



Empowerment and entrepreneurship: a theoretical framework

Empowerment
and
entrepreneurship

503

Haya Al-Dajani

Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia, UK, and

Susan Marlow

Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to develop an empirically informed conceptual framework to analyse the gendered relationship between empowerment and entrepreneurship contextualised within the lives of displaced Palestinian migrant women operating home-based enterprises in Amman, Jordan.

Design/methodology/approach – A longitudinal qualitative study was undertaken during which semi-structured in-depth interviews were regularly conducted with 43 women producing high-quality traditional embroidered goods within home-based enterprises. The empirical material was utilised to inform and illustrate the creation of an empowerment framework.

Findings – Entrepreneurship is popularly presented as an individually focused economic undertaking. However, this paper demonstrates it is also a socio-politically situated activity; within this particular context, marginalised subordinated women were empowered through their home-based enterprises.

Originality/value – This paper offers a gender informed conceptual framework to inform the analyses of empowerment and entrepreneurship. The discussion describes the necessary processes for development goals to be realised, and explains how traditionally subordinated women can utilise enterprise to contribute to social change. In so doing, the proposed conceptual framework acts as a theoretical illustration of the gendered relationship between empowerment and entrepreneurship.

Keywords Gender, Women, Entrepreneurialism, Empowerment, Homeworking, Entrepreneurship, Subordination, Middle East region, Jordan, Palestine

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

In a critical overview of the status of and potential for entrepreneurship research published at the turn of this century, Shane and Venkataraman (2000) axiomatically adopted an objectivist ontology as field appropriate. This assumed that the essence of entrepreneurship research rests upon analyses of associations between opportunity recognition and resulting wealth creation. Since then, however, this stance has been subject to considerable ontological and epistemological critique (see e.g. Rindova *et al.*, 2009; Watson, 2011) which re-conceptualises this construct to encompass both entrepreneurship and entrepreneuring. This shift, suggesting overlaps between being [noun] and doing [verb], recognises that entrepreneurial orientation and behaviours arise from, and reflect, diverse contexts and so, generate a range of differentiated socio-economic/political outcomes (Sarasvathy *et al.*, 2003; Calās *et al.*, 2009; Welter, 2011). As such, the analytical focus shifts from the discovery and enactment of opportunity associated with generating economic returns. Rather, it suggests a more nuanced and complex exploration of the entrepreneuring activities which effect a range of context dependent and institutionally bounded outcomes (Rindova *et al.*, 2009). In recognition of entrepreneuring as a contextualised activity reflecting a diverse range of influences, we explore the interface between entrepreneurial activities, gender, migrant status and empowerment.



The literature underpinning the contemporary analysis of the influence of gender upon entrepreneurial venturing largely reflects a US- and Euro-centric bias (Abu-Lughod, 2009; Al-Dajani and Marlow, 2010). We critique this bias through an analysis of the empowerment potential of home-based entrepreneuring undertaken by displaced, marginalised Palestinian women residing in a socially deprived neighbourhood in Amman, Jordan. Based on this analysis, we develop an empirically informed conceptual framework that illustrates the relationship between gender, entrepreneuring and socio-political empowerment in a context of material, cultural and economic deprivation. Accordingly, we take it as axiomatic that gendered ascriptions fundamentally inform entrepreneurial opportunities, experiences and behaviours. Moreover, we move on from the notion of gender as generic, using a specific articulation of contextualised female entrepreneuring to both challenge and develop current analyses of mainstream entrepreneurship theory and practice.

In essence, we aim to explore the cyclical inter-relationship between contextualised entrepreneurial motivations, empowerment and entrepreneurship; in so doing, we advance the understanding of entrepreneuring within the lives of displaced women operating home-based enterprises in a developing economy. We also explore the extent to which the emergent framework can analytically illustrate the potential for displaced women to be socially, politically and economically empowered by and through entrepreneurship. Due to a multitude of factors, small-scale informal home-based activities provide a critical route to income and related social benefits for marginalised women living in poverty within developing economies (Cinar, 2001; Al-Dajani, 2007). As such, there is a need for more evidence and related analyses of women's entrepreneuring within transitional, developing and disadvantaged economies especially where this has largely remained hidden within a context of patriarchy (Carter and Weeks, 2002; Tzannatos and Kaur, 2003; Metcalfe, 2008). Whilst there are few reliable data sources describing women's economic participation within the Arab Middle East; those which do exist (World Bank, 2010; Weeks, 2009) suggest it remains relatively low at around 26 per cent compared to the global mean of 55 per cent. Such figures, however, do not account for women's economic activity within the informal sector and, particularly, in home-based self-employment. Indeed, this sector remains largely unexplored both as a potential site of socio-economic activity for women and as a contribution to national wealth creation (Al-Budirate, 2009; Sadi and Al-Ghazali, 2010). This is somewhat puzzling, particularly within specific Arab Middle East contexts, as home-based enterprise offers women an opportunity to engage in income generation activities in groups where formal self-employment or waged employment is not culturally acceptable or economically feasible.

The paper is organised as follows. We commence by contextualising the discussion through a description of craft-based enterprise; this is followed by a critical analysis of entrepreneurial empowerment. The method and methodology utilised to generate our empirical material is then outlined. The findings inform and illustrate the analytical framework comprising three components: contextualised entrepreneurial motivations, the empowerment cycle and the empowerment outcomes. Finally, the conclusion considers the study's contribution whilst recognising limitations and future research directions.

Contextualising debate: heritage entrepreneurial activities and empowerment potential

The social and gender status of displaced women in Middle Eastern economies is defined through economic and cultural exclusion in a context of patriarchy. Small-scale

home-based enterprise has potential to challenge this matrix of disadvantage. In addition to offering women an enclave where economic activity can be undertaken within the protected space of the home, much small-scale enterprise largely depends upon traditional and typically feminised indigenous skilled craft work (Chifos, 2007). So, displaced women can utilise entrepreneuring activities as an acceptable form of income generation whilst also preserving and celebrating a cultural heritage. It is recognised that analyses addressing traditional craft production assume and embed gender and socio-cultural norms which essentially associate such activities with indigenous women both within their home countries (Jena, 2007), or as members of ethnic minorities in host nations (Buller, 2007). To this extent, the production of traditional craft has been criticised for reproducing a gendered division of labour, inequalities and limited development and empowerment for women (Vallianatos and Raine, 2007). However, this critique does not acknowledge that traditional craft production is often the only link between displaced women and a lost culture and identity (Ramussen, 2005) which de Bruin and Mataira (2003) term as “heritage entrepreneurship”. In addition, for women experiencing a myriad of intersectional disadvantages from their denigrated status as dispossessed female migrants within a highly controlled patriarchal society, home-based craft entrepreneuring acts as a bounded protectorate. The possession of particularised knowledge and skills transformed into economic activity through home-based enterprise can strengthen social identities and so, within certain contexts, has the potential to inform greater socio-political awareness leading to degrees of personal and collective empowerment (Al-Dajani and Marlow, 2010).

As such, traditional craft production can act as a vehicle for women’s empowerment, which in specific circumstances can support a growing sense of power and control over domestic and community resources (Al-Dajani, 2007). As has been noted, craft-based businesses enable displaced women to celebrate and protect a lost heritage but in addition, the required skills to produce such goods are embedded within the person. Consequently, for migrant women who are also constrained by patriarchal norms, access to employment is denied by virtue of both their migrant and gendered status. Thus, craft-based self-employment facilitates navigation of such severe social constraints in that it enables women to engage in economic activities which are culturally acceptable in promoting a threatened heritage and is also home based. Accordingly, the focus on craft-based businesses is justified by this combination of characteristics whereby women can seek empowerment through channels which are not ostensibly threatening to the status quo but which do enable them to exercise degrees of acceptable agency.

