



A Bibliometric Analysis of Women Entrepreneurship: Trends, Themes, and Global Perspectives

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurs are the most rapidly expanding section of global entrepreneurship and have garnered significant attention from several scholars, particularly in recent years. Emerging entrepreneurship literature indicates that females contribute significantly to entrepreneurial activities and economic growth by generating new jobs and enhancing gross domestic product. This study presents a comprehensive bibliometric analysis based on data extracted from the Web of Science record to explore the key trends, themes, and contributions in women entrepreneurship research. Using VOS viewer, the study maps keyword co-occurrences, identifies prominent themes, and analyzes the geographical distribution of publications. Findings highlight critical intersections of gender, innovation, and sustainability in entrepreneurship, revealing emerging areas for future research and policy development to foster global inclusive ecosystems for women entrepreneurs.

Key Words: Women Entrepreneurship, Bibliometric Analysis, Sustainability, Innovation, Gender studies, Global trends.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Female entrepreneurs are the most rapidly expanding segment of global entrepreneurship and have garnered significant attention from several scholars, particularly in recent years. Recent literature indicates that female's significant engagement in entrepreneurial activities (Noguera et al. 2013) & economic growth (Hechavarria et al., 2019) by generating new jobs and enhancing GDP (Bahmani-Oskooee et al., 2013), (Ayogu & Agu, 2015), thereby positively affecting poverty reduction and social inclusion (Rae, 2015). The proportion of females opting for an entrepreneurial profession remains inferior to that of men (Elam et al., 2019). This inequality amplifies with the country's level of development (Coduras Martínez & Autio, 2013).

Literature indicates that businessmen are characterized as assertive and possessing high-risk tendencies, while also appearing more socially motivated to attain economic benefits, a portrayal that does not align with women (Dileo & García Pereiro, 2018), who appear more attuned to care giving and the emotional domain, thus prioritizing social importance (Hechavarria et al., 2012). Ahl, 2006 investigated the role of academics in perpetuating stereotypes regarding women entrepreneurship, revealing that all studied books portrayed women entrepreneurs as subordinate to males.

This stereotypical and male-centric perspective deters certain women from engaging in economic endeavours, potentially impacting those who contact with women at a local level and establishing an extra obstacle (Langowitz & Minniti, 2007). The methodical analysis by Sullivan & Meek, 2012 indicated that societal attributions and varying socialization processes for men and women may hinder women due to the inequitable distribution of resources, educational goals, & expectations for daily activities. A study (Guzman & Kacperczyk, 2019) indicates that women are 63% less likely than men to get external investment in the form of risk capital, with the majority of the disparity attributed to gender inequalities.

The societal portrayal of businessmen as an autonomous and stereotypical male raises a secondary analytical concern that may constrain women, specifically the perceived obligation women have regarding the family/work dynamic (Jennings & Brush, 2013). Boz et al., 2015 found that females who prioritize family exhibit detrimental behaviours in the workplace, hence complicating the steadiness between home and work for female entrepreneurs, which constitutes a significant barrier to the expansion of their enterprises.

Contrary observed data has demonstrated the reverse. Thébaud, 2015 posits that work-family friction may significantly drive women to initiate entrepreneurial ventures. Business development provides women with significant flexibility regarding work hours, enabling them to work only a few hours per week or from home, thus facilitating a balance between professional and familial obligations (Kirkwood, 2007).

