, first of all, that of visualising the wellbeing dimension of female entrepreneurship. Very few studies have been done on this area (see for example Dolinsky and Caputo 2003 and Nordenmark 2004) and therefore our understanding of the relationship between working conditions (from a social, psychological and economic perspective) and women entrepreneurs' wellbeing

and the consequential outcomes of their businesses is limited (Lindström et al. 2000). As notable is the unparalleled global perspective offered by the authors. Studies on these issues have mainly suffered from the limitations of having limited and small samples, failing to distinguished between men and women entrepreneurs (Nordenmark, Vinberg, and Strandh 2012), and a tendency to focus on developed regions (Kuschel and Lepeley 2016; Marlow and Martinez Dy 2017; Minniti and Naudé 2010). This volume represents women entrepreneurs from countries in North and Latin America, Europe, Australia, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, extending the scope of research in such dimension in a distinguishably way. Something that stands out throughout the study, and that in my opinion is fundamental, is the reflective and critical standpoint taking by the authors. The authors accomplish the challenging quest of creating a new paradigm of analysis that sheds light into the important, yet relatively unknown, dimensions of women entrepreneurs' wellbeing and multiplier effect. In my view, their contingency (accounting for factors "outside" the individual entrepreneur and in dimensions that have been largely ignored such as the relationship of social arrangements and structures and the effects of these for their levels of empowerment and wellbeing) and global approach (allowing a comparative work with researchers from many countries) make the comparison between different social orders within these dimensions possible, facilitating the identification of different approaches for analysis and for recommendations on wellbeing improvement. This resonates with my own research interest of understanding how governments could influence positively women entrepreneurship³, a fundamental question that remains unresolved (Arshed, Carter, and Mason 2014). Clearly, the isolation of female entrepreneurs from issues of positionality and context has been an important limitation and, in this sense, a global perspective is of

³ Moore, K. (2019). A discursive institutionalist framework for female enterprise policy analysis. Diana International Research Conference. Babson College, Wellesley, MA June 2-4, 2019

great value in identifying the diverse realities and needs of women's entrepreneurs and providing sensitive policy recommendations. Furthermore, by extending the approach and assessment of women entrepreneurs' wellbeing, this book can contribute to direct policies into challenging gender inequalities and women's businesses secondary positioning –which has been questioned in recent research as most of such initiatives respond to economic imperatives and have a lack of impact, or even negative effects, on women's entrepreneurs (Pettersson et al. 2017).

Evidently, this work advances the academic perspective of women entrepreneurship and wellbeing through its innovative approach and broad perspective. The book thus contributes to advance our understanding of the different aspects of women entrepreneurs' wellbeing, revealing alternative ways of assessment with alternative implications for women and, in consequence, for the sustainability of nations worldwide.

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