In acknowledging the “contentions and contestations” (Cornwall and Anyidoho, 2010, p. 244) expressed by feminist critics regarding women’s empowerment theorising and practice in development studies (Batliwala, 2007), we propose an alternative approach to empowerment. That is, using entrepreneurship as a lens through which to interpret and evaluate displaced women’s experiences rather than presenting it as an end in itself. Empowerment offers an analytical frame through which to explore the extent that women utilise entrepreneuring activities to counter marginalisation and exclusion. Accordingly, analyses of entrepreneuring must feature within current approaches that evaluate empowerment; moreover, entrepreneurship should be recognised as part of the intersectional nexus informing studies of international development such as demography, sociology and economics (Malhotra *et al.*, 2002; Nwanesi, 2006).

Women's empowerment and motivations for entrepreneurship

The entrepreneurial discourse has largely centred upon economic opportunity recognition and remains normatively masculinised (Ahl, 2004; Ahl and Marlow, 2012). Although there is growing recognition of intersectional influences which inform empowerment and entrepreneurial activities (Gill and Ganesh, 2007; Abbasian and Bildt, 2009; Gupta and Sharma, 2011), this debate remains contextualised within a dominant US/Euro-centric frame. Yet, there is a convincing case to extend this analysis to novel contexts (Welter, 2011; Steyaert and Katz, 2004; Trettin and Welter, 2011) such as the Middle East where the intersectionality between gender, patriarchy and displacement critically shapes the relationship between entrepreneuring and empowerment (Al-Dajani and Carter, 2010; Al-Dajani and Marlow, 2010). By presenting the proposed empirically informed conceptual framework below, we aim to contribute to this extant literature whilst also exposing and critiquing the limited and biased reach of current entrepreneurship theorising.

The empowerment concept has been widely established in various literatures. While this can be perceived as problematic in developing a coherent and analytical core (Batiwala, 2007; Kantor, 2003), there is agreement that empowerment is a process (Carr, 2003; East, 2000; Kabeer, 2005) rather than a goal (Akhter and Ward, 2009); moreover, its application is directly relevant to those who lack power (GlenMaye, 1998; Townsend, 1999) through marginalisation, social exclusion, discrimination and/or social inequality. To this extent, empowerment excludes men who generally occupy a favoured position in patriarchal contexts. In fact, within the development arena, empowerment studies have predominantly focused on women (Wieringa, 1994; East, 2000; Elson, 1999). Contrary to Sholkamy (2010), empowerment is about process and agency where women themselves must be the significant agents and actors in the process of change (Mehra, 1997). Indeed, "unless the intervening processes involve women as agents of that change rather than merely as its recipients, the overall process would not be considered or defined as empowerment" (Malhotra *et al.*, 2002, p. 7). The importance of agency in the empowerment discourse emerges from "bottom up" approaches towards development (Narayan *et al.*, 2000).

Using broader definitions of empowerment, we extend the process and agency approach and suggest that, rather than a linear process, women's empowerment is a continuous cycle "entailing enhanced abilities to control choices, decisions and actions" (Al-Dajani, 2007, p. 20) to act with others to affect social change (Jabre *et al.*, 1997). This definition reaffirms the individual's role in contributing to social change within her community (Mosedale, 2005) and reaffirms feminist definitions of empowerment offered by Carr (2003) and Sardenberg (2008) amongst others. The existing women's empowerment literature is embedded in the context of developing economies and analyses of female entrepreneurship, empowerment and social capital assume homogeneity of background and context; such normative modelling effectively excludes the migrant, ethnic minority, refugee and displaced women residing in a developing host economy (see e.g. Katungi *et al.*, 2008). However, given the limited socio-political and employment rights afforded to such groups in their developing host countries, entrepreneuring provides one of the very few options available for income generation and social engagement (Granovetter, 1985). In recognition of such, Kontos (2004) argued that social embeddedness and engagement through entrepreneurship is biased towards privileged members of society and recommended the consideration of motivations as a resource for entrepreneurship. Consequently, analysing the intersectionality of women's place, empowerment, contextualised

entrepreneurial motivations and entrepreneurial opportunities is critical to this study. To explore and illustrate how these analytical themes coalesce, we now map empirical evidence from a longitudinal study of displaced Palestinian women operating home-based enterprises onto an empowerment framework.

Methodology and method

Given that empowerment is a process which can only be assessed upon a temporal basis, a longitudinal approach is preferable to dependence upon post hoc rationalisations. Accordingly, this study spanned a ten-year period, constituting three consecutive phases of data collection in Amman, Jordan from 1999 to 2009. The participants were 43 displaced Palestinian women entrepreneurs operating home-based enterprises within the feminised traditional embroidery sector.

As our key research proposition underpinning this discussion seeks to explore, analyse and illustrate the nuanced relationship between empowerment, entrepreneuring, gender and marginalised status, an interpretive, qualitative perspective was axiomatic. Indeed, as Bansal and Corley (2011, p. 235) note, such an approach enables us to “detail a context or situation in a way that the assumptions underlying prior theory are challenged”; as such, we have challenged the contextualised Euro/US-centric constructs of the potential represented by entrepreneuring behaviours and actions. In adopting an interpretive stance, we have invited these women to offer stories and reflections upon their understanding of their enterprising behaviours and in particular, ensuing empowerment. In addition, a qualitative stance is embedded within the notion of revealing and sharing a detailed account of events, processes and subjectivities; as Golombisky (2006) argues, this stance is critical for those whose voices and presence are positioned upon the epistemological margins. This was the case here as these women were denied status by virtue of their gender, migrant status and poverty; however, recounting the stories of their enterprising behaviours represented a channel to claim legitimacy and visibility for their particular perspective and daily realities and entrepreneurship (Steyaert and Katz, 2004).

To explore this lived experience, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with 43 women who were initially identified via eight organisations that subcontracted work from the home-based entrepreneurs; these constituted four women-owned businesses and four women-led non-profit organisations. All participants were interviewed at length (between 1.5 and 3 hours) with follow up interviews and/or telephone conversations undertaken at regular intervals within the ten-year study period. From a reflexive research perspective, the researcher sharing the participants’ ethnic origin recognised that she shared their wider social world (Brewer, 2000) but not their socio-political status and realities. Similarly, the participants were also well aware of the similarities and differences between the researcher and themselves, and they clarified their expectations of the researcher’s role in accurately portraying their invisible realities and raising awareness. Recognising the implications of this in the research process (Golombisky, 2006), the researchers adhered to Alvesson’s (2003, p. 24) proposal of a “reflexive pragmatist approach to the research interview” whereby reflexivity is considered as “conscious and consistent efforts to view the subject matter from different angles and avoid or strongly *a priori* privilege a single, favoured angle and vocabulary”. To this extent, the researchers constantly challenged their interpretations of the data and confronted their own views to ensure that they worked with multiple interpretations to avoid “traps and/or to produce rich and varied results” (Alvesson, 2003, p. 25).

The longitudinal nature of the study facilitated this approach as the data interpretation was regularly reviewed with the participants.

The interview conversations were framed around the women's experiences of home-based enterprise and the social, economic, political and community implications of such activities. In turn, these experiences were related to Longwe and Clarke's (1994) empowerment cycle phases, the outcomes of empowerment, contextualised entrepreneurial motivations and participant levels of empowerment. The primary interviewer is a fluent Arabic and English speaker, the meetings occurred within the home and were recorded and transcribed. To ensure accurate translation of the Arabic interview transcripts, translation from Arabic to English and back to Arabic was implemented. This process was undertaken by two native Arabic speakers fluent in English in order to validate the English translation of quotes used in this paper. Finally, the resultant themes and outcomes from the data analysis were shared with the participants to obtain their approval and confirmation.

