

## Female Social Entrepreneurship: Challenging boundaries and reframing gender and economic structures

Gerlach, Miriam

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Miriam Gerlach

# Female Social Entrepreneurship

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Challenging boundaries and reframing  
gender and economic structures

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edited by Corinna Onnen and  
Susanne Rode-Breymann

Miriam Gerlach  
Female Social Entrepreneurship

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Miriam Gerlach

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‘Your dreams in life will have deeper meaning when they are tied to the greater good’ Tererai Trent

## Abstract

The confluence of entrepreneurship, gender, sustainability and especially, the social dimension, is intricate and underestimated. Therefore, attending to the call for more research in this field, the main goal of this study is to portray female social entrepreneurs and their political, social, and economic contexts in Germany. Focus is set on describing their perspectives, analysing the gendered profile of German social entrepreneurs as distinctive and contextually influenced; as well as on analysing the social entrepreneurship ecosystem through a gender lens, assessing structural limitations and individual agency. To achieve this, it proposes a descriptive and a cross-sectional qualitative research design. Explicitly a conceptual and theoretical frame was developed based on a social constructionist and post-structuralist epistemological approach. Moreover, a secondary analysis of female social entrepreneurship in Germany was undertaken. Finally, 25 in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with social entrepreneurs and experts. Qualitative content analysis and descriptive statistical analysis were applied. Key results include, among others, an integrative frame for the analysis of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem, insights into social entrepreneur's personal paths, as well as their enterprises purposes and management practices, ideas to promote the sector and discussions around its potential. Additionally, practices of doing gender were described, showing that a diverse spectrum of discourses on gender is being utilized. Through the secondary analysis mainly political and economic policies and the forms and contents of initiatives that support and promote social enterprises were illustrated. Finally, recommendations for the field and future research were suggested. The study shows that this sector entails potential to re-do gender and reframe the economy, challenging norms, and borders towards systemic change.

Key words: Social Entrepreneurship; Feminism; Female; Gender; Germany



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# 1 Introduction

Many social changes are encouraging more and more women to create businesses as it provides economic opportunity for disadvantaged groups, low-wage earners and minorities (Halladay Coughlin & Thomas, 2002). Women-owned businesses are one of the fastest growing entrepreneurial populations in the world, making a valuable contribution to innovation, employment, and wealth creation. Contemporary political and socio-economic discourse provide an important space to entrepreneurship with a focus on individuality, self-efficacy, and personal achievement, suggesting it as a solution to a diverse range of global challenges (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). However, female entrepreneurs are understudied (Brush, Bruin, & Welter, 2009), although understanding deeply female entrepreneurship and the experiences and frameworks of it allows to help women and girls become independent and successful entrepreneurs, contributing to the economic growth and diversification, innovation and most important, to shape a more equal and sustainable society (Halladay Coughlin & Thomas, 2002).

One way of achieving this locates in the intersection between social mission and business activity. Social entrepreneurship has been unfolding as a space for growth and innovation, aiming at large and positive social impact being economically sustainable and viable. This type of organization has an enormous potential to help society develop towards an economy where social and economic progress are more positively and closely connected (Huysentruyt, 2014). Moreover, with regards to its intersection with gender, on average, women seem to favour social goals over economic goals (Hechavarria et al., 2017), social entrepreneurship provides a more egalitarian environment for women (Temple, 2017), and there is a firm stream of gender scholarship. However, there are only few reports of social entrepreneurship and gender. Additionally, entrepreneurship has still a male label. Globally, more men than women are entrepreneurs (Gawell & Sundin, 2014), and male social entrepreneurs are positioned as hyper-masculine heroes while women social entrepreneurs are supposed to contribute because of, and in addition to, the responsibilities of their domestic domains (McAdam, 2013). Therefore, this research inquires in a little discussed field, analysing gender, and social entrepreneurship in Germany and specially the potential of combining social businesses with feminist approaches to transform the entrepreneurial system.

This study includes a theoretical frame stressing the definition of social entrepreneurship and the intersections of gender and social entrepreneurship, concluding with the discussion of the epistemological and methodological frame, the description of the research design and methods. Finally, I present the results and analysis, as well as final conclusions and recommendations.

## 2 General Literature Overview on Social Entrepreneurship

### 2.1 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has been a topic of economic, political, and social importance throughout the years. It is known as an employment feature of times of pre-industrial revolution that has been growing and changing ever since (Kariv, 2011). Entrepreneurs are portrayed as the heroes of today's market, so that the global economy embraces them as the most significant force of economic development (Frederick, O'Connor, & Kuratko, 2018), and the predominant form of business organization. The OECD (2016) states that in all countries, between 70% and 95% of all firms are micro-enterprises<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, start-ups<sup>2</sup> with employees, represent between 20% and 35% of all employing firms in the OECD area.

'In most countries, entrepreneurship is emerging as the major factor paving the way of economic development, by having a synergistic impact through job creation, innovation, helping to increase female, ethnic and minority participation in the workforce and alleviating local poverty in inner cities and suburban areas' (Kariv, 2011, p. 2).

The entrance of new enterprises in a market influences the processes of growth and renovation of the economy, invigorating the competition, creating employment, causing the exit or adaptation of enterprises, and promoting structural change and economic growth (Pott & Pott, 2012). Moreover, its study and practice are a way for achieving greater social justice and fairness and as such, striving for social beneficial and sustainable outcomes that lead to human flourishing. In this way, the perceived divide between society and economy is artificial, as they are inseparable. The economy is an invention of society, so that it can and should be reinvented to guarantee the two are compatible (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015). This makes addressing social issues through entrepreneurship a natural fit (Kickul & Lyons, 2016). One alternative to achieve this is through social entrepreneurship. Thus, next, I present the definition of entrepreneurship as a foundation for the following conceptualization of social entrepreneurship.

1 Micro-enterprises have less than ten employees

2 Start-ups are up to two years old

### 2.1.1 *Origin and Definition of Entrepreneurship*

Widespread conceptions of entrepreneurship have evolved over time and these different understandings reflect its history; a history that does not propose a coherent and clear theoretical framework (Ricketts, 2008). However, the description of the origin and brief history of the concept of entrepreneurship and the progress of the different approaches follow next.

Anthropology studies have shown that entrepreneurial wealth creation has existed for millennia, such as the Phoenicia in the 11<sup>th</sup> century BCE, a nation of merchants and traders. Whereas in Muslim communities, trade and commerce were allowed and compensated, in Europe in the Middle Ages wealth and power came from military conquest. Moving from a feudal economy to nascent capitalism, merchant entrepreneurs became major players in European politics (Frederick et al., 2018). ‘The whole enterprise may have been statist at heart, but it relied on people to develop overseas markets, to build great trading companies, to strengthen domestic industry and to generate a large tax base’ (Ricketts, 2008, p. 36).

The term entrepreneur comes from the French verb ‘entreprendre’ which means ‘to begin, tackle, undertake’. The word appeared for the first time in the 1437 in the *Dictionnaire de la langue française*, commonly meaning ‘celui qui entreprend quelque chose’, referring to a person who is active and achieves something. Many French authors referred to this term during the medieval period, often in connection with war-like activities or with someone who is tough and willing to risk his life and fortune (Blundel, Lockett, & Wang, 2018; Landström, 2005). The first official use of the concept was in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, by a Parisian banker and economist, Richard Cantillon (1680-1734) who introduced the term entrepreneur with his ‘*Essai sur la Nature du Commerce en general*’ and presented his first definition of entrepreneurship as self-employment of any kind taking a financial risk (Blundel et al., 2018). It was however the agricultural and industrial revolutions of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries that finally produced the modern multi-faceted image of the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship represented in the 19<sup>th</sup> century a new social phenomenon, which derived in the idea of the heroic entrepreneur. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the entrepreneurship trend initially decreased as large-scale corporations started establishing their business more managerial than entrepreneurial. Later in the century, some industries, like computer technology, re-established entrepreneurship (Ricketts, 2008).

One of the economists mostly referred to in entrepreneurship literature is Joseph Alois Schumpeter (1883 – 1950), who was the first to emphasise the role of innovation in entrepreneurship (Kariv, 2011), and who embossed the term ‘creative destruction’, assuring that capitalism is a form of continuous economic change, where new substitute old, through processes of creative destruction (De, 2005). Throughout history many other economists and theorists



have been developing the understanding of entrepreneurship. In general, these tend to be grouped into three main streams of research, which include a focus on the results of entrepreneurship, the causes of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial management (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006). Methodological and theoretical disagreements are still current, and a general theory of entrepreneurship is not officially available (Ricketts, 2008), as entrepreneurship is studied from broad disciplinary perspectives, such as psychology, sociology and anthropology, economics, historical studies, and political science (Blundel et al., 2018). The phenomenon has been studied focussing on a macro level (social, cultural, financial, displacement and ecological aspects) or on a micro level (traits, venture opportunity and strategic planning aspects) (Frederick et al., 2018).

Entrepreneurship is associated nowadays with many different qualities and it is until now not clearly defined (Frederick et al., 2018). Thus, the OECD-Eurostat Entrepreneurship Indicators Programme (EIP) defines entrepreneurship as the

‘phenomenon associated with entrepreneurial activity, which is the enterprising human action in pursuit of the generation of value, through the creation or expansion of economic activity, by identifying and exploiting new products, processes or markets. In this sense, entrepreneurship is a phenomenon that manifests itself throughout the economy and in many different forms with many different outcomes, not always related to the creation of financial wealth’ (OECD, 2016, p. 12).

A general and broad definition, that includes the recognition of opportunities, as well as their translation into marketable ideas and value creation, assuming risk and implementation, underlining innovation, comes from Frederick et al. (2018, p. 8):

‘An entrepreneur today is considered to be a social or business innovator who recognises and seizes opportunities; converts those opportunities into marketable ideas, adds value through time, effort, money or skills; assumes the risks of the competitive marketplace to implement these ideas; and realises the rewards from those efforts’.

Therefore, as a summarized way of defining entrepreneurship for the present dissertation, the concept is understood as: ‘an undertaking, embedded in a social, cultural, economic and political context, where an individual or team discover and evaluate opportunities or their own visions and ideas and bring them into reality by creating something innovative, generating economic and social value’.

This definition underlines that the phenomenon of entrepreneurship occurs within a certain context, influencing and being influenced by it. It includes an undertaking, which means taking concrete action, referring to the agency of the individual or the team. This undertaking comprises discovering and therefore identifying, evaluating, and bringing into reality opportunities or the own visions and ideas. Bringing them to reality comprehends creating something

new or innovative or it can also comprise improving the reality by changing it. Finally, this undertaking creates and generates value, economic and social. This occurs through setting up a business, organization, institution, or improving processes and services, policies and so on, which can manifest in different forms and in varied outcomes.

However, it is important to mention, as Ahl (2004) points out, that framed within an epistemological setting as proposed by this study (discussed further), a universal definition or an essence of what constitutes an entrepreneur is not an aim of this research, moreover concepts like entrepreneurship, as being socially constructed, can only be analysed through the way they have been constructed, which includes the development and historical embedment of the definitions of entrepreneurship and of the entrepreneur.

### *2.1.2 Profile of the Entrepreneur*

Many researchers attempted to discover common personality traits and attitudes from entrepreneurs, as well as conducting many meta-analytic studies on this relationship (Frese & Gielnik, 2014). However, it is now well established that psychological traits cannot confirm entrepreneurial behaviour. The results are usually contradicting. It is probably impossible to determine just one type of person with a high probability to become an entrepreneur. Likewise, not only the individual characteristics play a role, but also the social, political, and cultural characteristics. Furthermore, many of the individual characteristics are very difficult to measure and define. Common findings allow in that way only a broad delimitation of the attitudes and characteristics related to entrepreneurs. However, the empirical analysis of the ‘entrepreneurial personality’ continues to proliferate and branch into new directions (Blundel et al., 2018; De, 2005; S. C. Parker, 2018). The most important traits discussed in these studies are innovation and creativity, achievement motivation, general self-efficacy, willingness to take risk, courage, determination and readiness for action, goal-directed action or proactivity, control and organization, internal locus of control, imagination, vision, intuition and social competencies such as empathy, proactivity, emotional stability, team spirit and stress-tolerance (De, 2005; Frese & Gielnik, 2014; Jain, 2011; Pott & Pott, 2012; Rauch & Frese, 2007). Age and education are also seen as influential on increasing the probability to become an entrepreneur. The highest prevalence of entrepreneurial activity is among the 25- and 44-year olds (Acs, Szerb, Autio, & Lloyd, 2017). Moreover, most of the entrepreneurs in Germany are university graduates (Sternberg, Vorderwülbecke, & Brixy, 2014). A detailed overview and discussion of these can be found for example on Blundel et al. (2018).

Studies have shown that the heterogeneity of entrepreneurs (in age, gender, preparation, visions, etc.) is their most important characteristic. Nevertheless,

it is known that all have a common motivation which is the wish to develop themselves into their own venture. Entrepreneurship realises different motivations and needs related to the preferred career and way of life (Kariv, 2011). The GEM (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2016) has measured motivations categorized in opportunity-driven, necessity-driven or improvement-driven motivations and shows that globally the highest motivation has to do with opportunity-driven reasons, followed by improvement-driven reasons and at the end by necessity-driven reasons<sup>3</sup>. In these studies, gender is used as a variable, and here it was found that making more money motivates men more than women to create a business, while pursuing an interest or hobby is a stronger motivator for women (OECD, 2018).

In Germany, the most important motivations for setting-up an enterprise are getting involved in an entrepreneurial activity, to have an additional source of income, to do justice to the own qualifications, to bring change into the day-to-day and to realize a dream (Metzger, 2016). In general, global tendencies are reflected as well in Germany. The most part (49%) are opportunity-driven, followed by a 37% of improvement-driven and a 14% of necessity-driven motivations (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2016).

### *2.1.3 Context and Entrepreneurship*

As previously discussed, entrepreneurship is a phenomenon that is influenced by the individuals who start a venture and the context in which they do it. Entrepreneurship should be therefore examined through a multi-level approach, making connections between individual, organizational and social levels, involving the economic and financial situation, as well as the governmental, legal, social, and cultural systems (Blundel et al., 2018).

It is known that the level of entrepreneurial activity differs across countries; which is linked with variations in the stage of economic development, demographic (e.g., age distribution and immigration), cultural (e.g., entrepreneurial values, beliefs and expectations about work and career) and institutional (e.g., fiscal systems, infrastructure, education) structures (Freitag & Thurik, 2010; Urban, 2007). Culture is represented as a mediator of the relationship between contextual factors and entrepreneurial outcomes, transforming and complementing the institutional and economic contexts that influence entrepreneurship (Hayton, George, & Zahra, 2002). Cultural values also impact the perception of each individual in their formation

3 Necessity-driven - Percentage of TEA of the adult population aged 18-64 years old who have started a business out of necessity because they have no other option. Opportunity-driven - Percentage of TEA of the adult population aged 18-64 years old who have started a business out of an opportunity. A portion of these seek to improve their situation, either through increased independence or through increased income (versus maintaining their income).

of cognitive schemes, interpretation models and judgement criteria, which shape subsequently the behaviours and therefore entrepreneurial activity (Urban, 2007).

There are some theoretical frames that explain entrepreneurial frequency. The first frame states that if psychological traits are aggregated the more people with entrepreneurial values are in a country, the more people will behave entrepreneurially. Another frame focuses on the fact that the orientation of a culture, whether materialistic or non-materialistic, influences entrepreneurship. A society which is post-materialist<sup>4</sup> is more likely to be less entrepreneurial. A third frame focuses on social legitimation of entrepreneurship and therefore on the impact of social norms and institutions. Finally, the dissatisfaction perspective argues that a clash of values between groups may motivate future entrepreneurs into self-employment (Thurik & Dejardin, 2010). Other researchers study the relation of culture and entrepreneurship utilizing the dimensions of Hofstede (op. 2001), which include power/distance, uncertainty/avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity (Urban, 2007). A study by Urbano & Alvarez (2014) found that institutional dimensions influence the possibility of involvement in entrepreneurship; showing that favourable regulative dimensions (fewer procedures to start a business), normative dimensions (higher media attention for new business) and cultural-cognitive dimensions (better entrepreneurial skills, less fear of business failure and better knowing of entrepreneurs) increase the likelihood of being an entrepreneur. Other external factors that influence positively entrepreneurship are financial markets that provide access to financial resources, government policies that favour the establishment and operation of new ventures (e.g., favourable tax policies) and when markets for specific new products and services grow rapidly (Baron, 2012).

As stated, the cultural and shared beliefs of groups and societies influence greatly the way the social and political structures will be built and at the same time the individual beliefs and values. Therefore, understanding the social image or public perception of the entrepreneur and the existing social image of entrepreneurship is vital. One specific example is how language influences this social perception. The German language uses four terms to define 'entrepreneurship' which symbolize different aspects of it and thus represent the various social roles that exist for this concept. First, the self-employed (Selbstständige) is a retailer, service provider or craftsman, usually owning a small business and earning little income; the businessman/woman (Unternehmer/in), who is linked with active leadership, employers, and a producing business; the freelancer (Freiberufler) who is like the self-employed but has usually a profession and finally the entrepreneur is linked with young innovative founders (De, 2005).

4 Strong post-materialistic cultures value humanism, quality of life, peace, human rights, and the environment.

The relationship between entrepreneurship and culture and environment is reciprocal, thus it is also important to mention the ways entrepreneurship influences and contributes to society or a community (Blundel et al., 2018). Entrepreneurship and mostly the creation of business fulfil the economic functions of innovation, growth, employment creation and renewal of the business demography (De, 2005). For Fritsch (2016) there are direct (job creation) and indirect (substitution of established companies by new successful ones) effects of entrepreneurship. However, it is also a way for people to ascend socially. It was already Schumpeter who stated that it was not the rich and well established but the ‘social outcasts’ who performed as dynamic entrepreneurs (immigrants, women, LGBTQ\* community, those who were informally educated, etc.). Entrepreneurship allows people to unfold their own talents independent from formal qualifications and regular career paths and in that way, being able to sustain them commercially. Therefore, it contributes to a society allowing that the available skills and potentials are exploited in an optimal way (Kariv, 2011).

Before ending this chapter, it is relevant to note that the characteristics of the Global North countries represent overall trends but may not hold for every country on every dimension (Urban, 2007) and for every population. There is a wide range of studies in the Global Souths, covering issues like culture and values, the post-colonial period, institutional barriers, governance and policy, education, foreign investment, infrastructure, and many others related to entrepreneurship (Acs & Virgill, 2010). These studies contribute to a better understanding of global entrepreneurship. Moreover, although there are more than 500 million indigenous people in the world, most research in entrepreneurship is focused on non-indigenous entrepreneurs. Indigenous entrepreneurs are mainly motivated by self-determination and heritage preservation; their entrepreneurial strategies are created and supervised by the whole community and allowed by their culture. Business opportunities from them take into consideration economic and non-economic objectives; and within these non-economic objectives, there are significant cultural pressures that are placed on them (Lindsay, 2005).

Finally, there is still a call to pay greater attention in future research on theory building which encompasses the interaction of contextual, cognitive, and behavioural variables of entrepreneurship, since research has been either focused on one or the other variable, but few have tried to include them all (Blundel et al., 2018; Urban, 2007).

- 5 When referring to the ‘Global South’ the definition by Santos (2016) is used, meaning the Global South as a large set of creations and individuals, suffering under capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy. On the other side is the Global North, a political, not geographical, location, increasingly more specialized in the trans-nationalization of these systems. Thus, the Global South is understood as a sociological category instead of a geographical concept and refers to set of knowledges and ways of living and producing meaning that are usually seen as residual or backward (Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019).

In the last ten years, the field of entrepreneurship has expanded greatly. Currently, there is a need to ‘break the idea that there is ‘one’ entrepreneurship, and instead accepting that there are ‘many entrepreneurships’ in terms of focus, definitions, scope and paradigms’ (Steyaert & Hjorth, 2003, p. 5). One of these ‘entrepreneurships’ is social entrepreneurship. In the next section I describe and discuss this concept.

## **2.2 Social Entrepreneurship**

Social entrepreneurship has now become firmly rooted in the popular language and has been researched and discussed largely in the academic field with a multiplicity of publications, MBA courses and academic research centres. Social entrepreneurship is a contact point between entrepreneurship, innovation, and social change (Perrini & Vurro, 2006). Already Schumpeter’s definition of entrepreneurship involved its relationship to the various forms of economic and social change (Swedberg, 2007).

The concept of social entrepreneurship is increasingly described as a very wide spectrum of initiatives or practices, even though there is no clear agreement on what kinds of organizations and practices might be at the ends of this spectrum (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). Indeed, Swedberg (2007) notes that the current literature on the topic offers more inspiring examples and anecdotes than theoretical insights and analysis. A deep understanding of what social entrepreneurship can be is not only significant in the academic field but it is also needed to avoid simplifying social challenges (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). There have been various perspectives through which researchers have analysed social entrepreneurship. Some included the research of the social entrepreneur, motivations, features, and personalities. Others concentrated on the organization of social entrepreneurship, analysing the governance structures, the stakeholder’s involvements, financing strategies and so on. Finally, other researchers have focused on the phenomenon of social entrepreneurship, its impact towards social change, its embedding in social structures or political systems. Nevertheless, an integrated and complete understanding of social entrepreneurship includes all of these different perspectives and more (Spiess-Knafl, Schües, Richter, Scheuerle, & Schmitz, 2013).

In the present chapter I discuss the conceptualization of social entrepreneurship, its origin and definition, its diverse forms and relations with culture and context, the challenges, and contributions of the field.

### 2.2.1 *Origin and Definition of Social Entrepreneurship*

Although the research on social entrepreneurship has recently become popular, it is not a new phenomenon (Zeiss Stange, Oyster, & Sloan, 2013). Even if they were not labelled as such, several authors discuss the history of social entrepreneurial activities and refer, for example, to the development of cooperatives in the mid-1800s and settlement houses in the late 1800s (Casey, 2013), some of these activities were either named ‘community development’ or those in ‘social purpose organizations’ (Tan, Williams, & Tan, 2005). For Zeiss Stange et. al. (2013) the idea of social entrepreneurship initiated in France in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when people started reacting to the uncontrolled capitalism. In Germany, social entrepreneurs emerged within a highly developed, highly regulated welfare state. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century many private charity organizations and social service institutions financed by donations and membership fees were established, developing into a system of five welfare associations (*Wohlfahrtsverbände*), which were granted privileged legal status and public funding. Simultaneously, local institutions were initiated to take care of those in need. Thus, a culture of cooperation between public and private welfare provision developed at the community level and is still valid today. The principle of subsidiarity in Germany was incorporated in the late 1960s into the country’s social law, guaranteeing the Free Welfare Associations a privileged position within the growing market of social and health service supply by granting them privileged public funding and protecting them against competition. Moreover, the alternative, women’s and environmental movement in the 1960s and 1970s gave important impulses for the establishment of social enterprises (Zimmer & Bräuer, 2014). At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were already some examples of social entrepreneurships, like the ‘SOS Kinderdörfer’ (established by Hermann Gmeiner), the cooperative movement started by Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen, a pioneer in microcredits financing (Schwarz, 2014) and Kolpingwerk (an international catholic social union, founded by Adolf Kolping) (Scheuerle, Glänzel, Knust, & Then, 2013). In the United States, the first modern social entrepreneurs started appearing by the 19<sup>th</sup> century (e.g., the anti-slavery leagues, Florence Nightingale and John Muir (Blundel et al., 2018)). However, these were isolated cases, and it was not until 1980 that the social area made a structural jump to a new global entrepreneurial competitive ground (Drayton, 2006).

Thus, Defourny & Borzaga (2001a) recount that the emergence of the first social enterprises at the end of the 1970s coincided with the decrease of economic growth rates and the increase of unemployment, causing a crisis in the European welfare systems. First, the crisis generated an increase in the public deficits, so that many countries reformed the employment subsidies and blocked the growth of social services. Afterwards, policy makers decentralized

power to local authorities and introduced prices by privatizing some services and shifted from passive to active labour and employment policies. This allowed an improved acceptance of civil society's initiatives, making their public funding more viable. Additionally, the failures of the traditional labour policies promoted the development of many social enterprises in work integration. This led to a trend to promote managerial and business-like approaches to the governance of non-profit and welfare organizations, implementing techniques for managing processes, new funding strategies, measuring and communicating outcomes during the last decades. The idea was that the instruments that were creating economic wealth could also generate social goods in a more efficient and effective way (Casey, 2013; Perrini & Vurro, 2006). This so called 'marketization of welfare' is the penetration of essentially market-type relationships into the social welfare (Salamon, 1993), adapting the techniques and logics of the market to church, school, etc. (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010). Using market-oriented principles for improving efficiency was also applied in governments and is known as the 'New Public Management' (Guo & Bielefeld, 2014). In this way, the social sector in general is following the trend from a traditional philanthropic dependency, towards focusing on measuring results and identifying potential commercial sources of income (Perrini & Vurro, 2006).