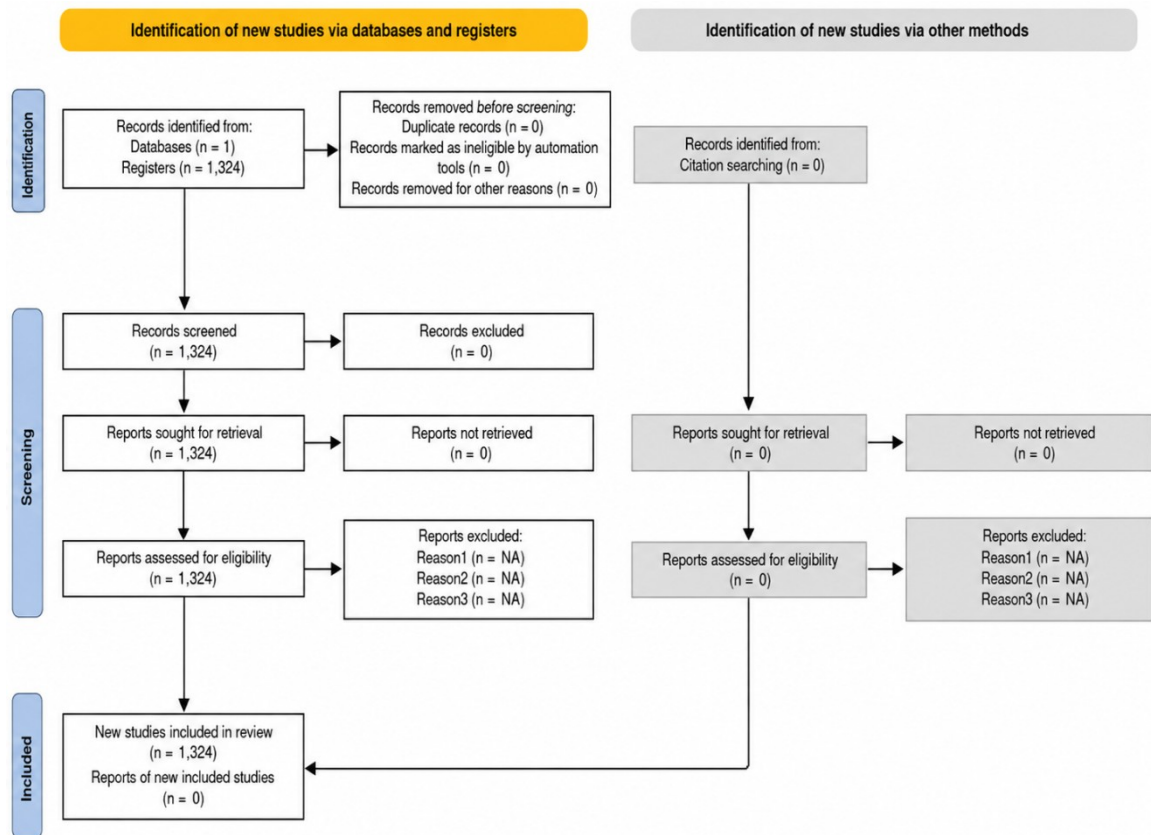
This paper explores the scholarly discourse surrounding women's entrepreneurship through bibliometric analysis, identifying trends, challenges, and emerging opportunities in the field. It examines the evolution of research on women in business, the factors influencing entrepreneurial success, and how women-led enterprises are reshaping traditional business models. The study also emphasizes the necessary support systems, including financial services, mentorship, and policy reforms, to empower women entrepreneurs. Ultimately, this paper targeted to provide an

inclusive understanding of the growing role of female in entrepreneurship & their influence on sustainable economic development.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes bibliometric analysis to evaluate the academic literature on female entrepreneurship systematically. Data was extracted from the Web of Science database, focusing on articles published between 2020 and 2024. Visualizations were generated using the VOS viewer tool to identify keyword co-occurrences and examine the geographic distribution of research contributions. **Figure 1** shows the selection criteria chosen for the study.

Figure 1: Selection Criteria opted for the study



(Source: Author own work)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Trends in Women Entrepreneurship Research

The bibliometric analysis reveals a steady growth in publications, especially in the last decade. Key research themes include entrepreneurial intention, sustainability, innovation, and gender

disparities. Prominent keywords such as "sustainability orientation," "social entrepreneurship," and "digital innovation" illustrate the evolving focus of the field.

3.2. Thematic Insights

Gender and Leadership: A significant number of studies explore the intersection of gender norms and entrepreneurial leadership, with a focus on challenges such as the "double bind" faced by women in leadership roles.

Sustainability and Social Impact: Women entrepreneurs are increasingly recognized as agents of sustainable development, especially in sectors like renewable energy, education, and healthcare.

Digital Transformation: The role of technology, particularly social media platforms, in empowering women entrepreneurs in developing regions is a recurring theme.

3.3. Geographical Distribution

Research publications originate primarily from North America, Europe, and Asia, with developing regions like Africa and Latin America emerging as key contributors. These regions focus on social entrepreneurship and informal economies, highlighting the global nature of women's entrepreneurship research.