Utilising this qualitative interpretative longitudinal approach enabled the recognition and exploration of the nuances of the self-employment process over time within a specific context and, moreover, it is widely appreciated that Arab culture is verbal whereby individuals prefer to converse and debate (Tzanntos and Kaur, 2003). The selection of participants was driven by a conceptual question that linked empowerment, motivation, gender, displacement status and entrepreneurship. Purposive sampling was adopted to ensure that participants reflected the characteristics of the study in that they were all home-based female embroiders producing and selling high-quality traditional craft work. Table I presents some demographic indicators of the participants. Participants' pseudonyms appearing in bold are quoted within this paper.

The qualitative analysis was undertaken manually as NVivo is still unreliable when used in Arabic (QSR, 2008). The themes drawn from the data reduction of the interview material informed three critical overarching constructs: contextualised entrepreneurial motivations, the empowerment cycle and the empowerment outcomes. Examples from the data are presented throughout the following sections to illustrate the emergence of the component elements of the empowerment framework. Thus, drawing from the thematically analysed interview material, an empirically derived framework has been constructed which is further illustrated with narrative fragments giving voice to the participants.

The empirically informed conceptual framework

This section outlines the three critical components for the framework and explains how these combine to form a continuous spiralling process whereby entrepreneuring enables social change through female empowerment.

1. Contextualising entrepreneurial motivations

Whilst the uncertain and tenuous nature of entrepreneurial motivations is recognised (Gartner, 2010), it is agreed that context critically influences how such motivations are realised to create the new enterprise (Welter, 2011). Accordingly, specific socio-economic, political, market and institutional contexts are key to fostering, enabling and enacting entrepreneurial activity (Shane *et al.*, 2003; Welter, 2011). Consequently, we transpose this analysis to explore the contextualised entrepreneurial experiences of displaced women operating in Amman. Drawing from the empirical material through content analysis and data reduction from the transcripts into coded categories

Participant	Age	Education level	No. of children	Declared monthly income from one subcontractor (UK £)	Years as home-based embroiderer
<i>SME 1</i>					
Hidaya	32	Secondary	2	75	16
Dalal	57	Primary	5	300	40
Ghalia	36	Secondary	3	80	16
Maysa	41	Secondary	4	130	20
Riham	38	Secondary	4	190	17
Nur	39	Secondary	3	250	21
<i>SME 2</i>					
Suha	55	Secondary	3	100	35
Sadeer	51	University	4	130	33
Rawan	56	Secondary	4	150	36
Samiha	59	Secondary	5	110	40
Fathiya	47	Secondary	3	125	30
Um Ibrahim	66	Secondary	3	380	50
<i>SME 3</i>					
Omaima	53	Primary	1	80	37
Firyal	58	Primary	6	70	42
Hiba	46	Primary	6	53	32
Iman	57	Primary	5	65	42
Dana	38	Primary	6	62	24
<i>SME 4</i>					
Huda	37	Secondary	4	52	16
Nihal	49	Primary	6	73	28
Rajha	48	Primary	5	70	28
Bahija	33	Secondary	2	40	14
Basma	34	Primary	3	63	20
<i>NPO 1</i>					
Jalila +	46	Secondary	1	68	30
Manal	49	Secondary	5	69	20
Rana	44	Secondary	1	65	24
Noura	36	Secondary	1	60	20
Madiha	35	Secondary	3	57	18
<i>NPO 2</i>					
Laila	63	Primary	5	75	50
Hana	40	Secondary	1	40	21
Lubna +	33	Primary	2	68	21
Alia	31	Secondary	1	50	15
Nafisa	39	Secondary	2	70	23
<i>NPO 3</i>					
Muna +	44	Secondary	3	60	30
Khadija	66	Primary	8	90	34
Maha	64	Primary	7	85	40
Lamis	38	Secondary	3	68	22
Sara	42	Secondary	3	70	25
<i>NPO 4</i>					
Maryam	28	Secondary	1	40	12
Fatima	50	Secondary	3	55	15
Adila	31	Secondary	1	52	16
Majida	32	Secondary	1	64	17
Sundos	47	Primary	4	70	25
Juhaina	53	Primary	4	68	30

Note: +, divorced participant

Table I.
Participants'
demographic data

and themes, the emergent entrepreneurial motivations for the home-based women entrepreneurs were as follows.

Resistance/heritage revival: throughout the study, maintaining and sharing their heritage through embroidery was critically important to the participants; this highly regarded skill was embedded within a community which was otherwise largely defined by displacement, poverty and a threatened socio-political identity as stated by Riham and reiterated by others:

[...] the authorities have always ignored us, but nobody else cares about us either.

Furthermore, for the participants, these disadvantages also intersected with patriarchal constraints. Thus, preserving these feminised skills through home-based enterprise articulates and celebrates a threatened heritage whilst related income generation provides some, if limited, scope to disrupt the prevailing patriarchal order.

Gender and political awareness: an awareness and experience of a denigrated political status and identity certainly motivated engagement with the feminised traditional embroidery sector as it acted as a substantive indicator of a distinct heritage articulated through highly skilled work. Awareness of the political volatility of the region was a consequence of their lived experience and reflected the group's social marginalisation. Fatima stated in 2005:

[...] ever since I can remember, we are considered a problem. No country wants us to stay and we cannot go back either so, instead of finding a solution, we have just been ignored by everyone [...] so if we don't help ourselves, who will help us?

Fatima's view was regularly repeated amongst the participants. Gender awareness was also a consequence of the participants' lived experience and reflected socially embedded patriarchal norms of gender inequalities and the implications of this on their daily enterprising activities. For example, Noura's statement was a common theme:

[...] my husband would not allow me to work because it is his responsibility to provide for the family [...] eventually, he gave in because he realised we needed the money and that I could bring in more money through my business than he could from his job.

The women were acutely aware that their impoverished status arose from political processes which denied their community both an identity and access to socio-economic opportunity. This realisation motivated their desire to undertake embroidery work for, as noted above, it was specifically presented as representative of a threatened heritage but, also, the income generated allowed some of the women to offer financial support to their local communities. This is outlined in more details below under the "Improved welfare".

Access to resources: the resources realised through enterprising endeavours were described in diverse terms and whilst the income generated was certainly an important motivator, social resources such as meeting and engaging with other embroiderers, the owners of the sub-contracting firms and personal clients was highly valued. This enabled the women to gain confidence and share experiences related to their work but, also, to gain a presence in the broader community. Such resources were critical in challenging isolation and forging social links. This was illustrated by the participant Hiba when she said:

[...] if I didn't embroider for the women that I do, I would only know about them from newspapers and magazines. But they really are my clients and they respect me for the quality of the items I make for them and, so, tell their friends and relatives about me.

Improved welfare: economic gains through entrepreneuring were channelled towards improving family welfare in terms such as better education and health care for children. Such tangible outcomes were highly motivating and central to addressing the material poverty which constrained the life chances of those within the community. Dalal, Um Ibrahim and Sundos all commented on how they contribute a percentage of their profits to their local community, and Sadeer – the only university graduate amongst the participants – stated:

I am one of the few in my community with a university degree [...] I was awarded a scholarship. Many people respect me and come for advice [...] I also help many adolescents with their home work [...] I am very active in the community and that encourages me to do more.