Hence, the term 'social entrepreneurship' was introduced in 1970s by Banks (1972, p. 53) as 'those who saw the possibility of using managerial skills directly for socially constructive purpose'. The main proposition was that management competencies should also be applied to solve social problems (Rummel, 2011). In this manner, the commercial activities of non-profits were the first to become associated with the term 'social enterprise' when at the end of the 1960s non-profits created programmes to generate employment (Kerlin, 2013). Internationally, the term became popular through Bill Drayton (founder of Ashoka, the organization that supports nowadays worldwide social entrepreneurs) and Muhammad Yunus (founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, who provided microcredits to promote social development) (Rummel, 2011) and then moved into academia in the 1990s through the work of business school professors (Casey, 2013), when for example the Harvard Business School launched the 'Social Enterprise Initiative' in 1993 (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

In Europe, the social enterprise, a similar concept, appeared for the first time in 1990 in the third sector, because of an incentive that came first from Italy and was linked with the cooperative movement. In 1996 the European Commission funded a research programme, the EMES European Research Network (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001b), which first was dedicated to the definition of criteria to identify organizations that could be called 'social enterprises' and in this way defining a social enterprise as:



‘...not-for-profit private organizations providing goods or services directly related to their explicit aim to benefit the community. They generally rely on a collective dynamic involving various types of stakeholders in their governing bodies, they place a high value on their autonomy and they bear economic risks related to their activity’ (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008, p. 204).

Within the Social Innovation school of thought, influenced largely by Bill Drayton, Dees (1998, p. 4) has proposed one of the most cited definition of the social entrepreneur as

‘... change agents in the social sector by adopting a mission to create and sustain social value, recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission, engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation and learning, acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and finally exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created’.

It can be noticed that this definition’s approach is more individual, focusing on the social entrepreneur and his/her characteristics. Bornstein (2007; 2010) describes social entrepreneurs as transformative forces; and social entrepreneurship as a process by which citizens build or transform institutions to advance solutions to social problems. According to studies about the personality of the social entrepreneur, they are characterized by special leadership skills, a passion to realize their vision, a strong ethical fibre (Mair & Martí, 2004); they are change promoters in society, pioneering innovation within the social sector through the entrepreneurial quality of an innovative idea, they have a capacity building aptitude, an ability to demonstrate the quality of an idea and to measure social impacts (Perrini & Vurro, 2006). Social entrepreneurs are intrinsically motivated by personal values that encourage empathy and self-confidence born of relevant experience, and extrinsically by an encounter with a social problem and the support of others who share concern regarding that problem (Kickul & Lyons, 2016). This is the main difference with commercial entrepreneurs, who have been historically conceptualized as being motivated by the discovery and exploitation of profitable opportunities for private wealth (Hechavarria & Ingram, 2016). Indeed, some authors discuss this change in terms of an economic paradigm shift, where the traditional understanding of value creation only in terms of economic profit has extended to cover non-economic gains (Sarango-Lalangui, Santos, & Hormiga, 2018). On the other hand, when describing social entrepreneurship usually the resulting beneficiaries of the venture are emphasized instead of the individual entrepreneur’s goals or efforts, and it focuses on and embraces socially constructed ‘feminine qualities’, such as empathy and compassion (Brush et al., 2009).

For Lyons (2013) social entrepreneurship can be simply defined as: ‘The application of the mind-set, processes, tools, and techniques of business entrepreneurship to the pursuit of a social and/or environmental mission’. Agreed upon is that a social enterprise is a business-like organization that pursues financial sustainability and mission achievement and has the goal to create value

for the society through a triple-bottom-line (TBL), making an impact on social, environmental, and financial aspects (Caslin III, Sachet, & Shevinsky, 2013). This is also underlined in the definition proposed by Muhammad Yunus which describes a social enterprise as a cause-driven business, where investors/owners can gradually recover the money invested but cannot take any dividend beyond that point. Purpose of the investment is purely to achieve one or more social objectives through the operation of the company, covering all costs and making profit. The social objectives could be focused on disadvantaged people, healthcare, housing and financial services, nutrition for malnourished children, safe drinking water, renewable energy, etc. Unlike a charity, a social business generates profit and aims to be financially self-sustaining, thus removing the need for fundraising and allowing to reinvest profits back into generating impact (Yunus, 2007; Yunus Social Business, 2019). Compared to commercial enterprises, in social entrepreneurship social wealth creation is the primary objective, while economic value creation, is a necessary but by-product that secures the sustainability of the initiative and financial self-sufficiency. Profit maximization and wealth creation become the means through which socially entrepreneurial innovators pursue their social mission (Perrini & Vurro, 2006).

Within the discussions of the concept of social entrepreneurship, sustainable entrepreneurship has been gaining importance and receiving increased attention in academic literature from many different backgrounds and perspectives (Belz & Binder, 2017; Sarango-Lalangui et al., 2018). Sustainable entrepreneurship can be defined as the recognition, development, and exploitation of business opportunities by individuals to resolve current market and societal failures leading to economic, environmental, and social improvements with a general concern for the welfare of future generations. Outcomes of sustainable entrepreneurship are usually described as value creation (social, sustainable, and mixed<sup>6</sup>), institutional innovation, and scaling effects or impacts of entrepreneurial activities. Transforming institutions means changing regulations such as industry norms, regulatory laws, property rights, and market signaling and transforming conditions embedded in broader socio-economic structures, reducing social and economic disparity, and improving the quality of life on multiple levels (macro-, meso-, and microlevels) (Belz & Binder, 2017; Sarango-Lalangui et al., 2018; Schaltegger & Johnson, 2019). Sustainable entrepreneurship is also a social movement towards changing existing consumption,

6 Social value creation refers to social issues and to positive outcomes generated for a wider extent of society created by the venture activities. Sustainable value creation occurs when value is created for all sustainability dimensions simultaneously and integrating individuals and societies with both economic and non-economic benefits. Mixed value creation (or shared value creation) combines one additional sustainability aspect to wealth creation, combining either ecological-economic aspects or social-economic aspects (Schaltegger & Johnson, 2019).

lifestyle and production patterns and engaging for this in co-evolutionary processes (Schaltegger & Johnson, 2019).

This neighbour concept has many features in common with social entrepreneurship. In general, social entrepreneurship focusses on social issues, while in some cases environmental problems are also included. Hence, sustainable entrepreneurship could be subsumed under the umbrella term of social entrepreneurship (Belz & Binder, 2017). However, for Schaltegger & Johnson (2019) sustainable entrepreneurship rather includes forms of social and environmental entrepreneurship. In this understanding, social entrepreneurship is seen as the application of the entrepreneurial approach (e.g., discovery, creation, and exploitation of opportunities) towards meeting societal goals and creating social value, usually in the form of a non-for-profit enterprise, whereas environmental entrepreneurship focusses on creating opportunities that minimize the venture's impact on the natural environment, typically through for-profit enterprises. Nevertheless, hybrid forms of entrepreneurial ventures are emerging to incorporate all three sustainability dimensions (social, environmental, and economic).

Regarding the differences between social and sustainable entrepreneurship, Belz & Binder (2017) propose three important variances. First, sustainable entrepreneurship aims at balancing the triple bottom line of economic viability, social equity, and environmental stability, while social entrepreneurship usually pursues a double bottom line of social and economic goals. Second, the root of the term 'sustainable' entrepreneurship stems from the concept of sustainable development, which underlines the protection of the ability of future generations to meet their needs. While sustainable entrepreneurship includes intra- and intergenerational equity, social entrepreneurship mainly focuses on intragenerational equity, that is, problems that affect people in the present. Third, sustainable entrepreneurship is limited to the study of for-profit organizations with a social mission and hybrid organizations, while social entrepreneurship also encompasses non-profit organizations. Thus, there is no consensus in the definitions of both concepts and neither in their conceptual and practical relations, and henceforth this dissertation will refer to social entrepreneurship, although in many cases it might be including or taking into account sustainable entrepreneurship as well.

In Germany, Achtleitner, Heister & Stahl (2007) provide a definition of social enterprise as an organization that has social change as a primary goal, and which uses entrepreneurial approaches. Thus, a social entrepreneur may create income for him or herself and other employees if this supports the goal of the organization (Schwarz, 2014). Social entrepreneurship can be new established organizations or new arrangements of existing social organizations (social intrapreneurships) and are motivated by individual or community driven goals, to relief and solve social problems, which are usually defined as such by the individual and community themselves. Social enterprises have no

self-preservation interest and their legal and organizational forms have usually governance structures (Jansen, 2013). Thus, the German Social Entrepreneurship Association, in their monitor report of 2018 (Olenga Tete, Wunsch, & Menke, 2018) use the European Commission's Social Business Initiative definition (European Commission, 2015, p. 9), which states:

'A social enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involve employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities'.

This definition includes three relevant aspects. First, the social objective of the common good is the reason for the commercial activity, often in the form of a high level of social innovation. Second, profits are mainly reinvested in order to achieve the social objective, and third, the method of organization or ownership system reflects the mission using democratic or participatory principles or focusing on social justice (European Commission, 2015; Olenga Tete et al., 2018).

An important add-on on the term is that social entrepreneurship has different aspects and is influenced by the socioeconomic and cultural context, so that it cannot be understood in a purely economic sense, and it needs 'to be sustained by, and anchored in, the social context, particularly the local environment' (Jack & Anderson, 2002, p. 483).

It can be observed that there are plenty of available definitions of the term, and as for many terms, there is no consensus on a universal definition. Clear is that the definition includes the features of entrepreneurship (related to the business, innovative, risk-taking and performance characteristics), with the general goal to create and sustain social or environmental value and have a positive impact on social change. A broad overview of the different theoretical approaches and definitions of social entrepreneurship can be found for example in Jansen (2013) which lists the various authors, their contributions, and definitions of social entrepreneurship as well as the perspectives and dimensions of each definition, comparing and discussing social entrepreneurship with social movements, NGOs and non-profit organizations. For other overviews see Kickul & Lyons (2016) or Guo & Bielefeld (2014).

Many other concepts such as the third sector, social economy, or civil society are also common in the general discussion and in academic research of social entrepreneurship, such that these different terms sometimes overlap, but also have variations in definitions, in meanings, as well as in connotations. Following a short table (Table 1) describing some of these different terms:

*Table 1: Concepts Related to Social Entrepreneurship (Source: own elaboration)*

<b>The third sector</b>	Made up of most enterprises and organizations which are not primarily seeking profit, and which are not part of the public sector. It includes formal and private, self-governing organizations, it has a non-distribution constraint and must have some level of voluntary contribution in time or money (Defourny, 2001).
<b>The social economy</b>	Has been an official term in the EU since 1989, and is primarily related to cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, and currently to social enterprises. It includes activities whose ethical stance is represented by the aim of serving members of the community, rather than generating profit. They have an independent management, a democratic decision making process and the primacy of people and labour over capital in the distribution of income (Defourny, 2001). Its initiation was a reaction towards globalization (Zeiss Stange et al., 2013). The social economy aligns with solidarity economy principles. However, the social economy does not necessarily seek systemic transformation, whereas the solidarity economy does (Kawano, 2018).
<b>The solidarity economy</b>	Seeks to transform the dominant capitalist system and other authoritarian, state-dominated systems, into one that puts people and the planet at its core, shifting the economic paradigm from one that prioritizes profit and growth to one that prioritizes living in harmony. Equity is a basic value, so that it opposes all forms of oppression. It embraces participatory democracy. There are many allies and common ground to be found among socially responsible capitalist enterprises, but if they have owners who control and make decisions, they do not align with democracy and are excluded from the solidarity economy typology (Kawano, 2018).
<b>Civil society</b>	Includes formal organizations as well as networks, informal organizations, and social movements (Gawell, 2014).
<b>Corporate Social Responsibility or Corporate Citizenship (CSR)</b>	The principal notion is to compensate the community with positive external effects, through the corporate strategy, as a secondary objective or to consider social aspects as a condition for their economic activity (Jansen, 2013). Some enterprises have also developed different types of environmental or social projects that go beyond their specific production or marketing requirements, and some also donate some of their profits to different charitable causes. The CSR approach is at times criticized for being used to camouflage rising profits or to 'clean up' negative environmental or social outcomes (Gawell, 2014).

Summarizing the different definitions of social entrepreneurship, the most important aspects that are highlighted are first, the pursuit of a social mission, to catalyse social change and transformation, creating social, environmental, and financial value for society. Here it is underlined that the economic value is a by-product of these cause-driven business. Second, the fact that it is a business-like organization that produces and provides goods and services in an

entrepreneurial and innovative way and seeks for financial sustainability. Innovation is therefore of relevance. Third, as it pursues a social mission it sustains on a collective and participatory dynamic, with stakeholders in governing bodies and it is managed openly and responsibly. Finally, many definitions include guidelines for the distribution of profit, stating that social entrepreneurs have a limited profit distribution and profits are rather reinvested into the generation of impact. These aspects are all included in the definition provided by the European Commission (2015), henceforth, this research will refer to the following definition for social entrepreneurship ‘an undertaking, embedded in a social, cultural, economic and political context, where individual or individuals discover and evaluate opportunities or their own visions and ideas and bring them into reality by providing goods and services applying entrepreneurial and innovative processes based on collective and participatory decision-making, with the main purpose to generate social value and well-being and resolve social or ecological problems through the creation of systemic change. This can be realized through a wide spectrum of organizational forms’.

To conceptualize integrally the term of social entrepreneurship, the understanding of what it is meant by ‘social’ impact and the creation of social value and social change is much needed. In the following chapter I discuss this issue.

### *2.2.2 Social Impact and Social Value*

Discussing social entrepreneurship includes affirmations like ‘sustain social value’, ‘have a social impact’, ‘social engagement’ and many others. However, the ‘social’ on these affirmations needs further clarification, as prevailing definitions generally overlook an explanation of the term. The social element should not merely be understood as representing altruistic behaviour or non-profit activities, as it fails and even prevents from discovering the essence of social entrepreneurship (Martí, 2006).

It has been shown that it is a complex challenge when intending to elaborate the substantive and normative content of the ‘social’ good. The prevailing definitions usually treat it as a predetermined and exogenous concept, or one so obvious that requires no further explanation (Cho, 2006). However, when determined to evaluate and understand social entrepreneurship, it is necessary to think critically about what ‘social’ means. The word ‘social’ comes from the Latin word ‘socius or socialis’ which means together, connected, allied. This should describe a reciprocal relationship as a basic requirement of cohabitation, an interdependent group that lives and works together cooperatively. Social sciences, and specially sociology<sup>7</sup>, have subscribed to the scientific

7 In German sociology, Max Weber analysed status groups and parties in terms of different types of social relationships. Emphasising relationships indicates that the social is not a

analysis of the social. Thus, states, markets and enterprises are per se, social phenomena. The ‘social state’ or the ‘social economy’ and ‘social enterprises’ obtain thereby a rather redundant quality (Jansen, 2013; Kickul & Lyons, 2016).

But the ‘social’ in social entrepreneurship has naturally to do more with just the obvious reciprocal relationships involved in an enterprise. When confronted to defining the social in social entrepreneurship, it mostly involves describing in detail the activities in which social entrepreneurship engages, such as did Defourny & Borzaga (2001b) in Europe. The authors described these activities and categorized them into two main fields: work integration and social and community care services, adding further the contribution to the development of local economic systems and in some countries also activities in environmental and cultural services. Thus, the social, is defined through the operationalization of the goals and missions of the social enterprise.

Another way of trying to analyse the ‘social’ was intended by Mair & Marti (2004), who identified three levels on which the social nature of initiatives might be detected. First, the purpose of the activity, which should aim at serving members or the community rather than generating profit. Second, the non-commercial resources; meaning that usually non-monetary resources are also involved, such as voluntary work or/and donations. And third, the use of specific organizational methods such as being autonomous, with own decision-making bodies. Social is also defined as creating positive social change, stimulating transformational processes to advance societal well-being (Stephan, Patterson, Kelly, & Mair, 2016). Moreover, the social category does also include sustainable and fair (environmental) development and seems to diversify in general over time. These developments did not only motivate scholars but also the German Laender Government in its report on the National Engagement Strategy to suggest talking of societal instead of social goals (Zimmer & Bräuer, 2014).

The nature of positive social change is a multilevel transformative process triggered, enabled, and supported by organizational activity that is applicable across the environment, social and economic inclusion, health, well-being, and civic engagement (Stephan et al., 2016). The different types of social innovation include (Perrini & Vurro, 2006; TEPSIE, 2014):

confined totality (such as ‘society’) but rather a process of socialization that involves reciprocal and meaningful exchanges between groups and individuals. In this way, Weber defines the concept of class as non-social, status as communally social and party as instrumentally social. As a consequence, social is an array of communal and associative social relationships or forms of socialization that cannot be subsumed under the term ‘society’ (Weber, 1978 as cited in Gane, 2005).

- new services and products like new interventions or new programmes to meet social needs (e.g., car-sharing; zero energy housing developments);
- new practices like new services which require new professional roles or relationships (e.g., dispute resolution between citizens and the state);
- new processes involving the co-production of new services (e.g., participatory budgeting, Fair Trade);
- new rules and regulations like the creation of new laws or new entitlements (e.g., personal budgets where older people can decide how to spend much of their support money);
- building local capacity, refers to the possibility of enhancing local conditions by giving power to underused local capacities;
- disseminating a package of innovations through the reconfiguration of products, resources and management practices into forms that fit better with local specificities
- contributing to building a movement, giving voice to marginalized groups.

In general, defining the social through the final activities implemented by social entrepreneurs refers to initiatives aimed at helping others. In many cases, it also comprises that the activity must be philanthropic and non-profit (Mair & Martí, 2004), and the intention is to create something better, which is only possible to know retrospectively (TEPSIE, 2014). Academics have also suggested that the context rather than the differentiation of entrepreneurship activities establish the ‘social’ and therefore analysed the way social entrepreneurship manifests in different countries and regions (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016).

Nevertheless, defining the term social has more to do with the activity or task that is made and its features. It is important to identify and clarify that not every social entrepreneurial activity is ‘social’ in the same sense, although every entrepreneurial activity involves society in some way or other. Commercial entrepreneurship also has a social aspect as every entrepreneur improves social wealth by creating new markets, new industries, new technology, new jobs, and so on. Thus, for some authors altruism and entrepreneurship are only different degrees and not different kinds (Mair & Martí, 2004). Social entrepreneurship appears to offer an altruistic form of capitalism that does not evaluate human activities in business terms. Yet, there are many ways to apply the adjective ‘social’ to the definition of entrepreneurship, depending to whether entrepreneurship is thought as in, by, for or involving society (Tan et al., 2005).

Trying to define the domain of the social requires making choices about which concerns can claim to be defined as in the society’s interest.

‘These choices reveal that, despite its protestations to the contrary, social entrepreneurship by its very nature is always already a political phenomenon. The move to distinguish social entrepreneurship from private enterprise already suggests that social objectives stand distinct from the interplay of individual pursuits’ (Cho, 2006, p. 36).



To be able to identify society's interest, there should be public dialogue. Identifying these 'social' aims allows distinguishing 'social' entrepreneurship from commercial entrepreneurship. However, defining a 'social' agenda can be difficult because individuals have competing and conflicting identities and interests. When an entrepreneur acts based on values defined as 'social', he/she has already made epistemological and political claims about their ability and entitlement to express what is the public's interest. Discussing 'social' objectives, involves different perspectives of the geographical, cultural, political, economic, and temporal aspects of 'society', which can produce very differing conclusions about the social good and the interventions needed to achieve it. So, in order to reconcile different social points of view, deliberation, debate and discussion are critical. A significant part of good governance is to include individual rights to free expression and political participation because these empower people to speak and negotiate on behalf of their values and interests (Cho, 2006).

In a plural democracy, the common good is a result of the interplay of forces of diverse stakeholders that goes through continuous change processes. A practical way to define the common good is through the tax code, which in Germany for example includes non-profit purposes (promotion of material, spiritual or moral aspects), charitable purposes for disadvantaged people dependent on support and church purposes. The action fields of social entrepreneurship are mostly the development of social services for people in problematic situations or with support needs. These are usually problems that have not been resolved either by the state or by private enterprises. Engaging in systemic change and transforming structures so that social problems are solved, should generate that in the long term the offered service or product is not needed anymore (Schwarz, 2014). Another way to define the common good has been proposed by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide a valid and fairly legitimized operationalization of the abstract vision of sustainable development with a set of goals resulting from a multinational, multi-stakeholder participatory process, referring through these goals to the most pressing social problems to be addressed in the short-term. These include social advances (e.g., eliminate poverty, end hunger, achieving quality education, decent work, reach gender equality, ensure healthy lives, and well-being), environmental protection (e.g., access to clean water and sanitation, climate-neutral energy, promoting sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, and protection of life on land and the oceans), while promoting fair economic development, innovation and infrastructure, cooperation, reducing inequalities, supporting climate action, peace, and prosperity as part of a positively transforming world (Schaltegger & Johnson, 2019; United Nations, 2015). In general, opportunities for social entrepreneurs might arise, for example, from gaps in the social welfare system. Thus, the nature of

the social needs addressed by social entrepreneurs differs depending on the context (Mair & Martí, 2004).

Another definition of positive social change is presented by Stephan et al. (2016) who define it as a process that is proactively initiated, multilevel in nature, and includes bottom-up dynamics, it transforms patterns of thought, behaviour, social relationships, institutions, and social structures to generate beneficial outcomes for individuals, communities, organizations, society, and the environment beyond the benefits for the initiators of such transformations. This definition underlines that positive social change is proactively initiated through the activities of market-based organizations and that these organizations influence market-based instruments to create value by functioning in a competitive environment and producing or distributing products or services. This is different to change initiated by regulators, donation or membership organizations focused on advocacy as well as different from reactive positive social change resulting from a crisis, a technological development, or shifting societal values. Based on a detailed review, the authors identified four broad domains especially relevant for positive social change projects. First, the environment (e.g., increased energy conservation, recycling, and responsible consumption); second, social and economic inclusion (e.g., empowered marginalized groups, improved educational attainment, reduced community violence); third, health and well-being (e.g., increased preventive and reduced health risk behaviours, improved access to health care); and fourth, civic engagement (e.g., increased community volunteering and responsible investing). However, positive social change projects usually involve several domains simultaneously (Stephan et al., 2016).

In social entrepreneurship, the character of the social does not have a real inherent quality but relates itself to society interpretatively or attributively. Usually, the social entrepreneur defines the social problem he/she intends to solve, on his/her own, and makes it plausible towards society regarding the client/target group (Jansen, 2013). So, this broad field that can be defined as 'social' allows that many organizations and individuals declare to be social on their own conditions. A current trend is for enterprises to propose, and partly implement, a social entrepreneurship discourse, which could be any type of enterprise which defines themselves as entrepreneurs committed to a social purpose. Some argue that the economic priorities should include making a profit, and that the distribution of profits to owners is just a practical means to a socially beneficial end; and according to others, profits and its distribution to owners and investors, are an important incentive, and as important an aim for social entrepreneurship ventures. There is no agreement, and there are no specific regulations related to this discussion. For example, there are no specific regulations regarding if an enterprise reducing CO2 emissions or an organization with fair work-life-balance-friendly policies is a social enterprise. Some businesses, that develop different types of environmental or social projects that

go beyond their specific production or some that communicate that they donate some of their profits to different charitable causes can also call themselves ‘social enterprises’. However, the actual details are generally vague. Thus, the corporate social responsibility approach is at times criticized for being used to disguise rising profits or to erase or decrease negative environmental or social outcomes (Gawell, 2014).