3.4. Publication Year Analysis

Analysis of publication years shows a marked increase in scholarly output, with 2022 leading the pack with 283 publications, accounting for 21.375% of the dataset. Other top years include 2023 (271 publications, 20.468%), 2021 (269 publications, 20.317%), and 2024 (259 publications, 19.562%). This data illustrates the sustained and growing academic interest in women's entrepreneurship. **Table 1** demonstrates the top five co-occurrences of Keywords. It displays that the word "Gender" has been used 573 times, followed by "entrepreneurship" which occurred 547 times, then women (368), women entrepreneurs (229), and lastly impact (181).

3.5. Top Publishing Nations

The United States leads with 326 publications (24.622%), followed by England (206 publications, 15.559%) and China (162 publications, 12.236%). Spain (131 publications), Canada (90 publications), and other nations such as Italy, Australia, France, India, and Germany also make significant contributions to the field.

Table 1: Co-occurrence of Keywords

Serial No	Keyword	Occurrence
1	Gender	572
2	Entrepreneurship	547
3	Women	368
4	Women entrepreneurs	229
5	Impact	181

Table 2 shows the top five cited nations and documents. It shows that the USA got the maximum number of citations (i.e., 3450), then England (2451), China (1531), Spain (1403), and Canada lastly with 996 citations.

Table 2: Country-wise Documents & Citations

Serial No	Country	Documents	% of 1324	Citations
1	USA	326	24.622	3450
2	England	206	15.559	2471
3	China	162	12.236	1531
4	Spain	131	9.894	1403
5	Canada	89	6.798	996

Table 3 describes the number of publications from 2019 to 2024. It shows that 259 documents have been published on women's entrepreneurship in 2024, 271 documents in 2023, 283 publications in 2022, 269 papers in 2021, and so on. The least number of documents were published in 2019.

Table 3: Number of publications per year

Serial No	Publication Years	Record Count	% of 1324
1	2024	259	19.562
2	2023	271	20.468
3	2022	283	21.375
4	2021	269	20.317
5	2020	217	16.390
6	2019	25	1.888

Table 4 discusses the inclusion of articles distributed based on WOS categories. It demonstrates that the category naming "Business" includes 481 documents, "Management" category includes 465 documents. 217 articles from the "Economics" category, 110 from Environmental studies, and 100 from Women S studies have been included in our study.

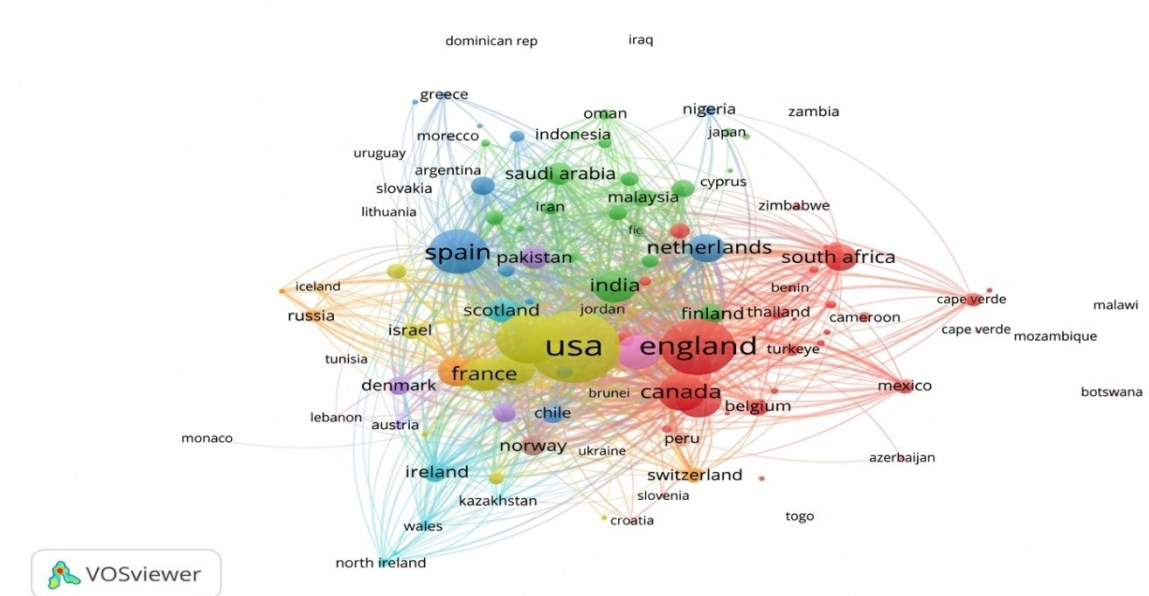
Table 4: Distribution of articles as per WOS categories