Economic independence: the income realised by the home-based enterprises was critical to supplementing the very limited wages available to husbands and fathers and, so, to alleviate endemic poverty. Moreover, as the source of this additional income, the women gained some power regarding how it was used and, so, it was more likely to be invested back into the family and community. As such, the opportunity for an independent income was identified as motivating and enabled some degree of financial independence from husbands and/or parents. Within a society where women's economic and social participation is severely constrained, personal income was not a lever to establish independent living or reject patriarchal norms. However, such income did enable the women to claim greater autonomy and voice regarding how finances were to be distributed within the family unit ensuring, for example, that children's education and health were prioritised. This emerges from Madiha's statement:

[...] as the family grew our expenses increased but my husband's wages were not increasing [...] I always wanted to have my own work and this was the best time to convince him to support me and I have never looked back.

Community organising: the need to find acceptable channels to generate income in the face of constrained opportunities motivated the women to reach outside of the family and local community to develop the embroidery market. So, for example, when 18-year-old Dalal who had never left the boundaries of the refugee camp on her own approached the United Nations Relief Work Agency in 1970:

[...] for support by displaying my products in the entrance of their headquarters where visitors could see and buy them, I became aware of how many young women were embroidering at home, like me [...] I had to find a solution. Through my display at UNRWA, I got a contract from a small business in central Amman, and with God's blessing, my business grew beyond my dreams so I employed the other women in the camp, and raised my five children.

As demand rose, Dalal organised her embroidering network to work more closely together to agree upon quality standards, price and product development.

The framework presented in Figure 1 proposes that home-based entrepreneuring occurs within the cyclical interplay between the contextualised entrepreneurial motivations discussed in this section and the processual cycle of empowerment (adapted from Longwe and Clarke, 1994). We propose that home-based entrepreneuring facilitates the empowerment process and enhances it.

2. *The empowerment cycle*

This component of the proposed empirically informed conceptual framework adopts Longwe and Clarke's (1994) empowerment cycle which encompasses the feminist

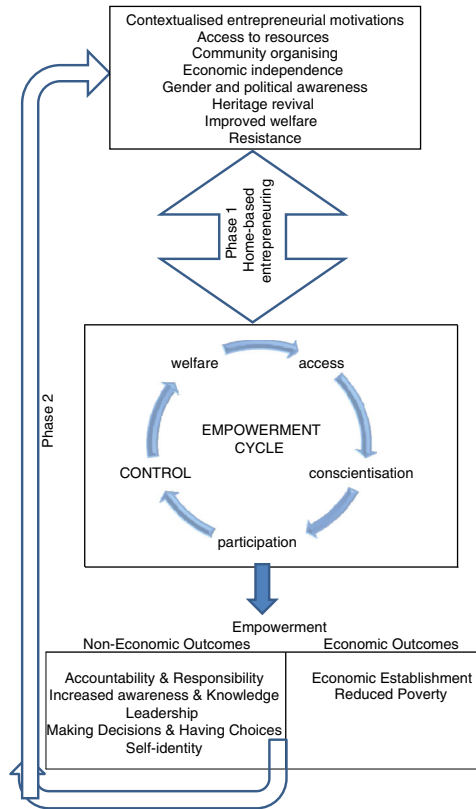


Figure 1.
The proposed framework:
women's contextualised
entrepreneurial
motivations, home-based
entrepreneuring and
empowerment

underpinnings of consciousness, identity and agency and maintains the fundamental notion of praxis since its five progressive stages are mutually reinforcing and interlinked. Freire (1973) claimed that praxis is fundamental to empowerment as reflection and action are inseparable. This claim is embedded in the argument of second wave feminists that the personal is political (Carr, 2003), and furthermore, that the political is personal (Robinson, 2007). To this extent, the empowerment approach can contribute to enhancing our theoretical understanding of entrepreneurship as a gendered, politically motivated process. Berglund and Johansson (2007) applied Freire's critical pedagogical perspective to entrepreneurship and regional development. Through this pioneering approach, they showed how the enterprise discourse suppressed an equality discourse, and highlighted the importance of "conscientisation" for men and women as a learning process focused on perceiving and exposing contradictions and taking action against the oppressive elements of reality. To a large extent, the empowerment cycle explains how this can be achieved.

The cycle is the foundation of the empirically informed conceptual framework proposed in this paper as it defines the parameters through which empowerment is defined in this paper. It comprises five interlinked stages: welfare, access, conscientisation, participation and control. Here, the welfare stage represents the actual unequal resources available to men and women; at the access stage, women realise the gender inequality embedded within welfare provision and take action

to improve their access to socio-economic resources. At the conscientisation stage, women become aware that their gendered unequal access to resources and general subordinate status are socially constructed principles. During participation, empowerment begins as women take action and participate in the decision-making processes within their households and communities to address and/or overcome the gender inequalities. Finally, women's increased participation is used to achieve increased control over access to resources and distribution of benefits, and to positively influence the gender inequalities that exist. At the control stage, the woman acquires a new role within her socio-political environment as she becomes a role model to others, reduces her poverty, contributes to community organising and gains some economic and social independence. The cyclical approach illustrates the process of women's empowerment whereby the pattern of development is continuous (Mosedale, 2005) and empowerment is not simply about achieving control, but, rather, utilising it to continually improve the welfare of themselves and others, whilst facilitating access to resources and so addressing marginalisation.

Drawing upon our sample, Longwe and Clarke's (1994) stages of the empowerment cycle were utilised through variable-oriented analysis to explore the participants' empowerment. All recognised the persistent socio-political inequalities between men and women within their displaced group, and the marginalisation of their overall displaced group. It was agreed that these factors certainly encouraged and motivated their home-based entrepreneuring. The majority of participants had progressed to at least the participation stage as the content analysis showed that their entrepreneuring activities had:

- *Created increased awareness concerning the heritage of their displaced group.* This is evident from Nihal's statement that "I'm very proud that my customers who are Arabs living in America or Canada buy traditionally embroidered items like cushion covers, coasters and bags to show the non-Arabs there and talk to them about the Palestinian heritage". Similarly, Iman stated "I have so many customers including foreign women living in Amman who come to buy my products and listen to the stories I tell them about this Palestinian art and the Palestinian people".
- *Motivated engagement with embroidery production as an economic activity.* The majority of participants agreed with Rawan's statement that "so many of my neighbours and relatives were encouraged to make and sell embroidered items after they saw me do it".
- *Contributed to a profitable and sustainable sector within the region's volatile environment.* This is evidenced by the sustainability and profitability of the sector as well as its embeddedness within Jordan's economy, especially in relation to the tourism sector. For example, following the Amman bombings in 2005, Firyal stated "one of my regular customers [a tourism operator] still orders about 2,000 embroidered coasters every year as gifts for his customers so the tourists must still be coming".
- *Elevated their individual social status within their immediate communities and sometimes, beyond them.* Rajha states "my husband and my family respect me and recognise me as the head of the household [...] they respect all my decisions especially my husband as he knows that, without my enterprise and management skills, we would be much worse off". From another angle, Um Ibrahim stated

“my clients come searching for me from all over the world because they read about me in the book Sheila Weir wrote about Palestinian embroidery”.

- *Contributed to the creation of outlets for non-violent forms of socio-political protest.* A significant number of participants engaged in legitimate awareness creating activities about the Palestinian intifada by making embroidered scarves marking the uprising and sold through local SMEs and NGOs to raise funds to support the victims during the period 2000-2004. Similarly, in 2009, the majority of participants created further traditionally embroidered products to be sold through the same SMEs and NGOs engaged in lawful fund raising activities to support the victims of the Israeli offensive on Gaza. Furthermore, when the overall sector chose to mourn the victims of the terrorist attacks on Amman in 2005 by closing their businesses for up to seven days, the displaced women entrepreneurs delivered a very clear message on the extent to which they are connected with the mainstream population and unsympathetic to the bombers.