Nevertheless, to provide a broad definition of the ‘social’ in social entrepreneurship for this dissertation, it is important to primarily note that ‘social entrepreneurship is a means to an end; it is not itself capable of defining social needs or assessing whether the burdens of meeting these needs are being shared equitably. These are fundamentally political questions’ (Cho, 2006, p. 49), and therefore choosing which concerns may be unmet social needs, is not a direct task of social entrepreneurship. Moreover, social entrepreneurship should address legitimate politically defined social problems and operationalize them as goals and enterprise purposes, involving, mobilising, and engaging beneficiaries and all stakeholders. These purposes and specific goals will usually comprise serving members of the community by improving their welfare, health and well-being, building local capacity, including people socially and economically, giving voice to marginalized groups, protecting the environment, challenging the unequal distribution of power and resources, promoting civic engagement and reconfiguring products, resources and management/policies/rules through innovative approaches that improve one or more of the aspects previously mentioned. The legitimate politically defined social needs and problems are the consequence of a consensus after deliberation, debate, and discussion of all interested parties. By playing a role in articulating or shaping social needs, social entrepreneurship can contribute to discourses about the public good and justice (Cho, 2006; TEPSIE, 2014).

### *2.2.3 Forms of Social Entrepreneurship*

As discussed in the proposed definition of social entrepreneurship for this research, this kind of activity may take varied organizational forms, as they are subject to a unique set of values, biases, challenges, laws and practices and therefore assume diverse forms and functions (Caslin III et al., 2013). Ideally, they break up limits among organizational groups, configuring themselves as hybrid organizational forms (Perrini & Vurro, 2006). Thus, in the following sector I describe the different forms of social entrepreneurship initiatives.

The most simple and common way to categorize the diverse organizational forms of social entrepreneurship is to identify two, non-dichotomous ends, of one spectrum or continuum. These ends are on the one side the purely philanthropic or non-profit (traditional charity) and on the other side the purely commercial or for-profit (traditional business firm). The boundaries between the

private, public, and non-profit sectors have been blurring, so that in between these ends are various forms of hybrid organizational structures. Even at the extremes there are still elements of both (Austin et al., 2006; Caslin III et al., 2013; Guo & Bielefeld, 2014; Kickul & Lyons, 2016; Sabeti, 2009). Purely philanthropic ventures focus on benevolence, mission, and social value creation. They are limited in its activities by laws regarding its tax-exempt status and have many alternatives for financing. By contrast, the purely commercial enterprise concentrates on its own interests, market benefits, and economic value creation. It includes taxation issues, and more limited financing options, but allows more control over the venture and a chance to keep the profits (Kickul & Lyons, 2016; Zeiss Stange et al., 2013).

Thus, social enterprises exist in the hybrid space, in between the public and private sectors. They can take the form of a for-profit, a non-profit with a for-profit subsidiary, a for-profit with a non-profit subsidiary, non-profit partnerships, non-profit-for-profit partnerships, or others in-between. Income and profits usually consist of a combination of donations, foundation and corporate grants, fellowships, crowdfunding, impact investments/loans, federal, state and city government grants or contracts, venture capital, business angels, loan providers, venture philanthropy, or earned income (Casey, 2013; Kickul & Lyons, 2016). Other forms of hybrid organizations could be for example a for-profit business that rejects a purely profit-only goal and instead works on a 'not-for-personal profit' basis, with higher priority given to the creation of social value; or a non-profit organization which operates in a more entrepreneurial 'business-like' way and pursues more earned income activities, without losing its social mission. Social entrepreneurs often create multiple legal structures, so they may establish both a for-profit company to raise capital and commercialize activities that generate revenues, and a non-profit to receive grants and donations and to provide service and education (Casey, 2013). 'Corporate Social Responsibility' is also part of the spectrum, and it has promoted an increase in social mission-oriented companies that are measured by a triple bottom line (TBL) (Caslin III et al., 2013). Another type of hybrid corporation are cooperative organizations, which combine business logic with cooperative principles such as voluntary and open membership, democratic governance, membership financial participation, autonomy, education and training, cooperation, and a concern for the community (Gawell, 2014). Because of the amount and diversity of these hybrid models, Sabeti (2009) proposes that they constitute an emerging 'fourth sector', meaning that these organizations blend attributes and strategies from all sectors and share the combination of the pursuit of social and environmental aims with the use of a business method, creating hybrid organizations that transcend the usual sectoral boundaries and that cannot be easily classified within the traditional three sectors.

It is important to underline that social enterprises pursue activities in different segments ranging from construction and energy over education, health

and social work to retail and community services, often focussing on services. However, many of them tackle more than one social problem simultaneously (e.g., fighting food waste and employing disadvantaged people) (Huysentruyt, 2014). Moreover, three different types of social entrepreneurship have been distinguished: Social bricolage as using local resources such as volunteers and community activists, social constructionists who access and mobilise financial resources, and social engineers who employ politics and power to change social systems (Teasdale, McKay, Phillimore, & Teasdale, 2011).

As can be noted, there are many different forms of social enterprises, of legal combinations of income and performance activities. Gray (2013) and Dees et al. (2001) propose both a very similar categorization of the different enterprise forms. Still, Gray (2013) admits that this taxonomy does not capture the complexity of the range and variety of organizations in society. Between each of the groups, there are hybrid establishments that do not exactly fit into one category or another. Huysentruyt (2014, p. 4) proposes a labelling that includes the social issues and the business activity. Another way of sorting the different social entrepreneurship forms is by differentiating between the types of activities they do. In this case, there would be social entrepreneurships that are community-driven, other which are cultural or artistic, other environmental and so on (Gawell, 2014). Finally, they can also be categorized according to their scale of social responsibility (Simmons, 2016 as cited in Stenn, 2017). In Table 2 the most important categorizations are summarized.

After revising all different forms of social entrepreneurship and the various forms academics have categorized and organized them, on the one hand, as the concept per se is not clear and defined, the forms are not either. On the other hand, it is important to acknowledge, first, that the central driver for social entrepreneurship is the social problem which is addressed. Second, the organizational form a social enterprise adopts should be decided based on which format would most effectively maximise the mission achievement, mobilizing the resources needed to address the problem. Accordingly, social entrepreneurship is not defined by any legal or organizational form, as it can be achieved through many different ways (Austin et al., 2006); these legal forms also differ between countries (Usher Shrair, 2015). In many cases, even if the country has a special legal form for social enterprises (e.g., the United Kingdom) many organizations do not use it. Which reinforces the fact that ‘what really distinguishes them from other organizations is their simultaneous focus on achieving a social mission through economic activity within the legal frameworks available to them’ (Huysentruyt, Mair, Le Coq, Rimal, & Stephan, 2016, p. 22).

Table 2: Summarized Social Enterprise Spectrum (Source: own elaboration based on Dees et al., 2001; Gray, 2013; Olenga Tete et al., 2018; Stenn, 2017; Neck, Brush, & Allen, 2009)

Spectrum						
←		Hybrids/ Blends Social Entrepreneurship			→	
Purely philan- thropic Non-profit Impact-ori- ented						Purely com- mercial For-profit Profit-ori- ented
	Traditional charities and NGOs	Non-profit social entre- preneurs- hips/ Non- profit with a for-profit subsidiary	Non- profit- for- profit partner- ships	For-profit with non- profit sub- sidiary/ For-profit social en- trepre- neurships	CSR Socially respon- sible com- pany	Traditional business firms
<b>General motives, methods and goals</b> (Dees et al., 2001; Gray, 2013; Neck et al., 2009; Olenga Tete et al., 2018)	Appeal to goodwill Mission driven Social value crea- tion Social impact: Lo- cal/Global	Mixed motives Balance of mission and market – TBL: Social, environmental, and economic value Type of social impact (by the author): 1. Social/ecological impact for the employees and stakeholders through management of the enterprise 2. Social/ecological impact for the community /target group/ through enterprise goal/purpose 3. Social /Ecological global and future impact (societal impact)				Appeal to self-interest Market-driven Economic value creation
<b>Social responsibility scale</b> (Stenn, 2017)	Relies on fundraising events, donations, and awareness campaigns. Some may charge fees for services or memberships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-defensive actor: company engages in social responsibility activities, but the motivation is an effort to counter criticism of its products or policies. Marketing and public relations effort attempt to polish a compromised brand image. Activity is reactionary.</li> <li>• Cyclical grantor: prefers to offer cash to other entities engaged in socially responsible work. Usually through creating a foundation and offering cash grants of a cyclical basis. Little long-term commitment to a particular project, and minimal ongoing interaction with grant recipients.</li> <li>• Project focused: dedicated to a particular cause or projects and commits resources towards its long-term success.</li> <li>• Operations focused: focus their socially responsible approach on all aspects on their company's production and operations. Social responsibility is seen as internal to the company's existence, rather than as an external focus.</li> <li>• Social business venture: legally organized as a for-profit company, but its mission is to fulfil</li> </ul>				Primarily concerned with profit, short-term cost reduction, and survival. Donations to local causes is incidental, sporadic and lacks long-term commitment

		a traditionally non-profit purpose. Company profits are used to fulfil the mission.	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hybrid non-profit: rather than relying exclusively on traditional donations or fundraisers, it establishes for-profit businesses, all of whose profit is invested back into the non-profit.</li> </ul>	
<b>Beneficiaries</b> (Dees et al., 2001)	Pay nothing	Subsidized rates and/ or mix of full payers and those who pay nothing	Pay full market rates
<b>Capital</b> (Dees et al., 2001; (Gray, 2013))	Donations and grants Stakeholder accountability	Below-market capital or mix of full payers and those who pay nothing Market rate capital Combination of donations, grants, sale of products and services Combination of stakeholder and shareholder accountability	Market rate capital Sale of products and services Shareholder accountability
<b>Workforce</b> (Dees et al., 2001)	Volunteers	Combination of market rate compensation and below-market wages or mix of volunteers and fully paid staff	Market rate compensation
<b>Suppliers</b> (Dees et al., 2001)	Make in-kind donations	Combination of charging market prices and special discounts or mix of in-kind and full price	Charge market prices
<b>Use of income</b> (Gray, 2013)	Social and political purposes. Expenses.	Combination of social and environmental causes and expenses returned to owners/shareholders/etc.	Expenses return to owners.

### 2.2.4 Context in Social Entrepreneurship

Cultural difference is a dimension that conceptualizations of social entrepreneurship often ignore, although there are significant cultural differences in how it is conceptualized (Casey, 2013). The meanings of social enterprise are influenced culturally, historically, socially, and politically, and policy and practitioner discourses over time have also played a role in their definitions (Teasdale et al., 2011). Following I describe a few particularities of some main regions of the world with regards to social entrepreneurship.

As one of the pioneer regions in social entrepreneurship, the discussion will start describing the context of the United States. Here, a more individualistic ideological context prevails, and the emphasis has been on the individual entrepreneur who creates a new organization or the ‘intrapreneur’ who transforms an existing one (Casey, 2013). Such activities were already happening during the foundation of the United States, when community or religious groups sold goods or held bazaars to supplement voluntary donations, however the term social enterprise gained importance in the late 1970s and 1980s. The government started the Great Society programmes in the 1960s, and a significant part of the funds for education, health care, community development and

poverty programmes was channelled through non-profits. Yet, the recession in the economy in the late 1970s led to welfare and federal funding cutbacks so that non-profits began to expand their commercial activities to cover the gap in their budget through the sale of goods or services not directly related to their mission (Kerlin, 2006). As mentioned earlier, the internationalization of social entrepreneurship, is mainly due to Bill Drayton and Ashoka, the organization he founded in 1980. Ashoka focuses on the profiles of specific social entrepreneurs in diverse fields, rather than on their organization forms. Thus, the debate around social entrepreneurship in the United States has been influenced by foundations like Ashoka, portraying social entrepreneurs as ‘modern times’ heroes’ and by consultancy firms focused on business methods and earned income strategies to be adopted by non-profits looking for more stable sources of funding. Also, business schools have and are contributing to facing challenges like alternative and stable revenue, management methods, evaluation and accountability strategies and others. These schools have also influenced European schools (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

In most Western European countries, third-sector organizations were already playing an important role in the provision of services before the Second World War and their role increased in the 1950s. In the late 1970s–early 1980s, structural unemployment, the need to reduce state budget deficits and for more active integration policies questioned the role of the third sector in meeting these challenges. The solutions given to these challenges varied among the European countries. Some of these different contextual developments are reflected on the various legal forms that social entrepreneurship has taken. Consequently, the concept of social entrepreneurship in Europe focusses on the way an organization is governed and what its purpose is, and not so much in the way profit is distributed (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). The European emphasis on participation extends to the management of the social enterprise where usually governing bodies are made up of a diverse group of stakeholders that may include beneficiaries, employees, volunteers, public authorities, and donors, among others. This formal democratic management style is not a requirement of social enterprise in the United States (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a; Kerlin, 2006).

In the Bismarck countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Ireland), non-profit private organizations, mainly financed and regulated publicly play a significant role providing social services. During the 1980s, these states started implementing active labour policies, which aimed to integrate the unemployed into the labour market through professional training programmes, job subsidy programmes, etc. These programmes tried to encourage the creation of new jobs in industries where they could satisfy social needs, with the intention to reduce social spending and implemented by associations. This type of public structure promoted the trend towards a more entrepreneurial dynamic within the non-profit sector. In France



and Belgium, these dynamics were explicitly located inside the third sector, which was referred to as the ‘social economy’ (*économie sociale*) or the ‘solidarity economy’ (*économie solidaire*) (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). Moreover, in some countries, like Germany, traditional third sector organizations have resisted the emergence of social enterprises and therefore, they have been developing in niches, mainly in new activities and by exploiting resources that are not specifically related to the production of social services (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a). Habisch & Decker (2016) argue that because of the innovative structure of social entrepreneurship they mostly emerge in areas where innovation is missing.

In the Global South, the focus is set on creating small-scale businesses with the potential to lift the entrepreneurs out of poverty, on establishing social services in underserved areas or working with underserved populations (Casey, 2013). However, academic literature has largely focused on the Global North, perhaps due to the dominance of the idea that entrepreneurship in the Global South is necessity-driven and therefore conducted only for economic gain; and thus, judged as unproductive, labour-intensive, and inefficient, conducted by poorly educated and low-skilled entrepreneurs and at best, to contribute little to economic development and growth and at worst, to hinder it. Thus, the policy approach has been to eradicate such entrepreneurship and to instead focus upon promoting legitimate opportunity-driven entrepreneurship (Williams & Gurtoo, 2017). But, in fact, the ability of social enterprises to achieve both a social and financial return is relevant to the Global South, hence it can be used to attain sustainable solutions to a social problem, especially poverty and limited and of poor quality educational and health services (Rametse & Shah, 2012). Also, social entrepreneurship can provide business training and increase social mobility, enabling the growth of local economies. This has led to municipal community entrepreneurship as a form of social entrepreneurship encouraging participation of disadvantaged members of society, who in many cases are women (Ratten, Ferreira, & Fernandes, 2017). As governments are increasingly relying on non-profit organizations to help provide social welfare and institute development strategies, the intersection of the non-profit sector and social entrepreneurship promises to encourage more entrepreneurial, innovative, and sustainable development work (Stecker, Warnecke, & Bresnahan, 2017).

Concluding, usually, in societies where basic material and physical human needs are met, entrepreneurs place less emphasis on the economic value creation. However, a dilemma rises for policy in that social enterprises are frequently required when governments and markets are not optimally managing multidimensional social and ecological issues and challenges and therefore fulfil gaps, especially in materially focused societies (Hechavarria et al., 2017).

The relevance of this section is to underline the importance and influence of the context where social entrepreneurship is embedded, as well as the

corresponding social, economic, political, and legal structures. These structures are the foundations on which social entrepreneurship develops and which it often pursues to change.

### 2.2.5 *Contributions of Social Entrepreneurship*

After reviewing the different challenges that social entrepreneurship faces, it is important to underline the valuable contributions that the field can and is granting society. Following, I describe some of the most significant contributions.

#### 2.2.5.1 Social Impact Per Se and its Potential

In general, the created social value and the aimed social change should be the most significant contribution that social entrepreneurship offers. Within this broad contribution, some detailed measurements show the real impact. For example, between 49% and 60% of the 400 Ashoka leading social entrepreneurs have changed national policy within five years of their start-up-stage election (Drayton, 2006). In this way, they contribute to the improvement of life conditions, the wellbeing of communities and the level of social integration (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a). Economically, social enterprise is doing business differently, and showing considerable commercial resilience, so that it continues to outperform mainstream small and medium-sized enterprises (in turnover growth, innovation, business optimism, start-up rates, diversity in leadership and others) (Temple, 2017). Thus, social entrepreneurship is creating, maintaining, and using social capital, by developing solidarity, increasing trust, and facilitating citizens' engagement in the solution of social problems and networking. In general, social entrepreneurship enables transformation and systemic change, being accountable to society, not to private shareholders (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a).

#### 2.2.5.2 Reformation of the Welfare and The Public-Private-Third Sector Structures

Social enterprises could contribute to the reform of welfare systems because they initiate transformation, which support a development of the existing institutional structures (Schwarz, 2014). They can support state action through an innovative way; reintegrating the overall social services supply and supporting the public expense cost control as well as maintaining or improving the quality of social services and jobs (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a; Perrini & Vurro, 2006). Moreover, social enterprises often blend their productive role with advocacy activities in favour of the same or other groups of users. Social enterprises are neither outside of the market, nor outside of the public system; rather,

they can use both rules of the market and the state, though not identifying themselves with either of them (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a). Thus, they know how to operate at the link between private, public, and non-profit worlds, acting as facilitators between these. It is not about making the social sector more business-like, nor is it providing business a social integrity. Social entrepreneurship combines these two dimensions so that it creates social value in the most efficient, effective, and sustainable manner possible; involving both agency (using business strategies and tactics) and structure (cultural, political, legal, financial and other infrastructures) (Kickul & Lyons, 2016). Social enterprises are shifting the emphasis from charitable relief to new, more systemic ways of improving social conditions, reducing the charitable assistance rather than simply meeting the need; engaging people in and allowing them to take responsibility for improving their lives (Dees et al., 2001). Moreover, shifting towards a more entrepreneurial culture can improve the quality of programmes by making them more consumer- or beneficiary-oriented as well as efficient and effective; and it might help attract and retain employees and donors (Kerlin, 2013). Additionally, they are sometimes able to move around politics, avoiding the most debilitating aspects of political power struggle (Kickul & Lyons, 2016). Also, foundations are enhancing a democratic governance; and many co-operatives are rediscovering the primacy of social objectives (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a).

#### 2.2.5.3 Increase the Demand for the Services and Products Offered by Social Enterprises and Fill Supply Gaps

The demand for social entrepreneurial programmes and services usually exceed the capacity of the social enterprises to serve these needs. Initial success often leads to increased demand for the social enterprise's programmes, products, or services, or even requests to scale or duplicate the organization (Austin et al., 2006). Additionally, social entrepreneurship fills supply gaps that are not being satisfied either by the state or by the for-profit enterprises (Schwarz, 2014). Evidence shows that social enterprises are more sensitive and responsive to social market needs; so that they systematically identify and respond to such needs before the mainstream enterprises meets them. Thus, social enterprises are obliged to innovate as a usual part of their activities (Huysentruyt, 2014).

#### 2.2.5.4 Innovation

In terms of innovation, it is known that social and solidarity economy enterprises have a great capability to innovate in what they do and how they do it, in response to the social needs of the context in which they function (Borzaga, Salvatori, & Bodini, 2017). The SELUSI project's results show that 88% of the social ventures they interviewed had introduced at least one new or

significantly improved process, service, or product in the past year. Social enterprises outperform comparable mainstream businesses or public-sector organizations when it comes to launching radical innovations, 65% of which have a significant service component. Also, they are opening new markets at a much higher rate than mainstream entrepreneurial start-ups. These types of enterprises act collaboratively regarding innovation, compared to for-profit companies; both in terms of having contributed to the development of another organization's innovation (90%), and having worked with others in developing new products, services, or processes at their organizations (78%), for both female- and male-run social ventures (Huysentruyt, 2014).

#### 2.2.5.5 Growth and Job Creation

Regarding economic factors, growth is one important contribution of social entrepreneurship. Recent trends show that social and solidarity economy enterprises have exhibited significant growth even through phases of economic recession and they have also the ability to expand in new sectors based on the needs of their communities and society (Borzaga et al., 2017). The establishment of new social and community care services can help to create a more stable local source of employment (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a). The important role of the social and solidarity economy in preserving employment is reinforced by its anti-cyclical nature, as evidenced by their resiliency in times of economic crisis. This resiliency might be due to their pursuit to provide a service to their members instead of making profit. During an economic crisis they will tend to maintain or increase their level of activity, even if this means decreasing their margins or even running a deficit (Borzaga et al., 2017). In general, research shows that social enterprises are effective at creating crisis-resistant employment opportunities and economic growth, and at growing 'social capital'. Additionally, the type of jobs created by social enterprises have distinctive positive features, as they normally remain local, they support vulnerable groups, and they contribute to the local economic development, like for example by generating opportunities in vulnerable urban areas or isolated rural areas (Usher Shrair, 2015). Moreover, social, and social economy organizations seem appropriate to provide an employment infrastructure also for jobs emerging in sectors highly fragmented. They usually adopt organizational forms that are more flexible and decentralized by turning to networked collaboration models based on a sharing culture relative to shareholder companies (Borzaga et al., 2017). Evidence shows that it can be estimated that the social economy in Europe (the aggregate of cooperatives, mutual, associations and foundations) employs over 14.5 million paid workers, which are about 6.5% of the working population of the EU-27 and about 7.4% in EU-15 countries. The social economy has increased more than proportionately between 2002 and 2010, expanding from 6% to 6.5% of total European paid employment and from 11 million to 14.5 million jobs. Indeed, this growth is not limited to

Europe but is actually becoming stronger around the world (Borzaga, Salvatori, Bodini, & Galera, 2013).

This research includes three broad concepts. Previously, I discussed entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. In the next chapter, therefore, I discuss the intersection of gender with social entrepreneurship. Gender as a concept is complex and has been developing in the academic field for many years. The following chapter has no intend to recapitulate this. Therefore, I define gender for the means of this research, mainly regarding entrepreneurship, and I discuss these intersections regarding challenges and future proposals.

### *2.2.6 Challenges of Social Entrepreneurship*

Scholars have identified some challenges that the different forms of social entrepreneurship are facing. However, not even academics agree on these challenges. While non-profits and NGOs have incorporated greater levels of earned income into their revenue-generating strategies, they have increasingly struggled with finding the right balance between their social mission and commercial goals (Kerlin, 2013). Some of these challenges can be categorized into those which are ‘external’ and those which are ‘internal’ to social entrepreneurship.

#### *2.2.6.1 Internal Challenges for Social Entrepreneurship*

The European Commission (2015) states some internal challenges for social entrepreneurship in Europe: the lack of viable business models, a high reliance on public sector as a source of revenue, a lack of entrepreneurial spirit and finally a lack of managerial and professional skills and competencies necessary for scaling-up. Following some further relevant internal challenges for social entrepreneurship in general.

##### *2.2.6.1.1 Measuring Social Change and Value*

The challenge of measuring social change is great due to non-quantifiability, multi-causality, temporal dimensions, and perceptive differences of the social impact (Austin et al., 2006). Even when improvements can be measured, it is often hard to attribute them to a specific intervention. And yet, when improvements can be measured and causally related to an implemented intervention, it is problematic to capture the created value economically. Mostly, social entrepreneurs rely on subsidies, donations, and volunteers, so, they need to proof their impact to these stakeholders (Dees, 1998). Common terms referring to the social impact are double bottom line, triple bottom line, blended value, and social return on investment, cost-effective analysis, cost-benefit analysis, RDSF’s Social Return on Investment (SROI). However, there are no universal measures of social or environmental impact. Most social ventures must identify

their own non-financial metrics of success based on mission, industry, and ideal impact (Neck et al., 2009). The actual problem may not be the measurement itself, but how these measures may be used to ‘quantify’ the performance and impact of social entrepreneurship (Mair & Martí, 2004; Steyaert & Hjorth, 2007).

#### 2.2.6.1.2 Focusing on Commercial Goals at the Expense of Social Goals

Mission drift is a term used when non-profits focus on their commercial goals at the expense of their social goals. Some scholars propose it represents such a significant threat to a non-profit engaged in unrelated business activities that they should avoid these activities altogether. Other authors note that the commercial activities are only one of many ways to a mission drift. However, there are many that believe that this market orientation of non-profits will put civil society at risk, as a focus on financial bottom line may lead organizations to abandon less efficient practices that strengthen social capital, relying less on traditional stakeholders and networks; shifting from board members connected to the community to those connected to business. When an organization operates a business in a non-profit context it creates values and expectations that are at times in opposition to one another, such as cause-driven versus profit-driven purposes, collaborative versus competitive relationships, loose versus clear boundaries with beneficiaries or consumers, and free versus full-cost products and services. Vulnerable groups may be excluded when profit-making activities interfere on the non-profit’s mission, or when these activities become preferred over mission-related programmes because they are more profitable. Moreover, evidence shows that non-profits involved in commercial activities grow increasingly focused on meeting the needs of individual clients rather than on providing public goods to the communities in which they work (Kerlin, 2013).