Serial No	Web of Science Categories	Record Count	% of 1324
1	Business	481	36.329
2	Management	465	35.121
3	Economics	217	16.390
4	Environmental Studies	110	8.308
5	Women S Studies	100	7.553

Figure 2 represents the bibliographic coupling of the countries. It is a method of identifying similar concepts in referencing a document. It also takes into account freshly released research

publications that possess fewer citations. A work is considered bibliographically connected when it is referenced in the citations of at least two other papers. As we can notice the USA has been positioned first in getting citations, then England, China, and the list goes on.

Figure 2: Bibliographic coupling of Countries



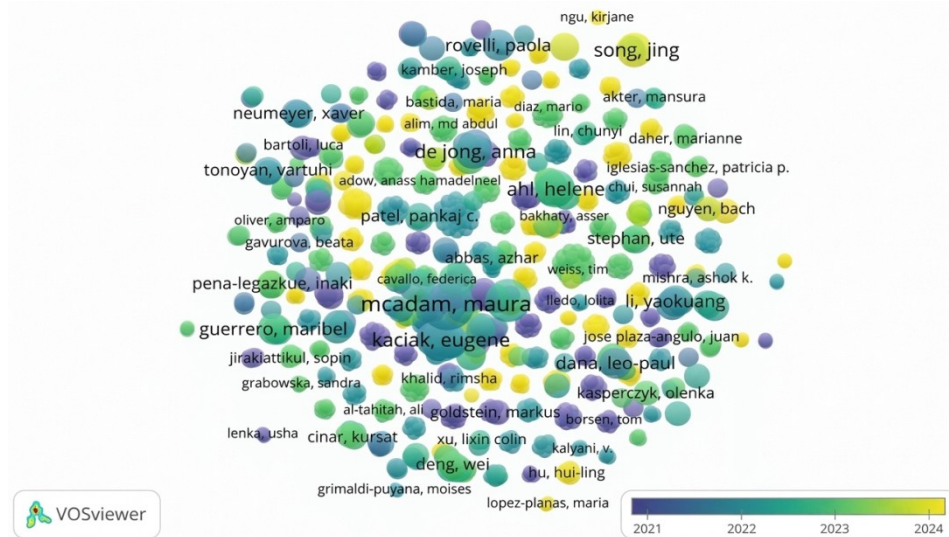
(Source: VOS viewer)

3.6. Top Web of Science Categories

The "Business" category dominates with 481 publications (36.329%), followed by "Management" (465 publications, 35.121%). "Economics" (217 publications, 16.390%) and categories like "Environmental Studies" (110 publications, 8.308%) and "Women's Studies" (100 publications, 7.553%) underscore the interdisciplinary focus of the field.

The overlay visualization resembles the network visualization, with the distinction that elements are coloured separately. Components in the overlay visualization may be coloured in two distinct ways. **Figure 3** shows the visualization of the authors.

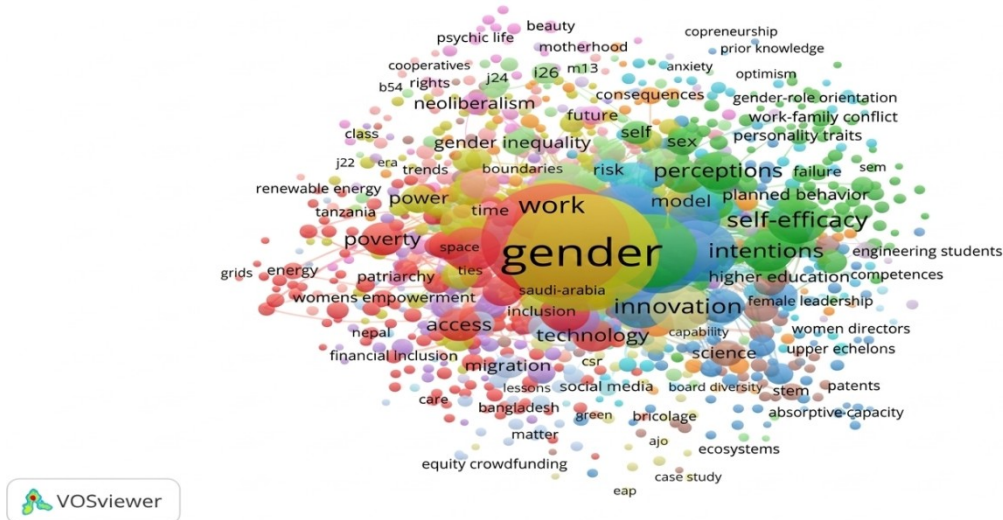
Figure 3: Co-authorship overlay visualization