This data show that the participants were within the participation stage of the empowerment cycle and that home-based entrepreneuring is a vehicle for facilitating and enhancing the empowerment process. The proposed framework in this paper presented in Figure 1 outlines several outcomes that are expected to result from the empowerment process.

3. *The empowerment outcomes*

This component of the framework adopts Al-Dajani's (2007) identified and potentially measurable empowerment indicators when articulated through entrepreneuring behaviours; increased awareness and knowledge, accountability and responsibility, making decisions and having choices, leadership, self-identity, reduced poverty and economic establishment. Each of these potentially measurable outcomes of women's empowerment have been acknowledged in the literature independently but considering them collectively, as the proposed framework does, has only been undertaken by Al-Dajani (2007) who stressed the importance of non-economic dimensions of women's empowerment. Through content analysis and the creation of analytic summary tables (Miles and Huberman, 1994) generated from data reduction from the transcripts into coded categories, we were able to analyse the relevance of these empowerment outcomes for each participant:

- *Increased awareness and knowledge:* this outcome begins at the welfare stage and is realised at the conscientisation stage whereby women acquire a motivation for social change through their increased awareness and knowledge gained through their experiences of gender inequality; Hana stated “first my father and brothers and now my husband, they all believe that – because I am a woman – I have to do as they say not as I think [...] all men here believe this but we, the women, know how to get round it”. Ultimately, without increased awareness and knowledge, no other empowerment outcomes can be achieved. To this extent, this outcome is fundamentally critical to the realisation of the empowerment cycle proposed in the empirically informed conceptual framework.
- *Accountability and responsibility:* this outcome commences at the conscientisation stage and is achieved at the control stage. Once the woman business owner gains a positive self-identity, her confidence to make decisions through available choices increases and she is more likely to be afforded leadership roles within her family and

immediate community. Laila explained, “I’m not only responsible for my children, my husband and my home, but also for all the women I subcontract to and their families [...] imagine what would happen to them if I didn’t give them work to do?” At this stage, her accountability and responsibility to social change begins.

- *Making decisions and having choices*: the ability to make a decision assumes the existence of choice. Within the empowerment cycle, this outcome commences when the woman business owner enters the conscientisation stage and continues until it is fulfilled within the participation stage. Through the empowerment cycle, women continually gain confidence to make decisions and, therefore, shape and potentially gain their independence from patriarchal authorities. An example of this is the women who operated their enterprises without their husbands’ knowledge. Suha, for example, stated “when he came home, which isn’t very often, he spent most of his time sleeping and showed very little interest in my embroidery [...] He didn’t ask, and I didn’t say”. Suha chose to ignore her husband and avoid a confrontation about her income generating work, and continued to pursue her home-based embroidering.
- *Leadership*: within the empowerment cycle this outcome can be realised at the participation and control stages. Here, women’s awareness and understanding of gender-specific roles and norms in patriarchal society motivates them to lead initiatives to address and/or challenge existing gender inequalities and patriarchal norms (Carr *et al.*, 1996). Kadija stated “if we don’t change things for ourselves, no one will change them for us [...] we have to lead this change so our daughters will have better opportunities than us”. Home-based and other enterprises can either be the initiative itself, or a vehicle for social change initiatives. Through the empowerment process, women’s leadership roles within their families and communities are strengthened and improved. However, as leaders within their communities, they also bear the responsibilities of being role models (Scase, 2000). Um Ibrahim explained that “so many of the women look up to me as a role model and say one day I want to be like you Um Ibrahim”.
- *Self-identity*: for empowered women, acting as role models for other women has positive effects on self-identity (Valodia, 2001). Throughout the empowerment cycle, self-identity is continuously challenged and reaffirmed as women adopt and forego various roles and labels. Within this study, Riham’s statement exemplifies this “to stay ahead of the game, I have to be very creative, it’s not enough to have good quality items, they have to be unique too – original, but also unique”. When asked how she achieved this, she stated “the original part is easy. We – the women who make the items are the original [...] we are experts at our culture, our art, our embroidery, our heritage. But, the difficulty is in keeping people interested in this [...] this is my responsibility, it’s not just about money, ask any embroiderer in this neighbourhood and I guarantee she’ll tell you it’s not about the money, it’s about who we are”.
- *Reduced poverty*: This is the only outcome that can be measured quantitatively by income levels and where the consequences are observed through financial savings, earnings and expenditures. There were many positive examples offered whereby the business income enabled the women to address material poverty by investing in improved housing, reducing debt and gaining better access to resources and commodities. Towards the end of the data collection period in

2009, Dalal explained that her two eldest children were in higher education. “Without my work we couldn’t afford to send them to university”.

- *Economic establishment*: this refers to establishing formalised and legally recognised enterprises beyond the boundaries of the home and the immediate community. Through positive role modelling, business support, peer mentoring and micro-financing, home-based women entrepreneurs may become sufficiently empowered to establish their own formalised and legally recognised enterprises. While this outcome may provide economic independence, it does not guarantee social change. Social change as an indicator of empowerment occurs when the woman invests her economic and non-economic resources achieved through entrepreneuring into combating the patriarchal norms that govern her society. This can be achieved through the empowerment process and its collective outcomes. Within the ten-year study period, none of the participants had achieved economic establishment as formalised and legally recognised enterprises beyond the boundaries of the home and the immediate community. For the majority, there was no question of such growth given the problems this would engender regarding the constraints under which they lived so they preferred to “maintain the manageability of the enterprise as it is now” (Juhaina). Over the course of the study, only eight women reported an aspiration for formal economic establishment; these were older women with at least 20 years experience in the sector which gave them additional confidence to assert their independence. Yet, although age and experience fuelled greater assertion it was accompanied by a new constraint such that they concurred with Samiha’s statement; “I’m getting older and more tired, I want to do less now, not more”.

Within the emergent empirically informed conceptual framework, we argue that, while increased awareness and knowledge are a critical outcome of the empowerment cycle, independently or collectively, the empowerment outcomes influence each other’s development. For example, reduced poverty can enhance women’s self-identity and leadership (Carr *et al.*, 1996), decision-making skills and the potential for economic establishment (Tomei, 2000). Similarly, increased awareness and knowledge clearly influence women’s accountability and responsibility, decision making and leadership potential. Furthermore, we also argue that, independently or collectively, these empowerment outcomes will, in turn, influence the individual woman’s entrepreneuring motivations which constituted the starting point of the proposed framework. In doing so, the cycle continues and spirals through the Phase 2 arrows on Figure 1.

Discussion: embedding women’s entrepreneuring within the proposed framework

Within the entrepreneurship literature, empowerment is not a visible component of thematic discussions addressing barriers and opportunities for women’s entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial character, intent or motivation (Al-Dajani and Marlow, 2010). However, there is growing evidence from the developing field of research on women’s micro-enterprise (Kantor, 2005; Mayoux, 2002; Odera-Wanga *et al.*, 2009) that a positive relationship exists between motivation, empowerment and entrepreneurship (Al-Dajani and Carter, 2010). The empirically informed conceptual framework discussed above illustrates this intersection specifically for displaced

women entrepreneurs operating in a patriarchal, developing economy context where gender inequalities persist.

Within the empirically informed conceptual framework, home-based entrepreneuring occurs within the cyclical interplay between the contextualised entrepreneurial motivations and the empowerment cycle (adapted from Longwe and Clarke, 1994). Within Figure 1, this is illustrated by the double-sided arrow labelled Phase 1: home-based entrepreneuring. The displaced women's motivations for home-based entrepreneuring influence the establishment and sustainability of their home-based enterprises which, in turn, act as a vehicle for driving empowerment. Thus, we propose that through home-based entrepreneuring, empowerment is enhanced to attain control that results in multiple empowerment outcomes which, in Phase 2, impact upon the displaced women entrepreneurs' motivations for further business venturing.