#### 2.2.6.1.3 Few Financial Resources

Social entrepreneurship requires financial and human resources; however, they are often confronted with restrictions as they usually face limited access to talent; fewer financial institutions, instruments, and resources; unrestricted funding and inherent strategic rigid structures, which obstruct their capacity to mobilize resources to achieve their goals. Social entrepreneurs are rarely able to pay market rates and are usually not able to offer other incentives such as stock options. Besides, social enterprises often rely on volunteers. To avoid such barriers, they sometimes choose a for-profit organizational form to increase their ability to access commercial capital markets and to pay competitive wages. Additionally, institutional breadth, flexibility and specialization do not exist to the same extent in the philanthropic markets as in the commercial ones. Social entrepreneurs have far fewer channels for accessing unrestricted sources of capital and must rely on donors and grants since they rarely become

financially independent, even with earned-income activities. Finally, they cannot change products or markets because the capacity to motivate and attract people and funding is tied to the specific social mission (Austin et al., 2006).

#### 2.2.6.1.4 Resisting the Demand for Growth and Short-Term Strategies

Social entrepreneurs are faced with the challenge to resist the strong demand for growth, and to be more careful about planning a long-term impact strategy. In some cases, growth may not be the best approach to achieve the organization's goals or to have the highest social impact. Growth as a goal per se can waste organizational resources and can reduce its overall impact and it might lead towards isomorphism (the tendency to develop into organizational forms that are better defined, legally stronger and socially more acceptable while being unable to keep and develop the most innovative features). In other cases, institutional growth may be the best path to optimizing social impact. The inability to grow beyond a certain threshold may delay their capacity to respond successfully to bigger challenges and build their reputation externally (Austin et al., 2006; Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a).

#### 2.2.6.1.5 High Governance Costs and Complexity of Stakeholders

The apparent advantage of involving various categories of stakeholders in the production and in the decision-making processes, turns out to be an element of inefficiency when conflicting interests limit the capacity of reacting quickly to a changing environment (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a), and an adequate communication is a great challenge (Zeiss Stange et al., 2013).

#### 2.2.6.1.6 Problematic with Work-Life Balance and Self-Exploitation

The results of Dempsey & Sanders (2010) illustrate that, although popular representations of social entrepreneurship offer a vision of meaningful work, they still celebrate a problematic vision of work-life balance based on extreme self-sacrifice and the prioritization of organizational commitment at the expense of health, family, and other aspects of social life. Spreading these types of representations helps naturalize and justify a dependence on unpaid labour and the payment of survival wages within the non-profit sector.

### 2.2.6.2 External Challenges for Social Entrepreneurship

With regards to external challenges, the European Commission (2015) has listed some important challenges as well for social entrepreneurship in Europe. These include a poor understanding of the concept of social enterprise, a lack of supportive policy and legislative framework, a lack of specialist business development services and support, difficulties in accessing markets and finance from external sources, absence of common mechanisms for measuring

and demonstrating social impact and the general economic environment. Following I describe some other pertinent external challenges.

#### 2.2.6.2.1 Market Rules Apply Less to Social Entrepreneurs

There are two ways the market does not apply to social entrepreneurship as it does to commercial one. On the one hand, it does not reward entrepreneurs for superior performance as in commercial entrepreneurship, yet inferior performance does not get punished as in commercial businesses (Austin et al., 2006). On the other hand, markets do not value social improvements, public goods and harms, and benefits for people who cannot afford to pay. As a result, it is much harder to determine whether a social entrepreneur is creating sufficient social value to justify the resources used in creating it, so that the survival or growth of a social enterprise is not a direct consequence of its efficiency in improving social conditions; and it actually depends on who is paying the fees or providing the resources, what their motivations are, and how well they can assess the social value created by the venture (Dees, 1998).

#### 2.2.6.2.2 Little Awareness of the Role of Social Entrepreneurship in Society

There is a generalized belief in most European countries that for-profit organizations together with active public policies can efficiently solve all social problems and satisfy overall demand for social and community care services, which leads to an underestimation of the potential role of the third sector and of social enterprises, perceiving them as unnecessary or, at most, transitional solutions. In Germany for example, such a negative attitude is relatively strong, as a very traditional perception of the enterprise is the norm. In this context, social enterprises are looked at with mistrust (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a). Social enterprise is a niche phenomenon in statistical terms, so that globally on average only 3.2% of people aged 18-64 are involved in social entrepreneurial activity as a nascent entrepreneur or manager-owner of a new business (Bosma, Schott, Terjesen, & Kew, 2015). Thus, it cannot be assumed that social enterprise alone can address all inequalities; rather, it is important to find ways to effectively influence and complement these types of interventions with new solutions for the most complex social problems (Huysentruyt, 2014).

#### 2.2.6.2.3 Need for a New Social Financial System

Social enterprises urgently need a new social financial services system. The rigid structures of governments or foundations do not allow them to value new ideas coming from social entrepreneurs, and their employees and leaders are limited to internal strategies that only allow them a specialist lateral career path. This will require much more time and resources for such an employer to implement a new idea, compared to implementing traditional ones. These rigid structures also keep them from accurately identifying and serving potential



clients; and, because they do not have to compete with anyone, they do not reward high performing citizen groups or close or merge poorly run ones. In social entrepreneurship, the need of medium- and long-term investments is substantial, as they often need time to test and improve an idea, learn how to market it, cause other organizations to change and then build an organization and movement. However, almost all governments and foundations only provide a one-year funding. Thus, society's resources are, consequently, assigned inadequately (Drayton, 2006).

#### 2.2.6.2.4 Lack or Inadequacy of Legal Forms Suitable for Social Enterprises

In most European countries, social entrepreneurs face the lack, or the inadequacy, of legal forms appropriate for social enterprises. This limits the flexibility and the possibility of reproducing social enterprises. At the same time, a legal framework that does not consider all the characteristics of these enterprises can facilitate the tendency towards isomorphism and can hinder their activities as well as the possibility of taking part in tenders, of entering contractual and partnerships and of generating or obtaining human and financial resources. Lastly, the development of social enterprises is also limited by a lack of access to industrial policies, which are intended to promote new enterprises, and to public funding for innovative social services (Defourny & Borzaga, 2001a).

#### 2.2.6.2.5 Social Entrepreneurship Discourse May Avoid or Supplant Deliberative Political Practices

According to Cho (2006) the pursuit of subjective and social values requires public deliberation, dialogue, and negotiation and in this way, the discourse of social entrepreneurship may avoid or replace valuable political practices. Social entrepreneurship includes the idea of revealing and confronting the underlying causes of social problems and not focussing on the 'symptoms'. However, for the author this affirmation is often inaccurate, as in many cases the problems are rooted in politics, and not in market failure, and social enterprises mobilize commercial resources and address specific gaps instead of addressing the political root causes, ignoring political processes, and favouring subject-centred and sometimes market-oriented approaches. The important task of identifying and solving social problems should be based on the autonomy of civil society to participate in intensive and critical evaluation of the system, to be able to integrate information in a holistic way, evaluate and act collectively. The proposition is conceptualizing social entrepreneurship as complementary to democratic processes of governance and deliberation and approaching the public sector as a potential partner rather than competition, avoiding the isolation from other key actors and thus cooperating with and supporting them.

### 3 Female Social Entrepreneurship

The entrepreneurs of today are a very heterogeneous group in terms of education, occupation, age, experience, and gender. During the last years more and more women have entered the field of entrepreneurship (Kariv, 2011). Thus, the role played by gender on this field has become an important component of academic analysis and recent years have seen an increasing number of studies focussing on female entrepreneurship (Minniti, 2009).

From a scientific point of view, the study of female entrepreneurship as a distinct area of research is legitimate, because it presents several special characteristics that differentiate it from male entrepreneurship. These special characteristics have significant implications at a macroeconomic level. The reasons for these differences are complex, however a common finding among gender comparative studies is that the similarities between male and female entrepreneurs regarding traits, motivations and success rates are more than the differences. However, studying female entrepreneurship contributes to an understanding of entrepreneurship and human behaviour in general. Thus, existing theoretical concepts should be expanded to incorporate the distinctiveness of women entrepreneurship (Minniti, 2009). Additionally, although entrepreneurship is gendered, most research on female entrepreneurship is not based on feminist theories, which tends to result in gender differences being explained in terms of how women entrepreneurs deviate from the 'male norm' (Brush et al., 2009).

Social entrepreneurship, as a nascent field, is growing rapidly and attracting increased attention from various sectors. It has been frequently mentioned in the media, is referred to by public organizations, is part of the university curricula, and is usually part of the strategy of many well-known social organizations (Martin & Osberg, 2007). The main sectors, social entrepreneurs are active on, are the social, environmental, human rights and gender equality sectors (Teasdale et al., 2011). However, research on gender in social entrepreneurship has been very limited and academic attention to gender or female social entrepreneurship has been little (Usher Shrair, 2015). In general, there is a lack of research on women social entrepreneurs, women-led social enterprises and gender dimensions of social economy and social enterprises (Humbert, 2012), and although there is a firm field of gender scholarship in general entrepreneurship and despite a call for more gender sensitive studies and the focus of social enterprises set on gender equality, most academic studies have employed a gender-blind analysis of it (Teasdale et al., 2011), so that there are just few descriptive reports of social entrepreneurship and gender (Usher Shrair, 2015).

It is known that women have a higher participation than men in the non-profit sector and, in general, women have been involved in the third sector and

led social enterprises throughout its history (Humbert, 2012). It is also known that women are more highly represented in social enterprise compared to commercial enterprises, and that the gender gap is less pronounced for social entrepreneurial activity for most global regions; as when analysed holistically, many women exhibit entrepreneurial behaviour, though not as an employer or self-employed, but more as pursuing this role in the social sector. In South-East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa female representation is high, and the difference between women's involvement in social versus commercial entrepreneurship is particularly impressive. In Australia and the United States, women and men are nearly equally present in social entrepreneurship (Bosma et al., 2015). Moreover, the few studies that have collected sex-disaggregated data internationally about social entrepreneurship have shown that the number of women social entrepreneurs is higher than the number for men in some European countries and that women social entrepreneurs are more innovative than male social entrepreneurs, while spending less on innovation (Huysentruyt, 2014). Additionally, recent studies show that the social enterprise sector provides a more egalitarian environment for women, at least in the United Kingdom, as can be seen in terms of presence on boards, with 41% of women members in social enterprise boards (Temple, 2017). The gendered dimensions and male label of entrepreneurship, management and organizations have been studied and the arguments mentioned previously suggest that it is worth researching further on the gender dimension also in social entrepreneurship. The practice of social entrepreneurship is expanding rapidly, and academics question if similar patterns are reconstructed in this sector too, or if gender is constructed otherwise in this field (Gawell & Sundin, 2014).

In this chapter I first discuss the understanding of gender for this study, afterwards, briefly, the history of women in social entrepreneurship, feminist theories in entrepreneurial research, the current state of research as well as some statistics and descriptions on this specific field, the potentials and challenges of female social entrepreneurship and lastly review proposals for further research.

### **3.1 Gender**

The term gender was used as a tool to differentiate between biological sex (bodies with male or female reproductive organs) and socially constructed sex, which is the result of upbringing and socialisation (Ahl, 2004; Butler, 2004). Gender involves a social construction which is performed through the individual's own process of identity formation, and through social interaction within normative and situated notions of what it means to be a woman or a man.

Therefore, the nature of gendered identities is processual, emergent, dynamic, partial, and fragmented (García & Welter, 2013). Gender is an institutionalized system of social practices, symbols, representations, norms and social values, for assigning people in two different categories (men and women), and organizing social relations based on that difference (Barbieri, 1993; Ridgeway & Correll, 2016). Gender and its components (roles, norms, identity) are understood as varying along a continuum of femininity and masculinity (Ahl, 2004), so that the ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ are defined in relationship to each other, and therefore are not clear and fixed opposing identities based on biological sex (Holmes, 2007). Thus, gender involves cultural beliefs and distributions of resources at the macro level, patterns of behaviour and organizational practices at the interactional level, and selves and identities at the individual level such as in other multilevel systems of difference and inequality (like those based on race or class) (Ridgeway & Correll, 2016).

When gender is understood as socially constructed, the assumed categories of men and women are questioned. As soon as a baby is born it immediately is categorized as a boy or a girl, and since then surrounded by adjectives, attributes, expectations, and values, which they usually fulfil regarding the proper gender behaviour. This socialization continues through education and media, so that individuals internalize it and afterwards, socialize their own children and families in the same way. In this manner, the content of what is perceived as male or female varies over time, place, and social context, and so gender becomes a momentary and flexible concept. Masculinities or femininities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a specific social setting (Ahl, 2004; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2016). Feminist social constructionism argues that bodies are socially constructed, without denying their material reality or universality. The social identity of an individual is a gendered identity, and it is almost impossible to define how much of this gendering is biology and how much is social construction (Lorber & Yancey Martin, 2013).

Nevertheless, the use of gender is in many ways problematic. First, it has been co-opted by normal science and everyday life and is currently used in the same sense as sex. Yet, when using biological definitions, there are at least seventeen different sexes based on anatomy, genes, hormones, fertility, etc. (Ahl, 2002; Ahl, 2006). Sex categories are numerous, complex, and subject to interpretation but do relate to markers such as genes, hormones, and physicality. Gender, however, is a social structure that has no practical category markers and consists of an array of flexible social attributions with related characterisations of complex masculinities and femininities, forced to sex categories of males and females (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). Also, within feminists the notion of ‘women’ has been dismantled as the unified and foundational subject of feminism. These critics argue that women are diversely situated in history, culture, and class; that genders are multiple; and that gender itself is a

discursive production, resisting any simple reliance on this categorical identity. However, in fields closer to positivist epistemologies, academics continue to treat gender as an unproblematic variable, however with increasing attention to intersectionality, and those in applied fields (e.g., women's entrepreneurship programmes) and working in activism may find that cultural and political assumptions about gender are still tied to their fields of action (DeVault & Gross, 2012).

However, changes in these two categories are difficult to consider, as the sex/gender divide is powerfully regulated by the idea that heteronormativity is the 'natural' and necessary foundation of society. Structures regulate individuals by gender, influencing them for example to choose specific careers and interests. When agency is added as a factor it changed from seeing how individuals become gendered to how they do gender. Doing gender means that it can be accomplished through the interaction with others. Gender manifests itself as an identity through which we recognise ourselves and others, a process by which we all 'do gender' as a set of behaviours and assumptions and as a performance whereby individuals perform and are performed by gender. Nevertheless, there are limits on the way that people can 'do' gender, and people with less privilege regarding class, age and ethnic origin, have more limited choices (Holmes, 2007; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). Here hegemonic masculinity plays a significant role. Hegemonic masculinity embodies the currently most honoured way of being a man, it requires all men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimates the global subordination of women to men. It should not be assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; yet it is normative. It was originally formulated in combination with a concept of hegemonic femininity, or 'emphasized femininity', to acknowledge the asymmetrical position of masculinities and femininities in a patriarchal gender order. Emphasized femininity focused on compliance to patriarchy. Still gender hierarchies are also affected by new configurations of women's identity and practice (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2016).

Hegemonic cultural beliefs about gender are widely shared and are among the core mechanisms that maintain and change the gender system. Gender beliefs and the cultural rules for enacting gender are the twin pillars the gender system is based on. These gender beliefs are hegemonic in that the descriptions of women and men they contain are institutionalized in the media, government policy, normative images of the family, and so on. Yet, alternative gender belief systems exist in the culture along with hegemonic beliefs and in some cases other identities such as race/ethnicity may be personally more relevant to individuals than gender. However, people must first classify others as male or female to be able to understand themselves in relation to them, working as a background identity in relational contexts. Regarding entrepreneurship, in most contexts, gender becomes a bias in the way one enacts the role of manager, entrepreneur or mother rather than a coherent and independent set of

behaviours, which is another way of understanding that gender is something that ‘does’ rather than something that ‘is’. Thus, the gender system will only be undermined through the long-term, persistent accumulation of everyday challenges to the system resulting from socioeconomic change and individual resistance (Ridgeway & Correll, 2016).

Unfortunately, the more advanced understanding of feminism witnessed in sociology and the political science literature is not reflected in the field of entrepreneurship (Henry, Foss, & Ahl, 2016). Gendered attributes may refer to individuals and their roles, organizations, or institutions (Brush, Edelman, Manolova, & Welter, 2018), so that in this research entrepreneurship is understood as a gendered undertaking. Authors in entrepreneurship research assume that men and women differ in important aspects (Ahl, 2006). The construction of male and female gender implies a gendered division of labour. Being an entrepreneur, requires time, effort, and passion, leaving little time for the caring of children, cooking, cleaning and all the necessary activities to survive. Therefore, to be able to perform this type of entrepreneurship requires that somebody (usually a woman) does the unpaid, reproductive work associated with the private sphere. The discourse on entrepreneurship in the economic literature is usually male gendered, in that way, the discourse on womanhood conflicts with the one on entrepreneurship. Being a woman and an entrepreneur forces to position oneself simultaneously in regard to two conflicting discourses (Ahl, 2004). Additionally, when these hegemonic gender beliefs are effectively salient in a social relational context, here, entrepreneurship, they bias the degree to which a woman, compared to a similar man, asserts herself in the situation, the attention she receives, her influence, the quality of her performances, the way she is evaluated, and her own and others’ inferences about her abilities. Specifically, gender becomes effectively salient in contexts where the stereotypic traits and abilities of one gender are culturally linked to the activities that are essential to the context, in this case the male gendered entrepreneurship context. When gender is effectively salient, it is usually the hegemonic form of gender beliefs that are implicitly activated, which leads to hierarchical presumptions about men’s greater status and competence becoming salient for participants, along with assumptions about men’s and women’s different traits and skills, shaping the expectations for their own competence and performance compared to others in the context, affecting people’s behaviours and evaluations in self-fulfilling ways. Nevertheless, gender is usually a background identity, and the effect of other individual differences in identities, skills, and abilities will influence the impact of gender on these behaviours and evaluations (Ridgeway & Correll, 2016).

In general, female business owners have a repertoire of socially available culturally embedded gendering practices through which they can do and redo gender using social interaction to challenge gender differences. Gender is therefore in constant flux and reproduced consciously or unconsciously,

depending on context and agency. Accordingly, identities are on the one hand the product of self-determination (agency) and on the other hand determination imposed by others (structure). Thus, researchers need to recognize both, institutional influences, and women's agency (García & Welter, 2013). Consequently, acknowledging the claim to give much closer attention to the practices of women and to the historical interplay of femininities and masculinities, this research suggests incorporating to the hegemonic masculinity understanding a more holistic understanding of gender hierarchy, recognizing the agency of women as much as the power of dominant groups and the mutual conditioning of gender dynamics and other social dynamics; distinguishing local, regional, and global masculinities or femininities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2016).

### **3.2 Short History of Female Social Entrepreneurship**

Although most of the economic definitions of entrepreneurship refer only to male entrepreneurs, women have also been entrepreneurs since centuries. Women in the United States have owned businesses as far back as colonial settlement and before the 20<sup>th</sup> century these businesses were a way to avoid poverty after the loss of or abandonment by a husband, or to provide an income for an unmarried woman. Women did not historically use the word 'entrepreneur' to describe their businesses until the late 1970s and called them 'side-lines' or part-time projects. Through the 19<sup>th</sup> century, women-owned businesses mostly included taverns and alehouses, retail shops, hotels, and brothels. In other cases, women inherited businesses from fathers or husbands (National Womens' History Museum, 2014). In South America, Spanish, indigenous and African women, although they do not appear as much in historical documents, were also enterprising as landowners, in trade, theatre, mining, amongst others. Women were also actively involved in the creation of trade unions and in the movements for the revolution during colonial times (Flores & Benhumea, 2011; Gálvez Quiroz, 2018).

From 1900 until 1929 movements like progressivism, feminism, consumerism, and immigration contributed to an environment that generated women entrepreneurship. During that time, their primary markets were typically other women, but often their businesses had a sense of purpose beyond economics. At the time, new women's organizations, provided a network for exchanging information and strengthening members (National Womens' History Museum, 2014). In Germany, it was the first time in 1908 that Alice Salomon, the social reformer, and pioneer of social work, wrote about women as employers. In 1895 the author found out that there were 8.555 female entrepreneurs in industrial companies like mining, weapon, gas industries, and many pharmacies and breweries were also owned by women. Nevertheless, the author doubted that

women were involved in the management of the businesses, only those women in trade who had female clients and ‘female’ products. Most of them were widows, who had inherited the business from their husbands and had continued it, in many cases with the help of their sons or employees (Eifert, 2011). In the United States, World War II brought many women into the workforce and into self-employment. When the war ended, women were replaced by returning soldiers, and thus many more started their own businesses. During that time women received support and training from institutions and state officials. The press welcomed women entrepreneurs for helping to rebuild the economy by increasing the number of women-owned businesses from 600,000 in 1945 to nearly one million by 1950 (National Womens’ History Museum, 2014). In Germany, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a quarter of all business was owned by women, mostly in self-employment businesses with no employee. In 1925, 20% of all self-employed were women (mostly in textile and food industries), which remained relatively stable until 1970. Women were no exception as entrepreneurs during the 20<sup>th</sup> century but rather accounted for one quarter or a fifth of all entrepreneurs in the country in big and small business and in all kinds of industries. But in comparison to the United States, in Germany, it was not until 1999 that the media acknowledged a new women’s movement of businesswomen (Eifert, 2011).

In the United States, around 1950, although women owned businesses, mostly home-based, they were still facing challenges like finding funds and credits in banks and doing business with men who would not do business with women. With the Civil Rights and women’s movements of the 1960s and 1970s women demanded equality in the business world too. Women entrepreneurs began to move beyond traditionally female industries and into commonly male ones like technology, metals, and finance. During the 1970s women managed to increase the access to capital, for example by funding feminist federal credit unions or a women bank. Another significant change came with personal computers and the internet between 1980 and 1990, as these made it easier and low-cost to start a business and to access resources or networks of assistance. Women continued launching firms in male-dominated industries such as finance, insurance, engineering and increasingly ‘green businesses’ (National Womens’ History Museum, 2014). Examples of female entrepreneurs in history are Lydia Pinkham (1875) founder of the Pinkham’s Vegetable Compound and herbal home remedies and others like Elizabeth Arden, Coco Chanel, Estée Lauder and Ruth Handler who created Barbie from the Mattel company (Chessman, 2008). In Germany known female entrepreneurs were Margarete Steiff (1875), founder of a felt and textile company, Käthe Kruse (1911) creator of a doll company and Jil Sander (1968) a fashion designer (Eifert, 2011).

Since then, women entrepreneurship has expanded and developed. Currently concepts like the ‘everyday entrepreneur’, ventures that typically start



small and plan to stay small, the ‘momprenneur’ representing entrepreneurs who are work-at-home mothers and trends like immigrant entrepreneurs, who represent the fastest-growing category between women business owners, and firms owned by African American women have increased at twice the rate of other groups are well known in the field. Predictions by experts state that by 2018, women’s businesses will create more than half of the new small business jobs and a third of the nation’s total new jobs in the United States (National Womens’ History Museum, 2014).

Regarding social entrepreneurship, it is known that in many countries, entrepreneurship conducted by women was restricted by law, and in many, female social entrepreneurs were excluded from politics or business (Zeiss Stange et al., 2013). Since the Industrial Revolution, women were involved in the creation of social economy organizations, and there are many examples of women succeeding and contributing to the social economy of various countries, like Florence Nightingale (United Kingdom, 1820) who established the first nursing school and developed modern nursing practices, Maria Montessori (Italy, 1870), who created the Montessori approach to early childhood education, (Usher Shrair, 2015) and Teresa Gonzáles de Fanning (Peru, 1836) a feminist pedagogue who founded the first school for girls in Peru (Lasso, Giménez López, & Barrionuevo, 2018). In Germany, one example is Beate Uhse (1919), who was a pilot and founder of a mail order firm for contraceptive devices and literature and creator of the world’s first sex shop (Eifert, 2011).