(Source: VOS viewer)

Figure 4 represents the co-occurrence network visualization of keywords. Keywords that appear at least five times are displayed on the map. The size of a node is decided by the no. of documents, but the thickness of the connecting lines signifies "link strength," a numerical value that correlates with the quantity of articles citing the same keyword. Keywords of identical colour are closely associated. It shows that the word gender has been used more frequently.

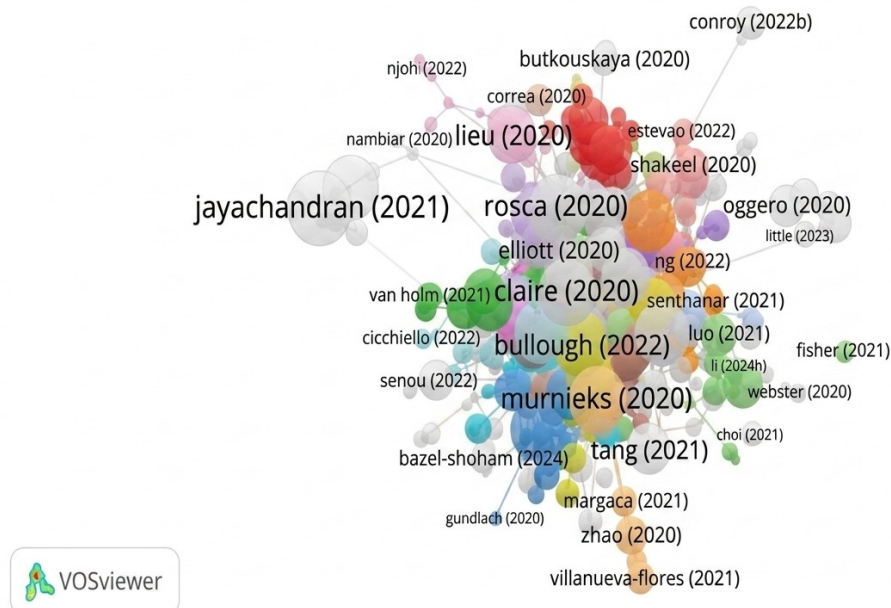
Figure 4: Co-occurrence network Analysis Map of Keywords



(Source: VOS viewer)

Figure 5 shows a network visualization map of citations. In network visualization mode, things are represented by their labels or, by default, by a circle. The dimensions of each item's label & circle are dependent upon the item's weight. The colour of an object is dictated by the group to which it is assigned. It is observed that the label may be hidden for some objects. This is executed to prevent overlapping labels. Furthermore, by default, no lines are shown across items. Jayachandran, 2021 has been positioned first and the list goes on.

Figure 5: Network visualization Map of Citations



(Source: VOS viewer)

5. CONCLUSION

Women entrepreneurs are pivotal in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and promoting social equity. They are instrumental in addressing development challenges, enhancing community resilience, and creating job opportunities, particularly in developing economies. Despite facing structural barriers like limited access to finance, societal expectations, and discriminatory policies, women entrepreneurs continue to make valuable contributions across sectors.

This study offers a thorough bibliometric overview of women's entrepreneurship research, highlighting its evolution and global scope. By combining bibliometric data with thematic insights, the paper deepens our understanding of the field and lays a foundation for future research and policy development. The visualizations provided through VOSviewer offer rich insights into the scholarly landscape, enriching the overall discussion on female entrepreneurship.

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