From the framework presented above, displaced women's entrepreneuring is intimately entwined with empowerment opportunities and, moreover, their business ventures provide a legitimate outlet for expressing, sharing and celebrating their heritage, identity and political power through traditional craft. The evidence illustrating the proposed empirically informed conceptual framework demonstrates how the motivations for establishing home-based entrepreneuring producing traditional embroidery reflected a complex matrix of causes. In addition to the economic imperative, the protection of a feminised traditional art that symbolised a lost heritage was deemed critical. Capitalising on their traditional social and cultural norms and skills, these displaced women created opportunities for themselves and others who shared their heritage and displacement within a restrictive and volatile host environment. These opportunities moved beyond the economic, as entrepreneuring enabled the women to enhance their denigrated status whilst contributing to household, community and political causes. Moreover, the nature of the business protected a feminised niche where men could not intrude or control the productive activity. Clearly, patriarchal norms and demands create separate spheres which deny women voice and visibility. Paradoxically, in this particular context, this designated feminised space had been utilised and exploited to enhance status and facilitate communal empowerment. However, this did not represent any overt challenge to formally embedded patriarchy.

Existing research addressing new venture development is often contextualised within stable rather than politically and economically volatile environments. While this may suggest that volatile environments are incompatible with new venture creation (Gelbuda *et al.*, 2008), our findings demonstrated an empowered entrepreneurial spirit that thrives on the volatility of the socio-political environment. This suggests that stable socio-political environments with their increased predictability and lack of chaos can be stifling to new venture creation (Hmieleski and Ensley, 2007). Given the volatile socio-political nature of the Middle East region, the survival and long-term sustainability of women-owned home-based enterprises can be unpredictable. However, while all participating enterprises were evidently sustainable in the long term, and expected to continue successfully after the global economic recession and the Arab Spring, all the participants agreed that their business grew or shrunk depending on the socio-political climate of the region. Within this region, a crisis in one area can lead to an opportunity in another.

Within-case analysis was undertaken to explore the contextual environment in which the participants operated. Results showed that, during and following the Israel – Lebanon war in 2006, not only did tourist numbers increase dramatically

in Jordan as a result of this war, but regional businesses who were engaged with Lebanese partners arrived in Amman looking for alternative partners specialising within the traditional embroidery sector. For the participants, this balanced the negative effects on their enterprises when tourism decreased dramatically and Jordan's socio-political stability was distorted following: the 9/11 New York bombings in 2001; the start of the war on Iraq in 2003; and the terrorist attacks on Amman in 2005. Thus, within an environment of volatility, patriarchy and denigrated status, entrepreneuring has enabled these particular women to defy socio-economic and political exclusion through empowering them to substantively challenge prevailing community disadvantage.

Yet, as noted above, whilst home-based enterprise did facilitate the empowerment process such that women were able to improve personal and communal welfare, act as role models and attribute higher status and value to their individual subject position, it did not represent a fundamental challenge to patriarchal ordering. For some women, enhanced respect and status was achieved whilst others still felt compelled to hide and deny their enterprising work. Regardless of denial or acknowledgement of enterprising activity, however, the patriarchal order remained largely in tact. Thus, entrepreneuring offered some potential for empowering displaced women but the scope for such remains embedded within particular situated environments and, as such, is not a panacea to challenge patriarchy or a solution to inherent subordination.

Conclusion

The fundamental stance informing the arguments within this paper rests upon and presumes that the prevailing entrepreneurial discourse is critically gendered (Marlow *et al.*, 2009). However, to develop and contribute to this theoretical assumption, it is essential to recognise and explore the intersection of entrepreneuring with diverse contextualised gendered performances. We undertake this task within this paper through the development of an empirically informed model which illustrates and evaluates the empowering potential that heritage-based entrepreneuring offers displaced Palestinian women. As such, following suggestions from Bansal and Corley (2011) we challenged the somewhat narrow assumptions underpinning the gendered/subordination discourse within the entrepreneurial field. By re-contextualising this debate within the environs of a marginalised community of women seeking to preserve a valued heritage whilst attempting to generate income and enhance their status, we contribute to developing analyses of the relationship between gender theory and entrepreneurship. As such, we acknowledge the imperative to move away from presumptions of gender as generic (Ashcraft, 2011) which essentially positions women in shared spaces and, instead, interrogate influences which reveal the complexity of gendered performances in differing entrepreneurial contexts.

The framework presented in this paper embedded displaced women's entrepreneuring within an empowerment and entrepreneurial motivations cycle to illustrate the role displaced women's entrepreneuring can play in creating social change. Women's role as agents and actors within this process was highlighted as critical in defining the empowerment process and context was crucial to understanding the implications of the framework. In these ways, this paper has responded to the calls for engaging a gender aware framework for women's entrepreneurship (Brush *et al.*, 2009) and to Ahl's (2006) suggestions for future research on women's entrepreneurship. Although the limitations of this research include a particular context, and the very specific non-representative sample of

women, we are confident that this paper makes a significant contribution in documenting the necessary processes for development goals to be realised, and highlights how the largely invisible women entrepreneurs contribute to social change in patriarchal cultures.

Our proposed framework also acts to illuminate the gender assumptions, and privileges, on which mainstream entrepreneurship theory and practice is premised in that it critiques the prevailing US- and Euro-centric bias when focusing upon an under-researched site of female subordination. Indeed, further research in this direction is necessary to strengthen and advance our understanding of marginalised women's entrepreneuring and empowerment, especially as women's entrepreneurial activity has been exploited in neo-liberal agendas to absolve governments of their responsibilities and transfer the onus to the individuals to find a solution for their marginalisation and poverty (Narain and Morse, 2008). Indeed, in presenting this analysis we are in danger of celebrating entrepreneurial activities as an idealised solution to poverty, marginalisation and subordination. This is not the intention; rather, we acknowledge that the prevailing era of post-modern individualism has informed an ideological stance which is in danger of informing narrowed ontological possibilities. As such, the management of the personal biography (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1991) through agentic activity, epitomised within the entrepreneuring agenda, is prioritised and emerges as a generic solution to all social ills (McRobbie, 2009). This shifts the emphasis from collective structural socio-political responsibility and resolution for what are, in effect, collective structural socio-political problems. Thus, our intention in this study has been to analyse and comment upon how marginalised women positioned within a context which denies them the spectrum of rights afforded to enfranchised human subjects can use the options available, such as entrepreneuring, to enhance their empowerment. We recognise that the ultimate responsibility for community development should be an iterative relationship between state and other welfare institutions and the individual to identify pathways away from desperate circumstances. To this extent, women's entrepreneurship presents a repertoire of options for community development and enhancement of resources, but it cannot be a full-scale solution to the alleviation of existing plights of displaced women entrepreneurs.

To enrich analyses of empowerment and women's entrepreneuring, three directions to future research in this area are recommended. First, to explore the empowerment – entrepreneuring relationship for displaced women entrepreneurs operating within diverse sectors in the economies of the Middle East. Second, to explore the impact of the current Arab Spring on this relationship. Finally, there is much scope to develop a critique of the current focus upon entrepreneuring as an idealised solution to poverty, marginalisation and subordination. Given that entrepreneurial opportunity and legitimacy is embedded within existing institutional norms, entrepreneuring can only ever be a partial solution to such problems; thus, theoretical critiques to reveal the chimera of alleged meritocratic entrepreneurial potential are required. Indeed, the theoretical and policy implications of such research at the local, national and international levels will contribute to an improved understanding of how women's entrepreneuring impacts their social, political and economic empowerment, and vice versa whereby not only is the personal political, but the political is also personal.