With the increase of women in self-employment the last 30 years have been fuelled with developments in the status, political weight, and interest in research of women entrepreneurs (Minniti, 2009). The first paper on entrepreneurship focused on women was published in 1976, by the *Journal of Contemporary Business*, entitled ‘Entrepreneurship: A new Female Frontier’ by Eleanor Schwartz (Yadav & Unni, 2016), who recognized that gender intersects with, and influences experiences of entrepreneurship (Minniti, 2009). Exploring and analysing the relationship between entrepreneurial intentions, behaviours, motivations, and gender involves a multi-disciplinary lens. Nevertheless, it was in the late 1990s that the research field developed as a separate and coherent domain of research (Yadav & Unni, 2016). The growth of the field becomes visible when all available research studies and articles are estimated. For example, in 2016 Henry, Foss & Ahl (2016), through a systematic literature review, analysed the last 30 years of research on gender and entrepreneurship, focussing only on empirically based papers and on appropriate journals. Their results show a final total of 335 papers across 18 journals. Thus, the female entrepreneur is currently a topic of research, a subject of policy generation and a separate practitioner category (McAdam, 2013).

In this way, the research on female entrepreneurship has expanded to different disciplines, methods, and countries. At the beginning, the studies focused on traits and individual characteristics, they did not tested theory and

considered gender or sex as a variable (Greene, Brush, & Gatewood, 2007), showing relevant differences between men and women entrepreneurs and concluding that these were not always appropriately reflected by existing theories developed for men and generalized to women. Afterwards, studies on female entrepreneurial behaviour inspired by feminist theories emerged (Minniti, 2009). Thus, theoretically based research appeared, and in the early 90s gender began being used as a perspective through which research was made and not just as a variable that was measured (Greene et al., 2007). Most of the studies with a feminist approach were empirical, leaving theoretical issues out (Minniti, 2009), and therefore the focus was set primarily on building the category of the female entrepreneur, and exploring the ways in which female and male entrepreneurs were influenced by the relations between gender, occupation, and organizational structure (Greene et al., 2007). Currently, research on female entrepreneurship has expanded into fields like health, motherhood, team and networking, management style, financing, social entrepreneurship, and others. Therefore, researchers have been able to provide data and facts about female entrepreneurship, profiling them, describing the type of businesses they manage and what the impact of these businesses is. As a relatively young research area, some results are contradicting and much remains to be explained (Minniti, 2009).

Next to the feminist approach, economy had a significant impact on the study of women's employment. In 1990, Claudia Goldin published her book *Understanding the gender gap*, legitimizing the study of women's labour behaviour and inspiring research on topics relating female entrepreneurship to the distribution of family resources, marriage and childbearing decisions, opportunity perceptions, self-confidence, and poverty, among others (Minniti, 2009). Goldin (2006) states that the women's increased involvement in the economy was the most significant change in labour markets during the past century.

However, to describe the theoretical issues related to the topic of this research, in the following sector I discuss shortly the different feminist theories in relation to entrepreneurial research.

### **3.3 Feminist Theories in Entrepreneurial Research**

In recent years, there has been a call to build more theoretical explanations and move beyond acknowledging differences between genders in the field of entrepreneurship (Yadav & Unni, 2016). As Greene, Hart, Gatewood, Brush & Carter (2003) point out in a meta-analysis of the literature, approximately 93% of papers until 2001 were empirically based and the rest used a conceptual approach or were literature reviews; and those that do use theory have gendered

ontological and epistemological assumptions (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015).

Entrepreneurship has been perceived as a way, for women, to obtain more agency over their socio-economic context, and potentially strengthening their status and power, as it is assumed that entrepreneurship offers autonomy. However, these theories of individualization that underline freedom and agency have been criticised because these do not consider the structural barriers which could be influencing women's life choices, including those related to entrepreneurship. Thus, analysing female entrepreneurship through feminist theories would contribute towards an inclusion of structural factors that are determining the differences between male and female entrepreneurship. Liberalist feminism and socialist feminism are the two most commonly used feminist perspectives in entrepreneurship research (McAdam, 2013), but post-colonialism and other approaches are also gaining space in the research realm.

*Liberal feminism* proposes that men and women are essentially similar with regards to mental capacities and rationalities and as such are entitled to the same opportunities; referring to women becoming more like men as the ideal standard (Holmes, 2007). Thus, the solution to any disadvantage, difference or deprivation experienced by women in relation to men is to remove barriers to women's participation in education and employment. These studies focused on identifying whether women are discriminated against by lenders and consultants, and whether women have less relevant education and experience. Liberal feminists assume that the persistence of legal and institutional barriers causes gender inequality, and their removal will result in women founders achieving unbiased entrepreneurial outcomes compared to male founders (Greer & Greene, 2003). Although liberal feminism assumes men and women are essentially the same, it was criticised for assuming that women can advance by being more like men (Holmes, 2007). Further, they had a tendency to ignore the gendered division of labour in the workplace and at home (Greer & Greene, 2003). Liberal feminist theory is inspired by liberal political theory, where the ability defines an individual; it does not question the existing structures like bureaucracy or leadership and advises women to adapt to the existing order in society (Ahl, 2006).

*Socialist feminism* focuses on difference and claims that women bring their own special skills to business. This theory states that the underperformance of women-owned businesses is caused by inherent differences in men and women because of variances in early and ongoing socialization. This does not mean women are inferior to men, as women and men may develop different but equally effective traits, and should be viewed as complementary (McAdam, 2013). Therefore, the environment should recognise and accept such gender role differences instead of rejecting or removing them. Assuming a socialist feminist position means regarding gender differences (biological, socially constructed, or otherwise) and acknowledging unequal economic power relations

associated with such differences (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015). Feminine traits are perceived as benefits rather than disadvantages and as resources to be used constructively (Ahl, 2006). This view, again, does not question the male norm, it just provides an alternative, or a complementary norm. 'Constructing men and women as different means that one understands 'man' and 'woman' to be essential, unitary (and different) concepts, which limits the repertoire of both sexes' (Ahl, 2006, p. 2). For socialist feminists, the goals of equality of opportunity of liberal feminists, which are based on the assumed androgynous entrepreneur, are erroneous, because cultural experiences shape the way women entrepreneurs view their roles in society and their chances of success (McAdam, 2013). The critiques of this approach include essentialism and polarisation of men and women (McAdam, 2013). Moreover, this approach uses white middle class women as the norm within a North American context ignoring other ethnic, minority or geographical groupings (Ahl, 2004).

*Marxist feminists* state that a key determinant towards understanding the economic disadvantage of women compared to men is the relationship between women's domestic labour and her market labour. Therefore, they express the need for socializing both childcare and household work in addition to full equality in the labour force (Greer & Greene, 2003). This approach has some limitations regarding theories of entrepreneurship because the focus is on paid labour, rather than self-employment. Although there are exceptions, the goals of Marxist feminists may appear to be contrary to entrepreneurial goals, which assume and generally accept the status quo and normative superiority of a market-based capitalist system versus a Marxist based economic system such as communism or socialism. Moreover, the relation between Marxist economic theories that do not recognise women's productive capacity and the agency demanded under a feminist approach offers a complex range of possibilities for rethinking forms of economic structures and entrepreneurship activities. To this end, Marxist feminist theories can offer insights and awareness around gendered entrepreneurship activities (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015).

*Radical feminists* suggest that men and women are inherently different (these are innate, psychological, emotional, and typically attributed, at least to some degree, to basic reproductive distinctions), and further, that men have exploited these differences to their own advantage, having more power than women (Greer & Greene, 2003). Radical feminism rejects the socialized norms that favour the masculine domination and explicitly aims to adopt feminist organizations and approaches. In the dominantly masculine entrepreneurial ecosystem, these kinds of pro-feminist organizations are scarce; however, there is an emerging movement toward launching female-only incubators, accelerator programmes, educational workshops, business plan pitch contests, angel investor funds, networks, and others, which somehow align with radical feminist perspectives (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015).

*Poststructuralist feminist theory and research*, according to Ahl (2004), avoids essentialism and polarizing men and women and understands gender and the body as a socially constructed phenomenon which is specific to culture, history, and locality. Gender is not the result of sex (Butler, 1990), and that what is regarded as masculine or feminine is a result of upbringing and socialization and varies in time and place. Therefore, gender is rather a 'doing', it can be 'accomplished' and it is not something which 'is', it is performatively produced and compelled by regulatory practices of gender coherence (Ahl, 2006; Butler, 1990). Thus, the task for poststructuralist feminism is to challenge and change the dominant discourse and so, rather than studying female entrepreneurship against scales of similarity (liberal feminist) or difference (socialist feminism), poststructuralism studies conditions and practices that produce gender (Ahl, 2004), how masculinity and femininity are constructed and what consequences this has on the social order. Discourse analysis by feminist underline the way the discussion of entrepreneurship takes a masculine ideal type for granted. Moreover, these researchers turn the focus back on the researcher and the discipline, the research practices, underlining that even with the goal to close the gender gap, these could be perpetuating the dominant masculine model by reproducing social reality (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015).

*Transnational/Postcolonial feminist approaches*, in general, attend to the living and working conditions of women and men in the Global South to underline their roles as low-status, low-wage employees working in the context of globalized capitalism. Specifically, postcolonial feminism focuses on the gendered subject of the Global South and attends to epistemological concerns over voice and representation. On the other side, transnational feminism addresses the role of the nation state and global governance in producing gendered subjects. Applied to entrepreneurship, these critical feminist lenses can show the ways in which gendered subjectivities and assumptions around who can become a specific kind of entrepreneur limit the type of activities and opportunities available for women. Moreover, they can also underline what other kind of knowledge is made invisible through practices that aim at 'helping poor women' (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016).

Next, I describe the current state of research on the intersection of social entrepreneurship and gender, exhibiting that these feminist theoretical frameworks are only recently starting to be applied in research.

## 3.4 Current State of Research

### 3.4.1 *Recent Research on Female Social Entrepreneurship*

As already mentioned, there is little research and attention paid to female social entrepreneurship. For example, in Europe, although data indicates that in 2014 there were 30.6 million self-employed people, from which 24.5 million were women (OECD, 2015) there is no gender disaggregated data available about the number of women social entrepreneurs specifically, as most academic studies have employed a gender-blind analysis of social entrepreneurship (Teasdale et al., 2011). However, this section provides a brief, and by no means exhaustive, review of the available articles and papers on this specific topic, up until 2019.

Globally and in Europe, there are relatively few comparative studies about social entrepreneurship (Usher Shrair, 2015). However, in general, in social entrepreneurship, gender is usually approached in two ways. One approach analyses the impact of women entrepreneurs on society and social issues, and the second sets social entrepreneurship as a platform for empowering women and achieving for example more gender equality (primarily in the Global South). Besides, more and more non-governmental organizations, micro-lenders and international aid institutions recognise entrepreneurship as necessary for economic and social development and a way to include women economically. There is the assumption that social entrepreneurship moves women closer towards gender equality. However, there are no critical feminist perspectives in the analysis of female social entrepreneurship (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016). Following, I shortly describe the different research studies that discuss the topic.

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor's (GEM) social entrepreneurship activity research is based on interviews with 167793 adults in 58 economies in 2015 and is thus the largest comparative study of social entrepreneurship in the world. During this survey, data was recorded regarding the social entrepreneurs' demographic characteristics, asking for sex, age, education, and household income (Bosma et al., 2015).

The SEFORIS project is a multi-disciplinary, multi-method international research project on social enterprise funded by the European Commission and it aims to better understand the role that social enterprises play in the European Commission and beyond in the development of and evolution towards inclusive and innovative societies. The most current reports, which collected data between April 2015 and December 2015, surveyed over 1000 social enterprises in Hungary, Romania, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Russia, and China, and for each country there is a report for 2016. Here,

social entrepreneurs are also demographically analysed according to sex, age, and education (SEFORĪS, 2016).

The EFESEIIS project's (Enabling the Flourishing and Evolution of Social Entrepreneurship for Innovative and Inclusive Societies) mission is to produce new knowledge enabling the European people to fully understand the conditions under which social entrepreneurship starts, develops, and can contribute effectively and efficiently to solving societal challenges in a sustainable way. It started in 2013 and continued into 2016 and aimed at constructing an Evolutionary Theory of Social Entrepreneurship, identifying the features of an 'Enabling Eco-System for Social Entrepreneurship', describing the 'New Generation' of Social Entrepreneurs, and providing advice to stakeholders. Apart from the National Reports, there are also some thematic focus reports. One of these was about sex, analysing a sample of 837 questionnaires and showing respondents' educational attainment, working position, previous experience, and average wage by sex (EFESEIIS, 2016).

The Thomson Reuters Foundation has conducted a survey in 45 countries to find out which of them are creating the best environment for social entrepreneurs. In each of the countries they contacted 20 experts on social entrepreneurship. Additionally, they inquired if women are well represented in leadership roles in social enterprises and if women who are leading social enterprises are paid the same as men (Thomson Reuters Foundation, 2016).

Urbano, Ferro & Noguera i Noguera (2014) analyse the socio-cultural factors that influence the likelihood of women becoming social entrepreneurs, using institutional economics, and applying binary logistic regression to test the proposed hypotheses. These include the positive effect of post-materialism, altruism and being a member of a social organization on the probability to become a social entrepreneur or on the probability of females becoming social entrepreneurs. It uses data (40 countries and 56,875 individuals) from the World Value Survey (WVS) and the World Bank (WB). The main findings indicate that socio-cultural factors have a significant impact on social entrepreneurship. However, their influence on gender issues is not clear as post-materialism affects male social entrepreneurship more than females, and in contrast, the altruistic attitude is more important in female social entrepreneurship. Also, being a member of a social organization can influence both female and male social entrepreneurs.

Teasdale, McKay, Phillimore & Teasdale (2011) with the article titled 'Exploring gender and social entrepreneurship: women's leadership, employment, and participation in the third sector and social enterprises' draw upon existing data sources and explore gender differences in leadership, participation and employment in the third sector and social enterprises. The research focussed on the United Kingdom, which is relevant because at that time the United Kingdom government is widely seen as having the most advanced social enterprise policy focus in the world. First, it might be arguable that women are only

slightly less likely than men to initiate and lead third sector social ventures. In turn, half of the higher and two thirds of the lower managerial and professional positions are filled by women, and the wider workforce consists of around two thirds of women. From this perspective, social entrepreneurship, and social ventures in the third sector could be perceived as balancing the gender inequality faced by women in the private sector. Second, women are only half as likely as men to attain higher managerial or professional positions. Moreover, women are paid less than men, although the gender pay gap is smaller than in other sectors of the economy. Therefore, third sector social ventures are gendered in similar ways to private sector organizations, although the degree of vertical segregation is less pronounced. Finally, women's choices to create or work in third sector social ventures are mitigated by the gendered context in which they are exercised. Thus, women may be pushed towards the third sector as they face less discrimination than in the private sector, or the skills they have developed are there more highly valued. It is shown that women may use the voluntary sector to counteract negative attributes such as re-entry to the labour force or building up skills and that in general, the participation of marginalised groups is associated with greater levels of change. However, the portrayal of women in the third sector is rather stereotypical. The misconception that volunteering is a way of occupying free time still exists, particularly among privileged groups, which needs to be challenged, as in fact, much volunteer work is being undertaken by members of marginalised groups to counteract negative circumstances. Moreover, volunteering is seen as an extension of women's care and family work, which strengthens the stereotypical conception of men's work as rewarded and as a public contribution, and women's work as the extension of private and care responsibilities. Studies have underlined that men are disproportionately more present on voluntary organizations' boards, more likely to occupy multiple seats and to be involved in different sectors compared with women. Nevertheless, the degree in which all these patterns are found amongst social entrepreneurs is under-researched, and additionally, many of the existing sources are based in North America, and therefore difficult for generalizations. More research is needed to understand the extent to which this vertical segregation varies within the third sector, both by subsector and by degree of market orientation (Teasdale et al., 2011).

In Germany, a study about the career in the non-profit sector for women by Zimmer, Priller & Paul (2017) states that a considerable number of jobs have been created in recent decades, particularly in the social, health, education, environmental and international sectors. Within these jobs, most employees (76%) are women. The structural characteristics of work and employment in non-profits explicitly make them highly attractive to women by responding to women's expectations of meaningful and social work, by fulfilling their wishes for relatively high autonomy in the context of project work, and by meeting their needs for flexible working hours and family-friendly structures. However,



these structural peculiarities also have their downsides, as they contribute to hindering the career advancement of women. On the one hand, women are less likely to be employed in management positions. On the other hand, women, mostly in middle management or entry level, 'feel comfortable' in a certain way and do not consider further career steps or a change of job. Thus, the feminization of the sector, is only reflected to a limited extent on the management levels. Most board members are still male and particularly professionalised board members who work full-time are predominantly (70%) male. If a woman is employed in a management position, she is often the managing director, so that the 'operative business' tends to remain with women, while men are more responsible for representative and public tasks. Moreover, only every second employee in the sector works full-time. These are usually men, while women work predominantly part-time. Also, compared to their male counterparts, women see fewer opportunities for advancement and career development in their organization or in the sector.

The Working Paper 72 published and supported by the Third Sector Research Centre in February 2012, titled 'Women as social entrepreneurs' and authored by Humbert (2012) argues that research on social entrepreneurs does not consider gender adequately. Besides, given the lack of research on women's contribution as social entrepreneurs, the paper suggests other possible areas of study to advance this field of research and brings together the literature on social entrepreneurs and female entrepreneurs, while also drawing on the gender/diversity literature. It provides paths of further work to better understand the way in which sex and gender interact with the practices of social entrepreneurs. This report was informed by a focus group organised in June 2009 in London that brought together key informants such as policy makers, female social entrepreneurs, and academics. It concludes that research on social entrepreneurs largely depends on the assumption that there are common characteristics inherent to social entrepreneurs. This is problematic in this context since it relies on individual characteristics and may ignore the collective nature of entrepreneurship and may not address its real diversity, limiting the depth of analysis.

The report titled 'Women Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation' published in 2014 by the OECD as a Working Paper by Huysentruyt (2014), includes data about the prevalence of female-run social enterprises, innovation by female-run social enterprises, the analysis of three cases and a final discussion and implications for policymaking. The author is part of the SELUSI project, and therefore the report draws on evidence generated by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor from 2009 and the LSE-SELUSI Database from 2010. Some results are further discussed.

Clark Muntean & Ozkazan-Pan (2016) present a research with the purpose to bring diverse feminist perspectives on social entrepreneurship research and practice to challenge existing assumptions and approaches, while providing

new directions for research at the intersections of gender, social and commercial entrepreneurship. Their research design included applying liberal feminist, socialist feminist, and transnational/postcolonial feminist perspectives to critically examine issues of gender in the field of social entrepreneurship. Their results suggest that the social entrepreneurship field does not recognize gender as an organizing principle in society. Further, a focus on women within this field replicates problematic gendered assumptions underlying the field of women's entrepreneurship research. The authors provide a critical gender perspective to inform the strategies and programmes adopted by practitioners as well as the types of research questions entrepreneurship scholars ask and redirect the conversation away from limited status quo approaches, towards the aim of social entrepreneurship and women's entrepreneurship, which is, economic and social equality for women across the globe.

Furthermore, a project by the UNRISD (2017) titled 'Feminist Analysis of Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) Practices: Views from Latin America and India', is an ongoing project which started in 2015. This project is located at the intersection between feminist and sustainable development research and aims to fill some of the gaps in SSE analysis and policies from a feminist perspective, and to show how feminist debates on social reproduction and the care economy can be enhanced through greater attention to forms of collective and solidarity-based care provision. It aimed at answering research questions like, what are the practices, social relations, and power relations through which social reproduction is organized within SSE? What is the contribution of SSE when it comes to revitalizing public action and policies in the fields of production and social reproduction? Its methodology and approach include four research sites from the Global South (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, and India). At the micro-level, the research teams will conduct in-depth studies of selected SSE organizations, using feminist anthropological approaches. At the meso- and macro- levels they explored the interactions between SSE practices and political debates in these countries, using feminist economics, sociology, and political science approaches. This study contributes to the production of detailed empirical information on SSE initiatives with a gender perspective and theoretical debates related to social reproduction, emancipation, public action, and policies. The research project has published three briefs to summarize the main research themes and findings: the revalorization of social reproduction through SSE practices; solidarity practices and the formation of political subjects and actions for change and making public policies for SSE sustainable, feminist-conscious, and transformative and exploring the challenges. All briefs provide recommendations for action.

In Spain, a study by Cordobés (2016) aimed at offering a clear image of the ecosystem of women's social enterprise in the country, synthesizing the available information and data, and identifying the main actors, initiatives, and programmes. Moreover, identifying the main barriers and the levers of change that

would enhance their participation. The study wanted to produce new data in relation to the profile of the social entrepreneur in Spain, as well as in relation to the characteristics of the social companies they are leading or co-leading, also to identify outstanding practices at an international level regarding support for women's social entrepreneurship. The study's methodology concentrated on secondary analysis, as well as conducting interviews and surveys with social entrepreneurs and other relevant agents in Spain and internationally. Results will be further discussed.

A report on female social entrepreneurship in Europe was conducted by the European Women's Lobby, as part of the WEstart project in 2015. This project aimed at gaining a better understanding of the situation of women's social entrepreneurship in Europe by analysing women-led social enterprises in ten EU countries (Bulgaria, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom). Ten experts in women's social entrepreneurship carried out desk research on the social enterprise ecosystems within their countries, gathered data on approximately 1,000 women-led social enterprises and conducted in-depth interviews using feminist methods with nearly 100 women social entrepreneurs. Additionally, 377 women social entrepreneurs from all 10 countries participated in an electronic survey. The goal of the research was to understand the national contexts in which women social entrepreneurs were operating, their revenue, legal status, job creation and sector, motivations, the barriers, and their social impact. The researchers discussed also about care responsibilities, women's empowerment, and gender equality. The results include a final synthesis report, ten national mini reports, a final conference, an electronic database of women social entrepreneurs and a communications strategy to disseminate the results of the project throughout the European Union. The main questions that were intended to be answered were 'With social transformation at its heart, and more women leading social enterprise than traditional enterprise, does this sector have the potential to introduce a new way of approaching business that shifts the current growth-focused, masculine-dominated paradigm? Can social enterprise provide a more gender-equal and inclusive way of creating jobs, inspiring innovation, and tackling social issues?' (Usher Shrair, 2015). Results will be also discussed further.

The report by Ashoka with the support of the Citi Foundation, 'Celebrating ChangemakHERS: How women social entrepreneurs lead and innovate' (Taberna, Rahman, Jackman, & Park, 2019) is based on a selection of interviewed Fellows from over 15 countries and aimed to understand what the most important enablers for female social entrepreneurs has been. Particularly to analyse common enablers for female social entrepreneurs to successfully lead and innovate, identify trends and shifts within women's leadership in social innovation, recognize the gender-specific challenges female social entrepreneurs face, measure impact of female social entrepreneurs' innovations, expand the

network for women in social entrepreneurship, understand the most transformative types of support given to female social entrepreneurs and lastly, highlight lessons from others who are advancing women's leadership. Results will be further discussed.

Finally, several studies, which will be discussed in detail afterwards, aimed at investigating doing gender and entrepreneurship. Bruni, Gerardi & Poggio (2004), present an ethnographic account of doing gender and doing entrepreneurship as intertwined. García & Welter (2013), on the other side, examined how women entrepreneurs construct their gender identities and practices through the interpretation of their narratives. Hechavarria & Ingram (2016) studied the interplay among forms of entrepreneurship and the gendered entrepreneurial divide, investigating the likelihood that females will venture in the commercial entrepreneurial ventures versus social entrepreneurial ventures. Braches & Elliot (2017) examined how German women construct accounts of entrepreneurship as a gendered career. Stead (2017) explores what belonging involves for women in the entrepreneurial context to offer a conceptualisation of entrepreneurial belonging as relational, dynamic, gendered and in continual accomplishment. Marlow & Martinez Dy (2018) develop a critique of contemporary approaches to analysing the impact of gender upon entrepreneurial propensity and activity, engaging more deeply with the notion of gender as a multiplicity, exploring the implications of such for future studies of entrepreneurial activity. And finally, Spiegelger & Halberstadt (2018) studied how relationship networks influence the idea generation in the opportunity recognition process by female social entrepreneurs.

