

# Female entrepreneurship in emerging and developing countries: a systematic review of practical and policy implications and suggestions for new studies

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – Women entrepreneurs face several challenges in creating and running ventures, especially in emerging and developing countries. In this sense, by aiming to generate inputs capable of helping overcome them, this study aims to categorize the policy, managerial and practical implications of articles whose empirical research was in one or more of the 155 emerging and developing countries. Further, although scholars have addressed female entrepreneurship in developed economies, there is scant literature in the context explored here. This article provides suggestions for new studies, helping academics fill gaps in the literature.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This article adopts a systematic literature review approach, performing content analysis and bibliometric description for the sample. The study comprises 77 articles selected from the Scopus and Web of Science databases.

**Findings** – Research concentrates on Asian countries, with lower incidences in Latin America and Africa. The policy implications focus mainly on the executive rather than legislative spheres. The practical implications focus mainly on entrepreneurial development agencies and women entrepreneurs. Among the suggestions for novel studies, those focusing on methodological choices and female enterprises stand out.

**Practical implications** – This paper maps and categorizes the policy, managerial and practical implications, helping to raise governments', policymakers' and practitioners' awareness of the preferred strategies to overcome the challenges of female entrepreneurship.

**Originality/value** – This paper emphasizes reflections of mutual interest to researchers, policymakers and practitioners, filling gaps in studies that prioritize an academic audience. Regarding the academic audience, this paper contributes to innovatively categorizing suggestions for future research and building an extensive research agenda capable of guiding research in this area.

**Keywords** Women, Gender, Self-employment

**Paper type** Literature review



## Introduction

The number of female entrepreneurs has grown in recent years, gaining academic and empirical relevance (Brush and Cooper, 2012; Cardella *et al.*, 2020; De Bruin *et al.*, 2007; De Vita *et al.*, 2014; Foss *et al.*, 2019; Owalla and Al Ghafri, 2020). Indeed,