References

- Abbasian, S. and Bildt, C. (2009), "Empowerment through entrepreneurship – a tool for integration among immigrant women in Sweden?", *Journal of Entrepreneurship Development*, Vol. VI Nos 3/4, pp. 7-20.

- Abu-Lughod, L. (2009), "Dialects of women's empowerment: the international circuitry of the Arab human development report 2005", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 83-103.
- Ahl, H. (2004), *The Scientific Reproduction of Gender Inequality: A Discourse Analysis of Research Texts on Women's Entrepreneurship*, Liber, Stockholm.
- Ahl, H. (2006), "Why research on women entrepreneurs needs new directions", *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, Vol. 30 No. 5, pp. 595-621.
- Ahl, H. and Marlow, S. (2012), "Exploring the dynamics of gender, feminism and entrepreneurship: advancing debate to escape a dead end?", *Organization*, Vol. 19 No. 5, pp. 543-562.
- Akhter, R. and Ward, K. (2009), "Globalization and gender equality: a critical analysis of women's empowerment in the global economy", in Demos, V. and Texler Segal, M. (Eds), *Perceiving Gender Locally, Globally, and Intersectionally: Advances in Gender Research*, Vol. 13, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, London, pp. 141-173.
- Al-Budirate, A. (2009), "Jordanian experience in measuring employment in the informal sector", paper presented to the Global Forum on Gender Statistics, United Nations Statistics Organisation, Accra.
- Al-Dajani, H. (2007), "Women's empowerment: a comparison between non-profit and for-profit approaches in empowering home-based women producers", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.
- Al-Dajani, H. and Carter, S. (2010), "Women empowering women: how female entrepreneurs support home-based producers in Jordan", in Brush, C., De Bruin, A., Gatewood, E. and Henry, C. (Eds), *Women Entrepreneurs and the Global Environment for Growth: A Research Perspective*, Edward Elgar, Northampton, pp. 118-137.
- Al-Dajani, H. and Marlow, S. (2010), "The impact of women's home-based enterprise on marriage dynamics: evidence from Jordan", *International Small Business Journal*, Vol. 28 No. 5, pp. 470-487.
- Alvesson, M. (2003), "Beyond neopositivists, romantics, and localists: a reflexive approach to interviews in organizational research", *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 28 No. 1, pp. 13-33.
- Ashcraft, K.L. (2011), "Knowing work through the communication of difference: a revised agenda for difference studies", in Mumby, D.K. (Ed.), *Reframing Difference in Organizational Communication Studies: Research, Pedagogy, Practice*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 3-29.
- Bansal, P. and Corley, K. (2011), "The coming of age for qualitative research: embracing the diversity of qualitative methods", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 54 No. 2, pp. 233-237.
- Batliwala, S. (2007), "Taking the power out of empowerment – an experiential account", *Development in Practice*, Vol. 17 Nos 4-5, pp. 557-565.
- Beck, U. (1992), *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, Sage, London.
- Berglund, K. and Johansson, A.W. (2007), "Entrepreneurship, discourses and conscientization in processes of regional development", *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development: An International Journal*, Vol. 19 No. 6, pp. 499-525.
- Brewer, J. (2000), *Ethnography*, Open University Press, Buckingham.
- Brush, C., de Bruin, A. and Welter, F. (2009), "A gender-aware framework for women's entrepreneurship", *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 8-24.
- Buller, R.E. (2007), "Un/veiled: feminist art from the Arab/Muslim diaspora", *Al-Raida*, Vol. 24 Nos 116-117, pp. 16-20.
- Calās, M., Smircich, L. and Bourne, K.A. (2009), "Extending the boundaries: reframing 'Entrepreneurship as Social Change' through feminist perspectives", *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 34 No. 4, pp. 552-569.

- Carr, E. (2003), "Rethinking empowerment theory using a feminist lens: the importance of process", *AFFILIA*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 8-20.
- Carr, M., Chen, M. and Jhabvala, R. (1996), *Speaking Out: Women's Economic Empowerment in South Asia*, IT publications, London.
- Carter, S. and Weeks, J. (2002), "Gender and business ownership: international perspectives on entrepreneurial theory and practice", *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, Vol. 3 No. 2, pp. 81-82.
- Chifos, C. (2007), "The sustainable communities experiment in the United States: insights from three federal-level initiatives", *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, Vol. 26 No. 4, pp. 435-449.
- Cinar, M.E. (2001), "Introduction", in Cinar, M.E. (Ed.), *The Economics of Women and Work in the Middle East and North Africa*, Elsevier Science B.V., Amsterdam, pp. 1-11.
- Cornwall, A. and Anyidoho, N.A. (2010), "Introduction: women's empowerment: contentions and contestations", *Development*, Vol. 53 No. 2, pp. 144-149.
- de Bruin, A. and Mataira, P. (2003), "Indigenous entrepreneurship", in Dupuis, A. and de Bruin, A. (Eds), *Entrepreneurship: New Perspectives in a Global Age*, Ashgate, Aldershot, pp. 169-184.
- East, J. (2000), "Empowerment through welfare-rights organizing: a feminist perspective", *AFFILIA*, Vol. 15 No. 2, pp. 311-328.
- Elson, D. (1999), "Labor markets as gendered institutions: equality, efficiency and empowerment issues", *World Development*, Vol. 27 No. 3, pp. 611-627.
- Freire, P. (1973), *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Continuum, New York, NY.
- Gartner, W. (2010), "An entrepreneurial jeremiad", in Gartner, W. (Ed.), *Entrepreneurial Narrative Theory Ethnomethodology and Reflexivity*, Clemson University Digital Press, Clemson, SC, pp. 1-13.
- Gelbuda, M., Meyer, K.E. and Delios, A. (2008), "International business and institutional development in Central and Eastern Europe", *Journal of International Management*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 1-11.
- Giddens, A. (1991), *Modernity and Self Identity*, Polity, Cambridge.
- Gill, R. and Ganesh, S. (2007), "Empowerment, constraint, and the entrepreneurial self: a study of white women entrepreneurs", *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, Vol. 35 No. 3, pp. 268-293.
- GlenMaye, L. (1998), "Empowerment of women", in Gutierrez, L., Parsons, R. and Cox, E.O. (Eds), *Empowerment in Social Work Practice: A Sourcebook*, Brooks/Cole, Pacific Grove, CA, pp. 29-47.
- Golombisky, K. (2006), "Gendering the interview: feminist reflections on gender as performance in research", *Women's Studies in Communication*, Vol. 29 No. 2, pp. 165-192.
- Granovetter, M. (1985), "Economic action and social structure: the problem of embeddedness", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 91 No. 3, pp. 481-510.
- Gupta, M. and Sharma, P. (2011), "A study of factors enabling female entrepreneurs", *International Journal of Management Research*, Vol. 2 No. 1, pp. 71-79.
- Hmieleski, K. and Ensley, M.D. (2007), "A contextual examination of new venture performance: entrepreneur leadership behavior, top management team heterogeneity, and environmental dynamism", *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, Vol. 28 No. 7, pp. 865-889.
- Jabre, B., Underwood, C. and Goodsmith, L. (1997), *Arab Women Speak Out: Profiles of Self-Empowerment*, John Hopkins Centre for Communication Programs, Baltimore.
- Jena, P.K. (2007), "Orissan handicrafts in the age of globalization: challenges and opportunities", *Orissa Review*, Vol. LXIV No. 4, pp. 19-25.