### *3.4.2 Female Social Entrepreneurship in Numbers*

Regarding female entrepreneurship in general, three main socio-economic factors impact their abilities and possibilities. First, the gender pay-gap, second the occupational segregation and unequal employment opportunities and third the work-life balance/ family and care issues. Briefly described, female employment is still concentrated in a thin range of lower-paying occupations, often as part-time employees. On the one hand, horizontal segregation generates the identification of specific occupations related to women that are less valued. On the other hand, vertical segregation includes the barriers women face in entering senior and higher paid positions. In general, women's employment experiences provide them with less financial resources to start a business and lower levels of human and social capital. Although entrepreneurship is frequently seen as an attractive career option for women because of the assumed flexibility to combine family and work responsibilities, pregnancy, maternity, childcare, and caring duties represent challenges for female entrepreneurs. Maternity means a greater financial risk for women business owners than for

employees. Additionally, women, because of their professional backgrounds, experiences, relationships, and networks, are usually in disadvantage in their access to human, social, physical, organizational, and technical capital. However, women are not a homogenous group and their experience of gender-related limitations differs greatly. Moreover, many women have been able to challenge barriers and lobby for change, so their agency should and must be acknowledged (Carter & Shaw, 2006).

Statistics on female entrepreneurship, as well as regional support services for female entrepreneurs in Germany will be discussed during the secondary analysis review in the chapter of Results and Discussion.

Regarding statistic data on female social entrepreneurship, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor states that of all world's social entrepreneurs, around 55% of them are male and 45% are female. This data shows that the gender gap in social entrepreneurial activity is significantly smaller than the gender gap in commercial entrepreneurship found in some countries. In almost every region, the percentage of female operational and nascent social entrepreneurship is higher than the percentage of female operational and nascent commercial entrepreneurship (Figure 1) (Bosma et al., 2015).

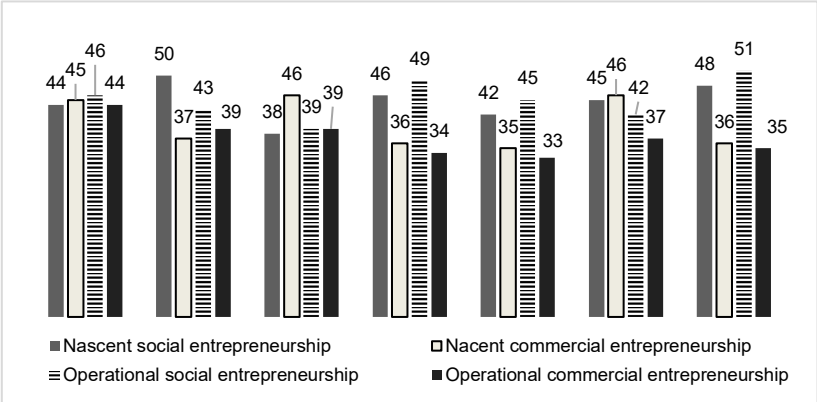


Figure 1: Percentage of Females Within Group of Entrepreneurs (Bosma et al., 2015)

The Thomson Reuters Foundation, together with Deutsche Bank, UnLtd and the Global Social Entrepreneurship Network ranked countries according to where women fare best as social entrepreneurs considering the representation in leadership roles in social enterprises and the gender pay gap. Data from the two questions were combined to draw up the final rank: the number one is the Philippines, followed by Russia, Canada, Malaysia, and China. Three others among the top ten ranking were in Asia (Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Thailand).

Brazil came last and the United States did badly in the perception survey due to concerns about women being paid less than men. Women interviewed across Asia described a fairer playing field and higher drive to put compassion over valuation as the reason women are doing so well as social entrepreneurs. In general, the online survey found that 68% of experts stated women are well represented in leadership in social enterprises (Thomson Reuters Foundation, 2016).

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (Bosma et al., 2015) and the SELUSI Database (2014) also suggest that although there are generally more men likely to start a social venture than women, but compared with commercial entrepreneurial activity, females are relatively more prevalent in social entrepreneurial activity (Huysentruyt, 2014). Also, in general, women seem to emphasize social goals more than economic goals relative to their male counterparts (Hecharvarria et al., 2017). There is a higher prevalence of women being more altruistic and seeking social goals than men, therefore, they are more likely to establish or manage a social enterprise than a traditional commercial form. Additionally, women are more averse to competition, and because the markets of social enterprises are generally newer, less mature and less competitive than commercial markets, the chances increase for women founding or managing a social enterprise (Huysentruyt, 2014).

A recent report of Ashoka (Taberna et al., 2019) analysing their global fellowships (approx. 3500) shows that there are 38% female social entrepreneurs and 1% with other gender identity. They are mainly working in economic development (20%), education (18%), civic participation (17%), health (17%), human rights (17%) and environment (11%). Moreover, they focus on populations living on poverty (55%), children and youth (55%), women (48%), people living in rural and remote areas (45%). Female social entrepreneurs are located in Asia (25%), Latin America (20%), Africa (15%), Europe (15%), MENA (15%) and North America (10%). They mostly work with low-middle income populations (70%), lead innovations that support job-creation (53%) and lead for-profit social enterprises (28%).

#### 3.4.2.1 Female Social Entrepreneurship in Europe

As mentioned before, there are a few sources of data about female social entrepreneurship in Europe, with the general report from the WEstart project (Usher Shrair, 2015) and the one by Huysentruyt (2014) as the most recent and detailed ones.

Huysentruyt (2014) analysed the data from the SELUSI project, as the author considered this the only data that included detailed information about the social enterprise, the director’s management style, background characteristics and the organization’s innovation activity. However, it provides information only on five European countries (Hungary, Romania, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom). In general, male, and female social entrepreneurs are very similar. Both female and male social entrepreneurs tend to be highly educated, having completed on average a master’s degree. Female social entrepreneurs seem to be slightly younger than their male counterparts (45.2 versus 46.9 years old for men), whereas the highest proportion (35%) of social enterprise directors overall is aged between 35 and 44, followed by the age group 45-54 (30%), for both female and male directors. Only in the age group of over 55-year olds (55+), female directors seem to be underrepresented (18% versus 26% of men) (Figure 2).

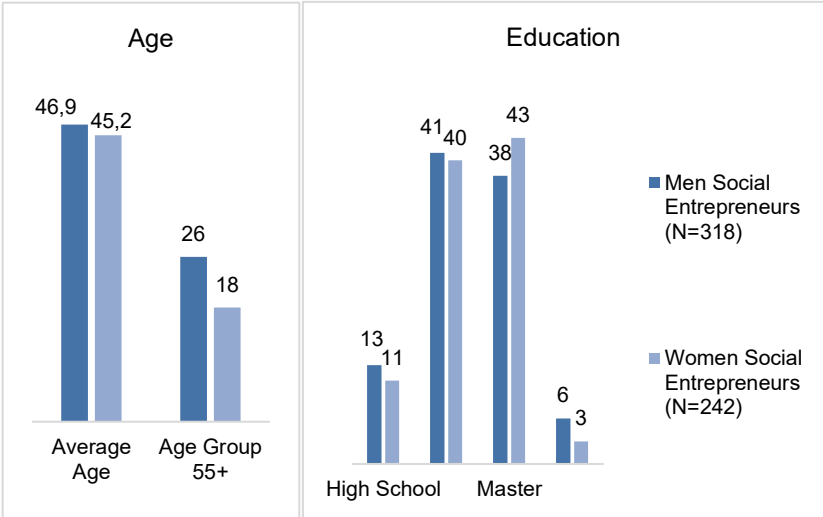


Figure 2: Female and Male Social Entrepreneurs Compared (Huysentruyt, 2014, p. 10)

The WEstart results show that more than three out of four surveyed women were running a social enterprise that was less than five years old. The small percentage (14%) that reported running social enterprises that were ten or more years old were often representative of NGOs or governmental institutions that transitioned to using the term or legal status of a social enterprise (Usher Shrair, 2015). The average age of the female enterprises is also slightly below male enterprises; however, this difference is caused by the gender difference in age of the social enterprise among the oldest ventures (those established at least 20

years ago) (Figure 3). Within this organizational age group, there is a significantly higher proportion of men (70%) who run social enterprises (Huysentruyt, 2014).

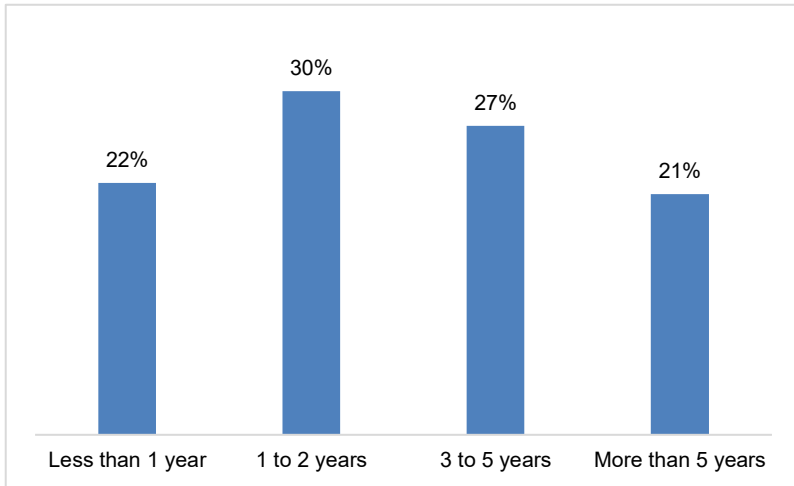


Figure 3: Age of Social Enterprises in Europe (Usher Shrair, 2015, p. 16)

The more prevalent domains for women-led social enterprises are social services (32% versus 18% of male run) and health (15% versus 8%). For all the other social sector types (listed in order of frequency: development and housing, education and research environment, and culture and recreation), no gender differences were found. Additionally, in terms of the enterprise's industry types (NACE Classification), social enterprises led by women are less likely to be active in business services (20% versus 28% of male run ventures) and in health and social work (28% versus 12% of male run enterprises). When women and male-led social ventures are compared, they are similar in size, profitability, and growth, once controlled for observable firm-level characteristics. There seems to be some evidence of a gender difference in revenues in the United Kingdom and Hungary. The SELUSI data shows that overall women-led social ventures do not underperform compared to those led by men (Figure 4) (Huysentruyt, 2014).



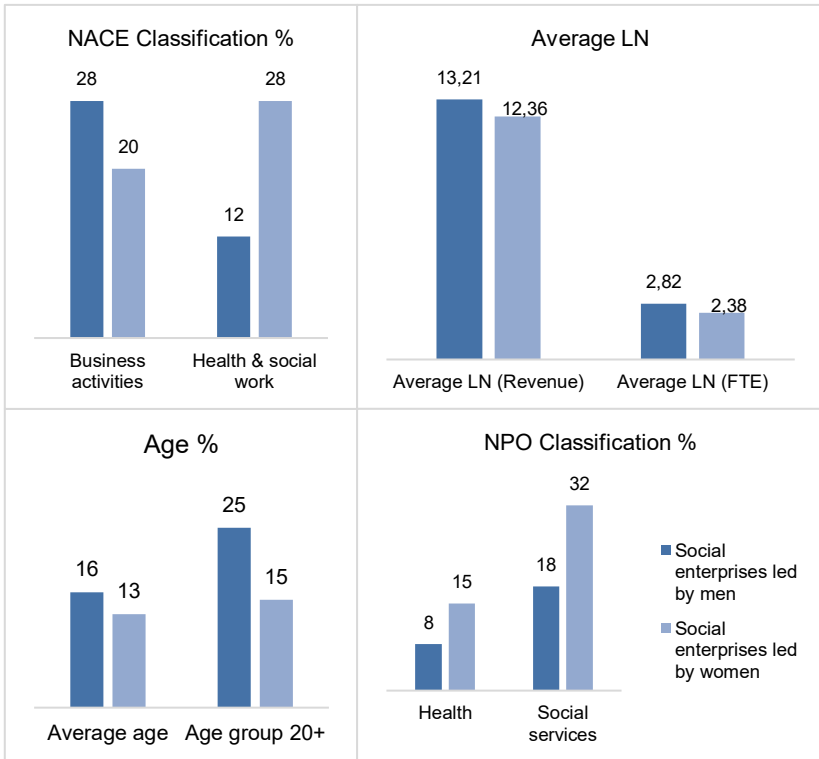
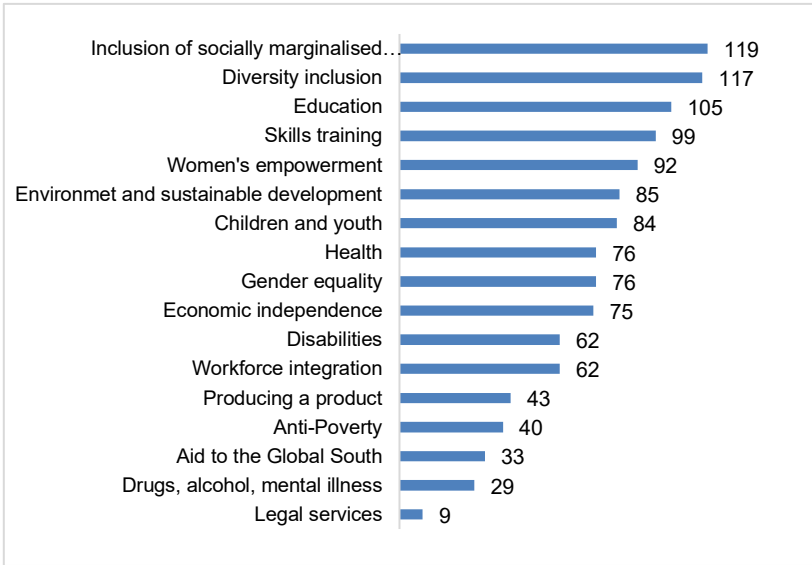


Figure 4: Social Enterprises Led by Men and Women Compared (Huysen-truyt, 2014, p. 11)

The WEstart survey asked women to choose from a standard list of EU labour market sectors and found that the largest percentage (26%) of women-led social enterprises reported being in the human health and social work sectors. Yet, the second highest percentage (19%) was in education, followed by accommodation and food services (9%) and information and communications (9%). The author underlines that, with additional sex-disaggregated data, there may be more gender differences within social enterprises in the education sector. With regards to the social mission, the inclusion of socially marginalised people and groups was the most common mission, followed closely by diversity inclusion (Figure 5) (Usher Shrair, 2015).



*Figure 5: Social Issues Most Relevant to Social Enterprises in Europe (Multiple Selections) (Usher Shrair, 2015, p. 18)*

For more than 50% of WEstart respondents, 50-100% of their annual revenue derives from the market, indicating that overall, female social enterprises are financially self-sufficient, with only 21% declaring that less than 10% of their revenue comes from the market. Also, more than half of the respondents reinvested over 90% of their surplus back into their organization or into a social cause, and over two-thirds reinvested 61%- 100%. In general, 31% of female social enterprises gain less than €10,000 annually, which is probably because more than 50% of survey respondents have enterprises that are less than two years old. 10% of the social enterprises interviewed reported revenues of €500,000 or more per year and 32% gain annually revenue of over €100,000, which indicates that there were many high-profit female social enterprises among the sample. For the author this is very promising, and again, opposes the underperformance (mis)perception of women business-owners (Usher Shrair, 2015). Also, after a regression analyses trying to explain between-firm variation in the log of revenues, the authors could not find any effect of gender; so that, again, there is no evidence that women have a preference to stay ‘small’ when compared to men in a same sector, and the importance of culture and country context is underlined. However, this result needs further research. Similarly, the share of self-generated revenues is on average lower between female enterprises (53%) compared to those run by men (64%), nevertheless, when

controlled for venture characteristics (like size, age, sector, etc.) and country fixed effects, gender no longer played a role. When controlled for age, sector, operational model and country location of the social venture, no gender differences in revenue growth or surplus growth can be found. An interesting fact is that female social enterprises rate their own organization's social impact consistently higher compared to other organizations in their field (Huysentruyt, 2014). Lastly, in Spain, women access less sources of external financing. Almost 50% of them financed their enterprises with their own resources of more than 75% of the total of the necessary investment. Only 16% have not used private/own funding. 78% have not used bank credits and 88% have not counted with impact investment. The second more used source of finance have been grants and donations. All this considering that 58% have valued the access to finance as a very important barrier (Cordobés, 2016).

The results of the WEstart survey show that 38% of women-led social enterprises have no full-time paid employees and additional 39% have between one and three full-time paid employees. The data also indicates that the majority had none to three part-time employees. In their household lived on average 2.55 people, with an average of 1.8 people contributing to the income. Only 32% of the surveyed women are gaining a salary from their social enterprise that represents more than 50% of their household income and 71% receive an additional income for their household (Usher Shrair, 2015).

Regarding the motivation of the surveyed female social entrepreneurs, the WEstart survey shows that for most of them (95%) responding to an unmet need in the community was a strong or very strong motivating factor in their decision to start a social enterprise. Likewise, for 93% of women, seeking to make a specific social impact was a strong or very strong motivating factor. In the analysed countries, women described personally experiencing and witnessing unmet needs in their community and looking for innovative solutions that will have a specific social impact. They also describe feeling a personal calling towards social issues and a desire to make the world a better place (Usher Shrair, 2015), which corresponds to the affirmation that women are more oriented towards social goals compared to economic ones (Hechavarria et al., 2017), even as commercial entrepreneurs, women seem to emphasise social goals more and economic goals less compared to their male counterparts (Huysentruyt, 2014). 82% of surveyed women noted that having a personal connection to an issue or group was a strong or very strong motivating factor, so that most of them referred to having had a personal or first-hand experience that motivated them to start their social enterprise. For 88% of the surveyed women, an innovative idea for a new product, process, market, or service was a strong or very strong motivation. For 80% of women, wanting to create a more ethical way of doing business was a strong or very strong motivation, and for 78% of them, to create a more sustainable model of doing business was a strong or very strong motivation. More than 50% were motivated by having a

greater decision-making and leadership power in their careers, and almost 80% were motivated by trying something new and learn new skills. Additionally, some became entrepreneurs to have more flexibility to be able to accommodate a family life, which depends on the maternity leave policies and work-life balance issues of the country (Usher Shrair, 2015). In Spain, to create and manage according to the own values is a very important motivation for 78% of female social entrepreneurs. Thus, the social enterprise can provide women a more collaborative and participative context, where they feel more comfortable and can unfold other ways of leadership and management. On the other hand, growing professionally was a very important motivation for 86%, which could indicate that they had difficulties to develop professionally in other contexts or difficulties accessing positions of responsibility. Economic motivations appear clearly as secondary, with just 13% of them who valued them as very important and only 10% who have founded out of necessity. Moreover, motivations related to gender do not seem as determinant, with 26% for whom avoiding discrimination or limitations associated with being a woman were a very important motivational factor and a 32% for whom it was to harmonize professional and personal life. 82% of the respondents manifested that the origin of their social enterprises was a personal experience (Cordobés, 2016).

The interviews from the WEstart project revealed that women entrepreneurs are not always aware of the fact that what they are planning, or operating is a social enterprise. Most of them were not usually seeking to provide a single income for their household (47%), and making a profit was not a motivating factor or a relatively small one (31%). Finally, for most women (68%) unemployment or underemployment was not a motivating factor (Usher Shrair, 2015).

Huysentruyt (2014) states that when asked about the three most important targets their organizations wish to achieve in the next year, women are much less likely to mention goals linked to the realization of agreements, collaborations or alliances (29% of women versus 43% of men). This is consistent with evidence elsewhere showing a gender gap in the likelihood to initiate negotiations, where women seem less inclined to negotiate, but only in the presence of a male evaluator. Interestingly, the most frequently mentioned goals relate to revenues and social impact, for both male and female social entrepreneurs (more than 50%). Compared to male social entrepreneurs, and controlling for age, sector focus, operational model and country location, female social entrepreneurs are significantly more likely to engage in participatory management practices.

When discussing barriers for female social entrepreneurs, the results of the WEstart project indicate that access to finance is the biggest barrier they face, with 41% of them who had not enough funding available, and 37% lacked access to funding. Discrimination and gender-specific barriers to access finance for women when starting a business is well-founded, however, the duality of

social enterprises, makes it even more difficult, as traditional investors and lenders find it difficult to understand the social factor of the social business models and tend to prioritize traditional businesses. Already, from the few specific lending and investment programmes available to social entrepreneurs in Europe, few if any, are targeted specifically to female social entrepreneurs. Another important obstacle are politics and legislation, for 28% of them national level politics and legislation represented a barrier, and for 20% community level politics and legislation were a barrier. Mostly, in countries without strong legislative frameworks and specific policies to promote social enterprise, women felt frustrated by the challenge of working in an underdeveloped ecosystem with little government support, nevertheless they stated men also experience this problem. An additional challenge was the high level of accountability and bureaucracy associated with small grants. Very demanding is perceived the dilemma between keeping funders satisfied while at the same time meeting needs of beneficiaries and effectively and efficiently achieving their goals (Usher Shrair, 2015).

Other barriers that were also mentioned were on the one hand the lack of national visibility (21%) and within the community (20%), a problem that was noted most frequently in Bulgaria. Further barriers were for 13% a flawed business plan or lack of business plan, and for 12% indicated the lack of skills and training. The socialization into traditional feminine career paths such as humanities and communication, is a clear disadvantage for women as financial organizations and funders tend to prioritize individuals with higher levels of business experience. Women repeatedly underlined the importance of making training available to future social entrepreneurs. Also, those who participated in accelerator programmes wanted that more professionals from the corporate world got involved and share their skills in the social entrepreneurship community and that it becomes more business-oriented (Usher Shrair, 2015). The main barriers in Spain are a combination between the inherent difficulties of creating social businesses and those associated to being a women entrepreneur. However, most women (59%) do not believe that the fact of being a woman has made things for them more difficult compared to a man entrepreneur (Cordobés, 2016).

Considering the available time women entrepreneurs have for their enterprise activities, research has revealed that women have less time because of the unpaid caring roles they are expected to fulfil. Noteworthy is that most of the survey respondents and interviewed in the WEstart project had care responsibilities when they started their social enterprise (55%), from which 28% were taking care of children, 17% of family members and 5% of someone else. From the rest, many of them noted that they themselves had a type of disability and therefore had to take care of themselves; and the majority (60%) continued having them when collecting the data. The project results show that 27% of women indicated that they had not enough time to devote to social enterprise

activities. Furthermore, many women social entrepreneurs reported feeling exhausted and burnt out, and wished there were more support services, such as childcare, or self-care training programmes available to them. However, many also mentioned positive elements of their care responsibilities, like for example the support perceived from the family, and the family as a space for learning or fostering personal developmental skills (Usher Shrair, 2015).

The WEstart results showed that only a few of the surveyed women perceived lack of self-confidence (9%) and of role models (10%) as a barrier. The authors state that during the interviews, many women discussed these issues, however when speaking hypothetically about female social entrepreneurs in general and not referred to their own experience. This could represent, for the authors, the way people approach entrepreneurship which could be potentially problematic, as they prioritize aggressive, male business styles as the norm and discuss the female way of doing business as 'lacking' confidence, assertiveness and other (Usher Shrair, 2015).

When considering the measurement of social impact, the results of the WEstart project show that only 36% do it, from which a wide range of tools and methodologies are reported. These include, among others, social auditing and peer-to-peer follow-up, case studies, pre- and post-self-reported questionnaires, evaluation by academics in collaboration with universities, annual surveys, numerical data, focus groups, cost-benefit analyses, SROI (Social Return on Investment) and theory of change models. The level of successful achievement of goals was for most respondents high, although they also stated that their ambitions were higher. Also, 79% reported that they are connected to other female social entrepreneurs in their community, and 79% are connected to other women social entrepreneurs in their country (Usher Shrair, 2015).

For 75% of the participants of the survey of the WEstart project being a woman affected the way they manage their social enterprise, and 88% managed their organization in a participatory or collaborative way, rather than in a top-down way. Additionally, female social enterprises were contributing to women's empowerment, for themselves and for their beneficiaries, members of their community, society, and nation (e.g., through job creation, education, providing products and access to relevant information, etc.), so that 85% felt like they were empowering women with their social entrepreneurship activity, and 90% stated their experience with social entrepreneurship is empowering them as women. Moreover, among the surveyed women, 88% stated they were contributing to gender equality. However, gender equality is understood differently within countries and rural and urban areas. 62% of surveyed women declared that their experience with social entrepreneurship had not changed the perception of gender relations in their country, and many noted that they were aware of gender discrimination and inequality before they started the enterprise, yet the experience of being an entrepreneur confirmed these beliefs (Usher Shrair, 2015). In Spain, many of the testimonies underline that it is a

natural environment for women, tied to abilities that seem to be more present in women, as empathy, teamwork, and emotions. They seem to be convinced that social entrepreneurship can impregnate business in general of new visions about managing and creating value. Social entrepreneurship modifies the traditionally male priorities in the business world and changes the concept of success. Besides, 56% also believe that female social entrepreneurs manage their businesses in a different way as male. Some believe the differences are because of the female capacity of resilience, while others underline the more integrative leadership of women, the more networking/collaborative and less hierarchical work (Cordobés, 2016).

Concerning gender inequality, Estrin, Stephan & Vujic (2014) investigated whether there is a gender pay-gap among social entrepreneurs in the United Kingdom and show that even as social entrepreneurs, women earn 29% less than their male colleagues; a greater gap than the United Kingdom average of 19%. Controlling for demographic, human capital, job, social business, personal preference and values characteristics, the authors estimate an adjusted pay-gap of about 23% and suggest, that the size and performance of the social enterprise is probably the main explanatory variable for this adjusted (unexplained) gender pay-gap. Additionally, the results indicate that female social entrepreneurs are more satisfied with their job than their male counterparts, even when controlled for salary. These findings therefore are consistent with the ‘paradox of the contented female (social) business owner’ (2014, p. 21), whereby the female social entrepreneur job satisfaction is independent of the salary generated through the social business. Thus, although social enterprise is a highly satisfying occupational choice, it also perpetuates gender pay inequalities.

Urbano et al. (2014) state that conditions for female entrepreneurship in a country tend to be like those for social entrepreneurship in general, like the positive effects from being a member of a social organization and age. However, for some variables they found a significant differential impact on female and male social entrepreneurship. Altruism has a significant positive impact of on the probability of women becoming social entrepreneurs, so that the positive effect of altruism is higher for women. In contrast, the effects of post-materialism and higher income levels on social entrepreneurial activity are positive for men and non-existent for women. Furthermore, evidence of a negative relationship between male social entrepreneurial activity and per capita income was found.

For Germany, I discuss statistics and data regarding female social entrepreneurship further in the chapter ‘Results and Discussion’, as part of the results of the secondary analysis.

### 3.5 Potential of Female Social Entrepreneurship

In general, there are many contributions of entrepreneurship and especially of social entrepreneurship that are meaningful, which have been discussed in the section about the contributions of social entrepreneurship: social impact, reformation of welfare and the public-private-third sector structures, increase the demand for services and products offered by social enterprises and fill supply gaps and innovation and growth and job creation. Thus, entrepreneurship is usually proposed as something which is positive and desirable for individuals, organizations and societies, and this positive assessment is even higher for social entrepreneurship (Gawell & Sundin, 2014). Following, I describe the potential specifically for female social entrepreneurship.

Regarding employment creation and economic growth, in general, social, and social economy organizations are characterized by a strong presence of women (e.g., the share of female workers in social enterprises is 70% in Belgium, 67% in France, and in Italy, 61% of non-seasonal part-time employees in social cooperatives were women, compared to 47% in other enterprises) (Borzaga & Galera, 2016). The stronger presence of women in social and social economy organizations and enterprises reflects also in the leadership roles in national, regional, and international associations. Employment in these types of organizations can be particularly important for poor women facing labour market discrimination and work-family conflict; they often facilitate flexibility, providing opportunities for paid work that can be managed combined with unpaid care work. Moreover, gaining voice, networking and advocacy skills has also been key for women's emancipation and political empowerment, allowing them to renegotiate traditional gender relations and demand equality (United Nations, 2014). When data about social entrepreneurship is disaggregated by sex, researchers underline the enormous available potential of female social enterprise, which, as explained before, contradicts the female underperformance hypothesis that is present in many entrepreneurship reports (Usher Shrair, 2015). Huysentruyt (2014) notes, that although it seems as if the ventures run by women are systematically smaller, both in terms of total revenues generated and number of full-time employers, compared to those run by men, when controlled for the director's age and level of education, organization's age, organization's sector or industry type, operational model, and include country fixed effects and interaction terms, the main effect of sex disappears, so that it has no overall main effect in revenues. Also, comparing women-led or men-led enterprises within the same sector; there is no evidence that women prefer to remain small in their enterprises.

In general, social ventures have a high propensity to innovate. Compared to mainstream entrepreneurs or public-sector agencies, they are much more likely to introduce radical innovations. On average 88% of the social ventures



stated that they had introduced at least one new or significantly improved process, service, or product in the past year, and 60% had introduced a radical innovation or innovation that is new-to-the market in the past year. Moreover, related to new market creation (entering/pioneering new markets), women seem to be taking the lead over male social entrepreneurs, with 62% female-run social ventures to provide this kind of service or product first in their region, country or worldwide, compared to 54% for those ventures run by men (Figure 6) (Huysentruyt, 2014).

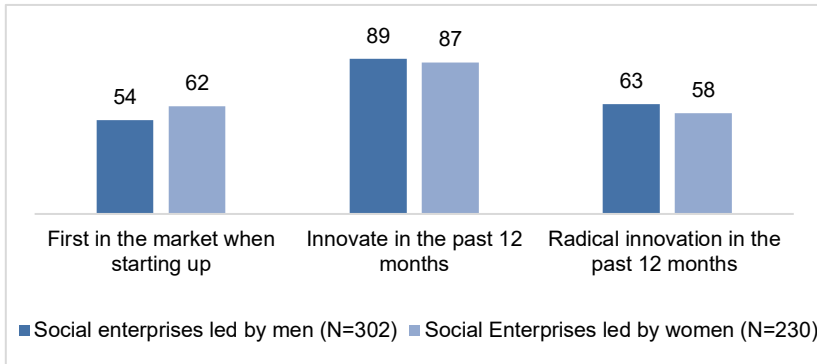


Figure 6: Female Social Entrepreneurs and Innovation in % (Huysentruyt, 2014, p. 14)

Social enterprise has much to contribute because of its diverse leadership and inclusive employment. Female social entrepreneurs are significantly more likely to use participatory management practices, as well as systemic and holistic approaches. Between female social entrepreneurs there is a tendency to focus not only on the main goal, but also on the process, like for example on building relationships and networks. Thus, they usually prioritize collaborative methods of decision making (Huysentruyt, 2014; Usher Shrair, 2015). Which could suggest the power of women social entrepreneurs to empower others, enabling colleagues to learn and develop talents and skills. Preliminary results suggest that this management style is systematically associated with more innovation (Huysentruyt, 2014). Also, in terms of inclusion and diversity, in the United Kingdom, 89% of social enterprise leadership teams have a female director, 34% have Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) representation and 36% have a director with a disability. More than two-thirds are supporting individuals from disadvantaged groups, and more than four in ten employ them. Additionally, consistent with previous surveys, 41% of social enterprises are led by women. This remains significantly ahead of both mainstream SMEs (20%) and big business (7% of FTSE 100). The proportion is still higher amongst the larger organizations, where women run 43% of social enterprises

with more than 100 employees, and 44% of those with more than 250 employees. 51% of social enterprises have a majority female workforce. The leadership teams of social enterprise reflect the communities where they are active, 12% of social enterprises are BAME-led; 34% have BAME directors. This level is broadly in line with the United Kingdom population and compares favourably to SMEs (5%) and charities (3%) (Temple, 2017). A recent study in Spain, stated that 56% of female social entrepreneurs believe women manage their businesses in a different way compared to men social entrepreneurs; variances for many, based on the diverse ways women are socialized. Social entrepreneurship tends to be a domain where qualities labelled as female (compassion, collaboration, eye-level communication, etc.) and therefore rather seen as deficiencies in commercial businesses, have been strengths and even key factors for success (Cordobés, 2016).

Hechavarria et al. (2017) confirm through their results that the motivation behind pursuing social value goals is influenced by individual psychological factors (like personal value system self-efficacy or compassion) and contextual factors (like government regulations and cultural norms). According to the theory of ethics of care, which is a feminine oriented value system, focused on the interconnectedness among parties and nurturing, and ethics of justice, a masculine-oriented value system prioritizing fairness, rights and obligations, women compared to men are more likely to express an ethic of care and therefore, they have a higher tendency as men to prioritize social and environmental, communal and relational values over economic ones, defining power in terms of taking care of others, and fostering values of empathy, sympathy, compassion, loyalty, discernment, love, benevolence, community, and promotion of a civil society more readily than men. This study investigated the value creation goals of men and women when founding enterprises. The results show that women entrepreneurs in post-materialist societies tend to report significantly higher social value creation goals and significantly lower economic value creation goals compared to men entrepreneurs. A post-materialistic culture amplifies the effects of gender on value creation goals, so that male and female entrepreneurs are less likely to prioritize economic goals in post-materialist countries, with a stronger effect for female entrepreneurs leading to an increase in the size of the gender gap. The authors believe this finding can be attributed to differences in how men and women frame ethical decisions. When countries move toward higher levels of post-materialism, the relationship between gender and social and economic value creation goals becomes stronger, so that the gender gap in social and economic value creation goals is wider in post-materialistic societies than in materialistic ones. Since women are more strongly affected by post-materialism than men, women entrepreneurs' social goals in the United States and Norway average 33%, which is 10% higher than social goals of men. In Greece and Switzerland, women entrepreneurs' social goals average 25.5% which is 5% higher than social goals of men.

'In strong post-materialistic cultures women's socialization to ethics of care is strongly reflected in venturing goals. In such cultures, women "dare to care" and report significantly higher social venturing goals than men in similar cultures, or women (and men) in more materialistic cultures' (Hechavarria et al., 2017, p. 26)

Furthermore, to explain the gender differences in social entrepreneurship relative to commercial entrepreneurship, Huysentruyt (2014) offers two strands of explanations. First, women are generally more altruistic and socially minded than men, and because of this motivation of caring about the social impact, they are more likely to establish or manage a social enterprise than a pure for-profit form. Second, women are more averse to competition, and because the markets of social enterprises are usually newer, less mature, and less dominated by competitiveness than the markets of regular entrepreneurship, women are more likely to start a social enterprise than a pure for-profit form. Additionally, social entrepreneurs place significantly lower emphasis on 'competitive aggressiveness' than commercial entrepreneurs. These differences in basic values are also explained for the author in two different ways. On the one hand, the 'nature explanation', where evolutionary theorists interpret these as reflecting different adaptation problems regularly faced by our male and female ancestors, which has led to the development of different cognitive and affective mechanisms, such as values (e.g., genetic, or hormonal differences leading women to be less competitive). On the other hand, the 'nurture explanation', where social role theory locates the source of differences in the division of labour, so that the occupational and family roles allocated to women and men provide sex-differentiated experiences that directly influence behaviour, identities, attitudes, and values (gender differences exhibit only later in life which suggests an environmental cause). The author states that there is evidence in favour of both explanations, so the research question should actually be the relative weights of these two factors and their interaction.

The results from the WEstart project also highlighted social enterprises as empowering women. Women informed that through the social enterprises they were able to discover their own talents, develop leadership competencies with diverse stakeholders (different public institutions, foreign partners, etc.). All the women felt that they changed because of the enterprise. The promotion of social entrepreneurship can act as a powerful lever towards promoting female entrepreneurship and female labour market participation more generally (Usher Shrair, 2015). Indeed, women-run social enterprises seem to attract a fair share of women collaborators or colleagues (Huysentruyt, 2014).

In that respect, for Ahl, Berglund, Petterson and Tilmär (2016) entrepreneurship can be used as a vehicle for feminist action, where feminist resistance is put into practice through business. The authors use the term FemInc.ism to denote this phenomenon, referring to the 'enabling of institutional change in private, public or non-profit sectors through enterprise' (2016, p. 21), which does not represent merely an economic increase or economic parity with men

through business ownership; instead, it highlights the potential for women and men to use entrepreneurship to reach feminist change, and it acknowledges

‘the risks of being trapped in a situation of feminist backlash that may arise because of structural dissolution as entrepreneurship could be a way to improve the position of women, or it could be harmful to their position, it could challenge patriarchal structures, or it could reinforce them’ (Ahl et al., 2016, p. 21).

Moreover, in a study in Spain about female social entrepreneurship, 87% of the interviewed female social entrepreneurs considers that social entrepreneurship can introduce a new way of ‘doing business’, closer to how women understand business (related to empathy, teamwork, emotions). Priorities and values around business, success and management could be transformed through social entrepreneurship (Cordobés, 2016).

Finally, a significant way of supporting female social entrepreneurship is to understand the main characteristics of successful female social entrepreneurship. The WEstart report’s results showed that many, indeed, displayed a set of characteristics and capacities which notably supported the development of their social enterprise. These features and capacities included resilience, demonstrating tenacity and endurance to their missions; a tendency towards relationships, developing a wide network of support and focus on people and communication skills; process orientation, prioritizing collaborative methods of decision making; empathy; adaptability and flexibility, seeking creative ways to solve problems, often setting aside personal recognition to get the best outcome. Regardless of gender, these qualities should improve the success in social entrepreneurship, so that the author proposes teaching these in entrepreneurship education for all and give them a higher economic value (Usher Shrair, 2015). Huysentruyt (2014, p. 21) concludes:

‘The promotion of social entrepreneurship can act as a powerful lever towards promoting female entrepreneurship and female labor market participation more generally ... women entrepreneurs, social and mainstream alike, seem capable of playing a key role leading us towards more societal change. This link between female entrepreneurship, in particular female social entrepreneurship on the one hand and transformative change that fosters more inclusive, green and smart growth, on the other has so far been widely underappreciated’

The potential of female social entrepreneurship is sustained in the fact that social enterprises are characterized by a strong presence of women, as well as by a diverse leadership and inclusive employment. They have a high propensity to innovate, and specially women are leading in new market creation. Female social entrepreneurs usually use participatory management practices and systemic approaches. Lastly, entrepreneurship can be used as a vehicle for feminist action and it can introduce a new way of ‘doing business’, with a more diverse focus on values and priorities.

Although having theoretical frameworks for studying female entrepreneurship under a feminist lens, as well as some studies applying these and the significant potential of this sector, research and the practical field of female social entrepreneurship have been criticised by many authors with regards to different limitations. Following, I discuss these challenges and afterwards, I propose some alternative approaches.

## **3.6 Challenges for Female Social Entrepreneurship**

Just as there are many potentials in the field of female social entrepreneurship, there are also many challenges that the field itself and the research of this sector should tackle.

### *3.6.1 Challenges Faced by the Field of Female Social Entrepreneurship*

The most relevant challenges within the field of female social entrepreneurship are generated by the gendered labour division and the perpetuation of gender stereotypes. Here the role of structural conditions and macro and meso level frames are highly important when figuring out how to overcome these challenges.

#### **3.6.1.1 Measuring and Demonstrating Social Impact**

The few studies analysing social entrepreneurship and gender have difficulties capturing the impact these types of enterprises are accomplishing. Wilkinson et. al (2014) report that rarely countries have nationally recognised systems or common methodologies for measuring and reporting social impact; and where they exist, they are not usually mandatory. This results in rare large-scale available information about social impact, which is a significant challenge also because of the need for sex-disaggregated data related to social impact (Usher Shrair, 2015).

#### **3.6.1.2 Lack of a Gender Approach in Social Entrepreneurship Initiatives in Europe**

The WEstart report informs that within the European Social Business Initiative, until the date, no mention of women or gender, or any evidence that there were or will be efforts to focus specifically on women, to apply a gender lens, or to disaggregate any data by sex was found. The European Commission has one position dedicated to women's entrepreneurship; however, they do not

work together with the Social Enterprise unit. The European Parliament has a FEMM Committee, focused on women's rights and gender equality. They have published reports on women's entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship such as 'Women's Entrepreneurship: Closing the Gender Gap in Access to Financial and Other Services and in Social Entrepreneurship', briefly discussing the intersection of both (Usher Shrair, 2015).

### 3.6.1.3 Gendered Labour Division and the Perpetuation of Stereotypes

The current conceptualization of the gendered labour division originated in the industrial revolution, when the combination of hard labour and caring as well as the blended public and private life, was substituted by the separation between public and private, so that the factory became the workplace, and value was created through the production and sale of goods for capital. Women were increasingly made responsible for family life and domestic production and were consigned to the private sphere; while men dominated the economic production, and controlled capital in the public sphere. Thus, the Industrial Revolution has instituted a male ideal worker model of someone who can work as though they have no social or caring obligations, which has resulted in a gendered concept of work, assuming that idealised masculine characteristics are necessary to be effective at the workplace, placing women into a secondary position and making it more socially acceptable for women to do paid work which replicates and reproduces their stereotypical gendered labour roles; becoming the ideal female head of household. In general, all kind of work related to health, social tasks, and protection of the environment is considered a feminine task, and therefore devalued or lacking a fair monetary compensation (Usher Shrair, 2015). In general, under the dominant gendered globalized capitalist economic regime, men and masculinities are privileged, producing gender inequalities in economic power and influence (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016).

Thus, there are many challenging consequences of this gendered ideal work model and the perpetuation of the stereotypes. Following, I shortly describe some of the most important of these consequences.

#### 3.6.1.3.1 The Double Bind

A 'double bind' might be generated when female social entrepreneurs internalise and reproduce gendered stereotypes, also in their practice of leadership, and they are then punished for being 'feminine', or on the contrary, criticised if they adopt a masculine style. Women are therefore 'bind' either way. Here, women are either perceived as too soft or too tough, but never just right. Moreover, there is a high competence threshold, were women leaders face higher standards and lower rewards than men. The female social entrepreneurs who participated in the WEstart project and the study in Spain acknowledged that being a woman affects the way they manage their enterprise; however, it

remains unclear for them if their inclination towards for example participatory management styles is inherent or internalised (Cordobés, 2016; Usher Shrair, 2015).

#### 3.6.1.3.2 Gender Pay-Gap

A research in the United Kingdom indicated that there is a pay gap of almost 23% among women social entrepreneurs, which means that women pay themselves 23% less than men (Estrin et al., 2014); however, at the same time, female social entrepreneurs report a higher job satisfaction compared to males; demonstrating the paradox of the ‘contented female (social) business owner’ (2014, p. 21), meaning that female social enterprise owners are willing to trade-off pay for job satisfaction (Usher Shrair, 2015). As previously mentioned, evidence shows that although women earn less in the third sector than in the public sector, the gender differential is less. Some theorist state that the skills required from women (caring, communication, etc.) are considered inherent and less valuable than learned skills, which would explain the gender pay gap. Thus, the horizontal segregation of women into ‘caring’ industries might explain much of the gender pay differential. Further research is needed to explore whether pay differentials exist across different fields within the third sector (Teasdale et al., 2011).

#### 3.6.1.3.3 Glass-Ceiling and Other Gendered Barriers in Entrepreneurship

Although entrepreneurship is a way to realize the individual’s potential with no formal entry barriers and theoretically, a meritocratic accessible field, women have limited possibilities to be entitled as entrepreneurs (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). The social attribution of gender roles and the gendered socialization limits the field for women (e.g., biased educational focus areas, unequal access to resources and activity expectations between sexes). Consequently, a glass ceiling is created; gender differences are found at each stage of entrepreneurship (motivation, opportunity recognition, acquisition of resources, and entrepreneurial performance/venture success) (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015), and women are presented as less entrepreneurial than men all over the world (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2016) based on the fact that the proportion of women as owners of businesses or self-employed is lower than the proportion of women in the labour market. Much has been discussed around the reasons for this low percentage, and Gawell & Sundin (2014) summarize them into lack of capital, neglect of women, identity, family obligations, lack of adequate knowledge and experience, and the male label attached to entrepreneurship. Thus, when women start a business, they have less capital, because they usually earn less and therefore collect less. Besides, financial institutions and public support systems rate men’s ideas and business plans more highly than women’s, which leads to women entrepreneurs being ignored and to women not valuing an entrepreneurial identity as highly as men. Moreover,

men are more likely than women to be managers in organizations, which gives them experiences and access to a network. Also, Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan (2016) mention that women and femininity are considered best for micro-enterprise, limited scale, slow growth, and socially oriented ventures, while rapid growth oriented, scalable, highly regarded, and resourced firms remain in the male domain.

#### 3.6.1.3.4 ‘Ghettoization’ of Women into Social Entrepreneurship

The expectations and the socialization of the gendered role of who women can be and do is very problematic in social entrepreneurship. ‘This field might involuntarily ‘ghettoize’ women entrepreneurs into slow growth, low-profit microenterprises in feminized and undervalued industries by advocating self-employment as the highest goal for women’ (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016, p. 19). By removing barriers and providing more support for women to run businesses in feminized industries, compared to male sectors like information technology, women might keep self-selecting these gendered fields (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016). Also, literature suggests that while a growth in social entrepreneurship may lead to increased employment and management opportunities for women, such opportunities would be of a lower status, over-represented in caring sub-sectors, in non-management position, in smaller organizations, and with lower pay than men in similar roles (Teasdale et al., 2011).

There are no physical, biological, or social reasons nor evidence, why both men and women should be confined only to a type of work. However, social representations of the division of labour, as well as portrays of women in research and literature continue to reproduce these stereotypes. Media usually identifies social enterprises as especially appropriate for women, assuming that women are more caring or have more experience in social, education and health sectors; without discussing the gender labour divide, the reasons why women choose social fields, or their exclusion from public and powerful sectors. Additionally, in traditional masculine sectors men may enforce their internalised gender stereotypes on women, for example by not taking them as seriously as men. However, women have also internalized many of these stereotypes and repeat them when describing for example themselves as more empathetic or communicative than men, without questioning the origin of these stereotypes and the fact that these are gendered. The authors could identify in most of the interviewed women a shared belief that, because they are women and they are caring, motherly and usually have experience in social tasks, they have valuable capacities for their social entrepreneurship occupations (Usher Shrair, 2015). Moreover, Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan (2016) argue that, although women assuming positions of leadership in social entrepreneurship constitutes progress and could promise a reduction in gender inequality and greater entrepreneurial legitimacy for female social entrepreneurs; an



exaggerated connection of women with non-economic goals and social entrepreneurship may create the perception that women, compared to men, are less focused on success, hindering their access to financing. The authors underline that the relative success of women in social entrepreneurship, compared to their status in mainstream entrepreneurship, may magnify the gendered dimensions of the entrepreneurship field. If the sectors in which women are legitimate entrepreneurs are only micro and social enterprise and social, the field continues to exclude according to gender, confining women to less profitable ventures and therefore remaining economically marginalized. It could be stated, that in social entrepreneurship such gendered characterizations are prominent, and these may limit the ability of women to negotiate social hurdles, including implicit bias. Also problematic are the assumptions around Global South's women's abilities and roles in the global economy within the social entrepreneurial discourse.

Finally, Teasdale et al. (2011) discuss the perpetuation of stereotypes with regards to the third sector. On the one hand, statistical differences in gendered attitudes contribute to explain why women are comparatively over-represented in less profit-orientated social ventures. On the other hand, feminist researchers with a structuralist approach have argued that the hierarchical organizational structures of many commercial businesses have historically been developed to serve the interests of powerful men. These can be overcome by rejecting the idea of the individualistic (male) hero, and reconstructing entrepreneurship in different (less hierarchical) ways, which might explain why women are more equally represented in social entrepreneurship within the third sector. As already mentioned, the third sector is horizontally segregated: the same proportion of women and men attain lower managerial positions, but access to the highest levels favours men; therefore, third sector organizations are 'gendered' in a similar way to public sector organizations considering access to positions of power, but less vertically segregated than private sector organizations.

#### 3.6.1.4 Individualistic Approach

Furthermore, through an individualistic approach, scholars and practitioners are not able to change structural, cultural, political, and institutional barriers women are facing. Many social enterprises target women, and in many of these the responsibility for solving economic and social problems is given to the individuals most negatively impacted by these problems (e.g., micro-lending initiatives place the responsibility for overcoming poverty on individual women) (Usher Shrair, 2015).

### 3.6.2 *Research Challenges for Female Social Entrepreneurship*

Research on women's entrepreneurship now constitutes a mature field of study (Ahl et al., 2016). Nevertheless, many authors have discussed the different limitations that are still present in research and theory about female entrepreneurship. These include specific suppositions of business, gender, family, society, the economy, and the individual, all of which influence the research questions asked, the methods chosen, the interpretation of the data and what is excluded (Ahl, 2006). When the masculine discourse is taken as a norm, those who do not fit into this norm, require specific interventions to address this supposed deficit. Meaning that the focus is set on individual women and their businesses, holding them accountable for structural circumstances beyond their control (Ahl & Marlow, 2012).