- Kabeer, N. (2005), "Gender equality and women's empowerment: a critical analysis of the third millennium development goals", *Gender and Development*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp. 13-24.
- Kantor, P. (2003), "Women's empowerment through home-based work: evidence from India", *Development and Change*, Vol. 34 No. 3, pp. 425-445.
- Kantor, P. (2005), "Determinants of women's microenterprise success in Ahmedabad, India: empowerment and economics", *Feminist Economics*, Vol. 11 No. 3, pp. 63-83.
- Katungi, E., Edmeades, S. and Smale, M. (2008), "Gender, social capital and information exchange in rural Uganda", *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 35-52.
- Kontos, M. (2004), "Considerations on the biographical embeddedness of ethnic entrepreneurship", in Apitzsch, U., Bornat, J. and Chamberlayne, P. (Eds), *Biographical Methods and Professional Practice. An International Perspective*, The Policy Press, Bristol, pp. 57-73.
- Longwe, S. and Clarke, R. (1994), "Women in development, culture and youth", Workshop Preparatory Readings, 1-3 April-December, Longwe Clarke Associates, Lusaka.
- McRobbie, A. (2009), *The Aftermath of Feminism*, Sage, London.
- Malhotra, A., Schuler, S.R. and Boender, C. (2002), "Measuring women's empowerment as a variable in international development", background paper prepared for the World Bank Workshop on Poverty and Gender: New Perspectives.
- Marlow, S., Henry, C. and Carter, S. (2009), "Exploring the impact of gender upon women's business ownership", *International Small Business Journal*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 139-148.
- Mayoux, L. (2002), "Women's empowerment and microfinance: a concept paper for the microfinance field", paper presented to the Microcredit Summit + 5, UNIFEM, New York, NY.
- Mehra, R. (1997), "Women, empowerment, and economic development", *The Annals of the Academy*, Vol. 554, pp. 136-149.
- Metcalfe, B. (2008), "Women, management and globalization in the Middle East", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 83 No. 1, pp. 85-100.
- Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Sage, London.
- Mosedale, S. (2005), "Assessing women's empowerment: towards a conceptual framework", *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 17 No. 2, pp. 243-257.
- Narain, S. and Morse, J. (2008), *Gender, Social Capital and the Development Discourse: A Critical Perspective*, Thinking Gender Papers, UCLA Centre for the Study of Women, University of California, Los Angeles, CA.
- Narayan, D., Patel, R., Schafft, K., Rademacher, A. and Koch-Schulte, S. (2000), *Voices of the Poor: Can Anyone Hear Us? World Bank Series*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Nwanesi, P.K. (2006), "Empowerment: a case study of market and rural women in Southern Nigeria", doctoral thesis, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.
- Odero-Wanga, D., Milcah Mulu-Mutuku, M. and Ali-Olubandwa, A. (2009), "Value added milk products: constraints to women in milk micro enterprises in Kenya", *Journal of Development and Agricultural Economics*, Vol. 1 No. 7, pp. 144-149.
- QSR (2008), "Frequently asked questions", available at: www.qsrinternational.com/support_faqs_detail.aspx?view=358 (accessed 13 September 2009).
- Ramussen, S. (2005), "Tuareg diaspora", in Ember, M., Ember, C. and Skoggard, I. (Eds), *Encyclopedia of Diasporas*, Springer US, Los Angeles, CA, pp. 309-318.
- Rindova, V., Barry, D. and Ketchen, D. (2009), "Entrepreneurship as emancipation", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 34 No. 3, pp. 477-491.
- Robinson, N. (2007), "The political is personal: corruption, clientelism, patronage, informal practices and the dynamics of post-communism", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 59 No. 7, pp. 1217-1224.

- Sadi, M. and Al-Ghazali, B. (2010), "Doing business with impudence: a focus on women's entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia", *African Journal of Business Management*, Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 1-11.
- Sarasvathy, S., Dew, N., Velamuri, S. and Venkataraman, S. (2003), "Three views of entrepreneurial opportunity", in Acs, Z. and Autretsch, D. (Eds), *Handbook of Entrepreneurial Research*, Kluwer Academic, Boston, MA, pp. 141-116.
- Sardenberg, C. (2008), "Liberal vs liberating empowerment: a Latin American feminist perspective on conceptualising women's empowerment", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol. 39 No. 6, pp. 18-27.
- Scase, R. (2000), "The enterprise culture: the socio-economic context of small firms", in Carter, S. and Evans-Jones, D. (Eds), *Enterprise and Small Business: Principles, Practice and Policy*, Prentice Hall, Harlow, pp. 32-47.
- Shane, S. and Venkataraman, S. (2000), "The promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 217-226.
- Shane, S., Locke, E. and Collins, C. (2003), "Entrepreneurial motivation", *Human Resource Management Review*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 257-279.
- Sholkamy, H. (2010), "Power, politics and development in the Arab context: or how can rearing chicks change patriarchy?", *Development*, Vol. 53 No. 2, pp. 254-258.
- Steyaert, C. and Katz, J. (2004), "Reclaiming the space of entrepreneurship in society: geographical, discursive and social dimensions", *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 179-196.
- Tomei, M. (2000), "Home work in selected Latin American countries: a comparative view, I", Working Paper No. 1, Job Creation and Enterprise Department – IFP/SED, ILO, Geneva.
- Townsend, J. (1999), "Empowerment matters: understanding power", in Townsend, J., Zapata, E., Rowlands, J., Alberti, P. and Mercado, M. (Eds), *Women and Power*, Zed Books, London, pp. 19-36.
- Trettin, L. and Welter, F. (2011), "Challenges for spatially oriented entrepreneurship research", *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, Vol. 23 Nos 7-8, pp. 575-602.
- Tzanntos, Z. and Kaur, I. (2003), "Women in the MENA labour market", in Doumato, E.A. and Posusney, M.P. (Eds), *Women and Globalization in the Arab Middle East*, Lynne Reiner Publishers, Boulder, CO, pp. 79-99.
- Vallianatos, H. and Raine, K. (2007), "Reproducing home: Arab women's experiences of Canada", *Al-Raida*, Vol. 24 Nos 116-117, pp. 35-51.
- Valodia, I. (2001), "Economic policy and women's informal work in South Africa", *Development and Change*, Vol. 32 No. 5, pp. 871-892.
- Watson, T. (2011), "Ethnography, reality and truth: the vital need for studies of 'how things work' in organizations and management", *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 48 No. 1, pp. 202-217.
- Weeks, J. (2009), "Women business owners in the Middle East and North Africa: a five-country research study", *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 77-85.
- Welter, F. (2011), "Contextualising entrepreneurship – conceptual challenges and ways forward", *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, Vol. 35 No. 1, pp. 165-184.
- Wieringa, S. (1994), "Women's interests and empowerment: gender planning reconsidered", *Development and Change*, Vol. 25 No. 4, pp. 829-848.
- World Bank (2010), *World Development Indicators 2010*, World Bank Group, Washington, DC.

About the authors

Haya Al-Dajani is Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management at the Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia. Her research is predominantly focused on female entrepreneurship and empowerment. She is the Chair of the Women, Research and Enterprise

IJEBR
19,5

Forum and member of the Women's Organisation Expert Panel. She is also a member of the Editorial Advisory Boards of the *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* and the *Journal of Family Business Management*. Haya Al-Dajani is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: h.dajani@uea.ac.uk

524

Susan Marlow is Professor of Entrepreneurship at the University of Birmingham and a visiting professor at the University of Leeds. Her current research interests focus upon feminist analyses of entrepreneuring, business closure and failure and managing labour in small firms. She is holder of the Queens Award for Enterprise, Editor of the *International Small Business Journal*, VP for Research at the Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship and Editorial Board member of *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*.