#### 3.6.2.1 Normative Masculine Discourses in Entrepreneurship

One of the most discussed limitations of female entrepreneurship research involves the fact that the entrepreneurship discourse is embedded in masculinity and therefore this masculine discourse is taken as normative. The entrepreneur is male gendered, hence, a masculine concept, and so it is not gender neutral (Ahl, 2006). Thus, most studies of women's entrepreneurship are embedded in a male-female comparative frame, so that they look for explanations for women's 'underperformance': smaller, slow-growing, weaker, lacking growth orientation, home-based, part-time, and many other possible negative features and less profitable businesses. Nevertheless, this underperformance disappears when the sector and structural factors are controlled, so that men and women in similar businesses sectors perform equally well (Ahl et al., 2016; McAdam, 2013). The male norm consequently reinforces a hierarchical gendered system, linking femininity with deficit. Accordingly, to be able to be legitimate entrepreneurs, women are encouraged to adopt and reproduce supposedly neutral entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours (which is the dominant masculine norm) and balance it with the attributed femininity that is fundamental to being recognized as women (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Also, the 'ideal-type' entrepreneur, business and industry leader is still unquestionably male in the media, case studies, textbooks, and the collective imagination, with consequences like the use of male gendered measuring instruments (Ahl, 2006).

Further, a consequence of the normative male discourse in entrepreneurship research is considering gender as a variable. There is a tendency to consider gender as equivalent to sex with explanatory power (Ahl, 2006), instead of considering gender as a socially constructed and relational concept (Ahl et al., 2016). Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan (2015) also suggest that the focus on biological sex in research on women entrepreneurship is unable to grant solutions to the marginalization women face in entrepreneurship. The authors propose redirecting entrepreneurship research into recognizing the importance of

gender in relation to the individual, institutional, structural, and cultural factors that are essential to entrepreneurship. Furthermore, only when the larger entrepreneurship field recognizes the ways in which gender informs all entrepreneurial activities and environments, which organize research and practice and women's marginalization from theory and research in the field, will gender equality be possible. When gender is used uncritically as a variable, the entrepreneurial activities of men and women are compared across performance indicators which inevitably position women in deficit. Consequently, these results promoted a variety of policy interventions which were intended to rectify the problem of the female entrepreneur or to make women be more like men (McAdam, 2013). Though, as Ahl (2006) points out, most of the results of studies using gender as a variable were not able to find significant differences between men and women enterprise owners. Meta-analyses of psychological research on men and women show that the differences between individuals, even within the same sex, are invariably much larger than the average difference, if any, between the sexes. However, it is commonly assumed that men and women are systematically different and that such differences have social effects. This has significant consequences with regards to power relations. Thus, the author states that research risks the reproduction of the subordination of women, when it recreates a binary polarization between individuals based on their sex and it affects research questions, hypotheses, methods, and interpretations of results; often leading to the conclusion that women need to change and adapt to become more like men.

Furthermore, family and care-giving assumptions related to the roles of male and female genders limit the research field as well. Current mainstream entrepreneurship models are based on the 'white male hero', assuming that the entrepreneur does not have caring or domestic responsibilities (Humbert, 2012). The invisibility of the role of male entrepreneurs as fathers, spouses, and household members with responsibilities to others should be questioned. Problematically, the role as parent is given exclusively to women entrepreneurs, represented as primary caregivers. Additionally, this basic assumption fails to recognize how men's entrepreneurial success is built on women's unpaid reproductive and care labour (wives, mothers, babysitters, housecleaners, etc.), which allows men to dedicate time for opportunity recognition, entrepreneurial activity for longer hours, develop and exploit their networks, and reserve the energy and resources to grow their businesses. It also plays a significant role when analysing the reasons why women entrepreneurs reduce their growth aspirations as there is a lack of men willing to play this unpaid support role. Women's business is constructed as secondary and complementary, both to male owned businesses and to her primary responsibility, the family. But this also affects men, as for example, male business managers and owners express greater work-life conflict and stress from internalizing the social gender norm of being primarily economically responsible for the household (Clark

Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015; Ahl, 2006). Moreover, research has not questioned to what degree most self-employed men identify with the masculinised stereotypical entrepreneurial role which is attached to them only because of gender (McAdam, 2013).

### 3.6.2.2 Stereotypical Reinforcements and Portrayals of Social Entrepreneurs

Based on studies that show that women have an increased tendency to volunteer in comparison to men, which is predominantly grounded in social expectations related to caring, femininity, maternity and feelings, many academics explain higher levels of female social entrepreneurship activity. However, this is an essentialist and reductionist explanation, and critics propose that in that case, male social entrepreneurs would be positioned as less caring, less concerned with the organization's social objectives and more driven by the entrepreneurial aspect. Nevertheless, these men tend to be portrayed as social heroes, exaggerating the already known hero discourse in entrepreneurship literature (McAdam, 2013). Also, volunteering has been analysed as an extension of women's domestic work, emphasising the idea that men's work is a public contribution; but women's work, is defined as an extension of their private responsibilities to family (Usher Shrair, 2015). Furthermore, in academic literature men can be described as social deviant, which is a refusal to accept the current situation and a potential to alter the norms or engage in unethical activity for a greater cause, in that way, a form of 'Robin Hood', saving the male social entrepreneur from being considered as deficient in comparison to the hegemonic male of commercial entrepreneurship because,

'...rather than being affiliated with the more feminine 'social' qualities or aspects of social entrepreneurship, the essentialist attractions for females, he remains affiliated with Schumpeter's hegemonic male, engaging in creative destruction of social inequalities whilst fulfilling protector and provider roles. So, male social entrepreneurs are positioned as hyper-masculine supermen with women social entrepreneurs making contribution because of, and in addition to, the responsibilities of their domestic spheres' (McAdam, 2013, p. 102).

In social entrepreneurship women are not portrayed as ambitious and capable of managing innovative, scalable, and impactful enterprises. The fact that those kinds of ambitions are not available for the female entrepreneur, particularly in the Global South context, should be addressed. These problematic portrayals of male and female entrepreneurs and the binary categorization based on their sex, risk the reproduction of the subordination of women and underline the way neo-liberalism influences social entrepreneurship. The real power of social entrepreneurship to change gendered social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions of society, as well as power relations and dependencies between the Global North and South should be questioned. They are in some way still an outcome of gendered economic arrangements, and thus might perpetuate them (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016).

Moreover, female social entrepreneurship remains centred on previous research on entrepreneurs, and merely adds in extra elements, like the ‘social’ or the ‘female’, often ignoring the contribution of the intersection of these two concepts. The major limitations of this research field are the lack of attention given to the interaction between social and female, without questioning their stereotypical underpinning.

‘Women are portrayed as doing different types of jobs, in different types of organisations, at a lower level and for less money. The rhetoric of difference prevails. Moreover, women are portrayed as not motivated by pecuniary reasons but more by a desire to act as what can only be described as mothers of the community: women are there to help, to build, for others but never for themselves, and are seldom valued or rewarded for their work’ (Humbert, 2012, p. 10).

Research about social entrepreneurs often consisted of analysing and comparing them with mainstream entrepreneurs, thus risking positioning one party as the ‘deviant other’, often implying an inferior position, which is the case with female entrepreneurs (Usher Shrair, 2015). In this way, researchers and academics can play a significant role in the perpetuation of gender stereotypes and in supporting practices that relegate women from enterprise activities usually linked to men. Focussing on small scale self-employment opportunities as the main solution to feminized poverty and inequality, the structural problems of undercapitalization caused by discrimination in lending and equity investment, unfair access to networks and gatekeepers, and vertical and horizontal gender segregation are ignored. Thus, it is very problematic when research maintains the status quo overestimating the competency of men and underestimating the competency of women as opportunity-driven entrepreneurs, and over-identifying women with lower status, lower-profit, and lower-impact microenterprise relative to men (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016).

### 3.6.2.3 Lack of Use of Feminist Theories

Many authors state that many of these limitations would be avoided if other deficiencies would be considered like the absence of a theoretical basis or explicit feminist analysis; also, in social entrepreneurship despite claims it can address social issues such as women’s empowerment (Ahl, 2006; Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016). Ahl et. al (2016) state that feminist action and feminist theorizing is not adequately equipped for theorizing entrepreneurship as feminist activism that enables institutional change. This is because this type of theories usually deprives women of agency, by underlining that female entrepreneurs are stigmatized, victimized, and subject to oppressive structural and institutional conditions. The authors propose that research should acknowledge the importance of addressing the context, avoiding a priori positions related to entrepreneurship, accepting ambiguities in the analysis and interpretation of research results. Thus, there is a need to develop a feminist and

an entrepreneurship theory to be able to describe and comprehend female social entrepreneurship adequately, a theory that includes categories of people, such as women, as something other than utilitarian, instrumental actors who are in search for economic gain.

In general, the challenge for research is to create new models or adapt these to the 'social' and the 'female' simultaneously (Humbert, 2012), like the socio-economic context presented by Brush et al. (2009), who state that although women may be targeted by particular forms of social enterprise, there is not a gender aware framework that examines hidden assumptions guiding concepts and research in the social entrepreneurship field more broadly. As already proposed, using a feminist theory could be useful for taking the context into account, and analysing female social entrepreneurship under a gender-aware framework. Thus, liberal feminist perspectives can empathize the ways in which gender stereotypes and roles prevent women from obtaining the resources that are more available to men, underlining individual strategies to improve these limitations. Research questions can focus on discovering the mechanisms that shape gender segregation. However, to be effective, these studies need to move away from (neo)liberal feminism and engage other, more expansive feminist lenses. Through a socialist feminist lens, the emphasis moves away from the individual approach towards changing structures (patriarchal society that devalues the feminine) to obtain real social change. The higher proportion of women in social entrepreneurship can be explained through intersecting inequality dimensions that allocate less resources to women and devalue cultural and social capital associated with women, preventing them from participating in the social and economic contexts on equal terms with men (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016).

Henceforth, when discussing gender and inequality, there are many other social divisions that contribute to discrimination and inequality. Intersectionality is conceptualized by Crenshaw (1994) as a way of framing the various interactions of race, gender, class, and sexuality, emerging from black feminist critiques. It is a way of understanding and analysing social inequality, as people's lives and the organization of power are being shaped by many axes of social division that work together and influence each other (Collins & Bilge, 2016). In this way, the debate around this concept has advanced, and the vectors that locate individuals within social hierarchies and resource allocation, include not only gender, race/ethnicity, and class but also sexual orientation, religion, migration, age, and disability, among others (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). The intersection of these different categories is not usually analysed in academic literature on female entrepreneurs and minority entrepreneurs. The results from the WEstart project showed that women social entrepreneurs with minorities backgrounds like Roma, LGBTQ\* and disability, perceive that their separate identities are not acknowledged, and often experience the rejection and discrimination of 'privileged' female social entrepreneurs. The author calls

for more research on female social entrepreneurs from other marginalized groups (Usher Shrair, 2015).

#### 3.6.2.4 Neglect of Contextual Factors

Because of the lack of adequate theories, a neglect of structural, historical, and cultural factors limits social entrepreneurship research (Ahl, 2006). The presumed gender neutrality of entrepreneurship is rarely questioned, and there is no criticism about the gendered institutional and cultural factors that structure the entrepreneurial context, although these factors impact entrepreneurial outcomes for both women and men. Even research funded for doing so may perpetuate gender disadvantage by not problematizing the status quo assumptions, social norms, and structural barriers. Additionally, top entrepreneurship journals rarely publish articles which critically analyse the structural barriers and provide recommendations for cultural, social, political, and institutional change, or propose explicit interventions and public policies necessary to close the gap (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015).

Moreover, the under-theorization of contextual and historical variables affecting the business such as legislation, culture or politics aspects (Ahl, 2006), lead to proposing solutions that are mostly limited to individual entrepreneurs, or women as a class of entrepreneurs that lack the male ideal in some way (Ahl, 2006; Ahl & Marlow, 2012) and therefore imply that the individual entrepreneurs or women as a group need to change themselves to adapt to the barriers and avoid the bias in the system (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015). Even when structural factors are recognized (for example access to business education, business networks or managerial experience) the individual is still the one who needs to adapt or correct these problems. A significant part of theories favouring individual explanations (45%), use only empirical results from earlier studies; the rest depart from psychology, sociology, or management theory/economics. Yet, they favour models which explain social phenomena by independent variables related to psychological characteristics or behaviour (Ahl, 2006). By avoiding the emphasize on entrepreneurial traits and producing a universal definition of the social entrepreneur, researchers recognise diversity and heterogeneity among social entrepreneurs. Research should analyse how the reification of the social entrepreneur affects men and women differently and whether it excludes some groups in particular (Humbert, 2012).

Furthermore, an objectivist ontology is questionable as there is little support for the assumption of attitude-behaviour consistency. If stable, inner gender characteristics do not exist, and even if they do, they cannot explain behaviour, so that results of such research are inconclusive or unexpected. There might be a tendency from researchers to favour the publishing of studies showing statistically significant differences, even if insignificant, over studies showing otherwise. Therefore, to be able to analyse social explanations, like culture, history, legislation, industrial, financial and educational structures, family

policy and others, methods other than surveys may be more suitable (Ahl, 2006). Additionally, gender theories that emphasize gender systems in societies as well as the way organizations are gendered are useful for a clear understanding on how gender is done and how it can and should be analysed. Social entrepreneurship interacts with various types of welfare system, business culture, the third sector or social economy, the cultural beliefs and attitudes and social structures (Gawell & Sundin, 2014). Thus, when researching on female social entrepreneurship, the importance of allowing women to share their authentic histories and discourses and analysing them as part of an integral system should be underlined (Usher Shrair, 2015).

### 3.6.2.5 Empirical Approach, Focus on Growth, Heteronormativity and Anglo-Saxon Dominance

There is a clear preference for a biased empirical focus, which are usually descriptive, using gender as a binary variable, to compare women business owners to men business owners (Greene et al., 2003). This research design usually uses research methods that look for mean differences, cross-sectional survey studies, structured questionnaires, and convenience samples. The rest use purposive, stratified, random or systematic random sampling. Consequently, as already mentioned, men and women entrepreneurs are compared, without analysing the reasons why inequalities happen during entrepreneurial processes (Ahl, 2006). Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan (2015) argue that theorizing about gender and entrepreneurship is rare, and that the field is entirely focused on women, as if men had no gender. Also, historically, theories of entrepreneurship were mainly developed based on studies of male entrepreneurs, by researchers who were almost completely male, based on theories generated predominately by men.

Moreover, entrepreneurship is perceived as an instrument for economic growth, so there is a tendency to focus on performance and growth, while ignoring issues such as gender equality and gender power relations. Women's entrepreneurship is mainly important as an instrument for economic growth; and researchers concentrate (65%) on analysing how women's business have or should have an important impact on the economy in terms of jobs, sales, innovation and economic growth and renewal (Ahl, 2006). Also, reviewers of the field have found it to be characterized by an Anglo-Saxon dominance, with a concentration on issues of performance and growth (Ahl et al., 2016). Similarly, institutional support for entrepreneurship research, the training and the socialization of researchers may emphasise any of the discursive practices discussed previously. Critical feminist work on women's entrepreneurship exists, however, it is published elsewhere, in books, in sociology, history, cultural geography or anthropology, in critical theory journals or in gender research journals (Ahl, 2006). Another limitation is the lack of queer entrepreneurship research. There is some work which explores this area, but it has not been



developed as a contribution to queer studies; and so, heteronormativity dominates the field and is uncritically accepted as the norm (McAdam, 2013).

*Table 3: Summary of Challenges Faced by the Field and Research Area of Female Social Entrepreneurship (Source: own elaboration)*

<b>Challenges faced by the field</b>	<b>Challenges for research</b>
Measuring and demonstrating social impact Lack of a gender approach in social entrepreneurship initiatives in Europe Gendered labour division and the perpetuation of stereotypes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The double bind</li> <li>▪ Gender pay-gap</li> <li>▪ Glass ceiling and horizontal segregation in the third sector</li> <li>▪ 'Ghettoization' of women entrepreneurs into slow growth, low-profit microenterprises in feminized and undervalued industries</li> <li>▪ Individualistic approach</li> </ul>	The entrepreneurship discourse is embedded in masculinity and neoliberal discourses, which are taken as normative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Considering gender as a variable – 'underperformance theory' of women</li> <li>▪ Assumptions on differences on sex and family and caregiving</li> <li>▪ Reproduction of stereotypes → Portrayal of men as social heroes – whereas women are social entrepreneurs as part of their feminine/domestic duties</li> </ul> Absence of adequate theories or explicit feminist analysis → Neglect of structural and contextual factors Empirical approach, focus on growth, Anglo-Saxon dominance, and heteronormativity

### 3.7 Proposals for Future Research

With the different challenges and potentials and the current state of research, globally and in Europe, female social entrepreneurship has a long future ahead. To shape this future in a more optimal way and to be able to tackle the challenges and unravel these limitations and make use of the potentials, there are many suggestions for future research proposals. In general, feminist scholars working in academia have a role to play in ensuring that gender equality is enacted through their research. Thus, common gender stereotypical signs in the academic literature, texts, business press and mass media need to be addressed and avoided (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015, 2016). More specific future research proposals include those regarding research questions and those concerning the research methods. In the next section I describe and discuss these.

### *3.7.1 Proposed Research Methods and Approaches*

Comparative work with researchers from different countries is recommended as it avoids the risk of not questioning the norms and values of one's own culture and context. Thus, applying a constructionist approach is recommended. This approach uses gender, not as an explanation, but as an analytical category, and instead of taking it for granted, it analyses how it is constructed and accomplished in different contexts. This shifts towards thinking that gender is something that is done, and is tied to anything, concepts, jobs, industries, language, disciplines, or businesses. A constructionist approach entails that any individual should be analysed within the social world (Ahl, 2006). Also, to be able to collect and analyse accurate data it is necessary to require organizations to collect and make publicly available data on the percentage of women participants and businesses recruited, selected, assisted, and funded, and to require private institutions to report the share of women-owned businesses they assist and finance (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015). Specifically, European institutions should invest in the collection of sex- disaggregated data on social entrepreneurship with a stronger gender lens, so that any research on entrepreneurship, social economy or social enterprise should have gender mainstreamed into the research methodology by a gender expert on women's social entrepreneurship (Usher Shrair, 2015).

Additionally, feminist lenses can clarify hidden assumptions, expectations, norms, and values and pay attention to how multiple marginalised social divisions, such as disability, minority ethnicity, or sexual orientation/identity may intersect to form the experience of social entrepreneurs and impact the way social entrepreneurship is conceptualized and practiced (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016; Usher Shrair, 2015). Also, these different feminist perspectives question narratives in the social entrepreneurship field about ability, choice, and freedom, which are male-dominant discourses taken from entrepreneurship. Both the identity of the social entrepreneur and the context needs to be analysed from a gender perspective. Doing ethnographic studies of women moving from need-driven self-employment to opportunity and growth driven entrepreneurial activities, as well as more rigorous work on how education and programmes specifically targeted to overcoming gender structural barriers translates into more gender equitable entrepreneurial ambitions and outcomes is recommended (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016). At last, for Urbano et al. (2014) future research could develop more longitudinal studies that allow comparing different periods of time and focus on the influence of socio-cultural factors, not independently but in terms of their overall effects; and therefore, should include more countries in the analysis and more explanatory and institutional factors, both formal and informal, to rule out country differences.

### 3.7.2 *Proposed Research Questions and Focus*

Many different specific and general research questions still need to be answered and discussed. These are the main proposals for future research questions and focus:

- studies of how social orders are gendered and by which mechanisms is this gendering reconstructed, underlining external factors such as legislation, social norms, family policy, economic policy, structure of the labour market regarding the degree and type of women's participation, etc. (Ahl, 2006);
- within the study of the entrepreneurship ecosystem, Brush et al. (2018) offer ideas for future research about women's entrepreneurship and their ecosystems, proposing research questions like: what are the influences of ecosystem institutions, culture, and policies on women's entrepreneurship?, in what ways do women entrepreneurs influence local ecosystems?, how does public policy vary across national ecosystems and with regard to influence on women's entrepreneurship?, how do meso-environmental factors and spaces, such as incubators and accelerators influence women's entrepreneurship?, what is the role of gender in ecosystem institutions?, and how does gender identity influence performance of individuals in entrepreneurship ecosystems?;
- Usher Shrair (2015) proposes research focussed on the type of networks female social entrepreneurs are connecting with or how national and community-level female social enterprise systems can be strengthened, because of the gender inequalities, and the little academic attention;
- Humbert (2012) suggests that it is important to understand how men and women operate in social entrepreneurial teams and to examine the role of women in the governance of social enterprises;
- Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan (2016) recommend applying the literature on identity and gender to explore what 'doing gender' and performativity would be in social entrepreneurship. Also, on how national culture can support women's empowerment, to understand the structural factors that influence women's entrepreneurial success. Researchers should show the strengths of feminine ways of entrepreneuring and social entrepreneuring;
- within the topic of 'doing gender' Nentwich & Kelan (2014) recommend that researchers must be careful not to reify everyday taken-for-granted assumptions about gender, but to critically investigate how they actually came into being. Moreover, they should rather aim at investigating how 'being a man' or 'being a woman' is achieved as a social practice and not as a given fact that existed prior to the research. Additionally, future research should at least reflect why the occupation or field researched is

seen as a ‘female’ or a ‘masculine’ dominated field and focus on the consequences for the doing of gender, respectively;

- Gawell & Sundin (2014) propose paying more attention to part-time entrepreneurship, as it seems to be very common. Moreover, the discussion of gender, the social economy, and social enterprises should be developed along a variety of factors and dimensions;
- Huysentruyt (2014) proposes more research to find innovative ways to capture the influence of gender on innovation and social venture growth, development and impacts. To advance in research it is important to monitor how the increased competitive pressures in social entrepreneurship will affect new entry and participation of women;
- the report by Ashoka (Taberna et al., 2019) recommends conducting further research on how female social entrepreneurs are redefining social impact, further researching topics such as definitions of success, frameworks for different scaling and impact models, leadership and innovation approaches and the role of gender in the lifecycle of social entrepreneurs. However, the authors acknowledge that their intention is not to over-simplify social entrepreneurship along gender lines, recognizing that further research is needed to fully represent the diversity and richness of female social entrepreneurs’ leadership behaviours and innovation patterns;
- finally, according to García & Welter (2013) the research agenda should be aware of the use of masculine constructs that position women as the other who needs to adapt to existing systems and structures. Also, research should recognize the heterogeneity of women’s entrepreneurship, so that ‘In focusing upon women’s experiences, we give them a voice rather than assuming that they will conform to the status quo, which prioritizes a male standard for entrepreneurial activity’ (2013a, p. 385).

One specific research and theoretic frame to study female entrepreneurship is the ‘5M’ gender-aware framework for female entrepreneurship from Brush et al. (2009), which will be used in the following epistemological frame for this study. The authors draw on institutional theory, highlighting the household and family context of female entrepreneurs and the meso/macro environment, such as expectations of society and cultural norms (macro), and intermediate structures and institutions (meso). Usually, the current entrepreneurship theory is organised around three basic constructs, the ‘3Ms’, since an entrepreneur needs access to markets, money, and management (human and organizational capital) to be able to establish a company, which originate in mainstream economics and management of entrepreneurship. The authors assume that all entrepreneurship is socially embedded and argue that to holistically analyse women’s entrepreneurship, norms, values, and external expectations are central to it. Thus, the 3Ms should be appropriately outlined and qualified to consider any specifics of women’s entrepreneurship, but it needs an extension to ‘5Ms’ with

the inclusion of ‘motherhood’ and the ‘meso’ and ‘macro’ environment. ‘Motherhood’ represents the household and family context, with the intention to underline the fact that family/household contexts might have a larger impact on women than men; including unequal division of labour and access to household resources that differentially impacts access to markets, money, and management. On the other side, the ‘macro/meso environment’ considers aspects like expectations of society and cultural norms (e.g., media representations of female entrepreneurs), so that macro environment usually includes national policies, strategies, laws, cultural and economic structures; while meso environment reflects regional support policies, services, organizations, and initiatives (e.g., occupational networks, business associations). The macro environment impacts on gender socialization, which influences many decision-making contexts, framing how women perceive opportunities and make choices, and how women and others see their businesses. Significant also is how ‘gatekeepers’ of resources and power holders influence female entrepreneurship, with very few women in male-dominated industries; and the role that networking and social capital play in women business owners’ access to financial capital. The authors acknowledge that the category ‘Motherhood’ should be part of the ‘Meso/macro environment’ dimension and that both are interconnected, yet they decided to differentiate them to underline the engendered household for female entrepreneurs. Also, while macro and meso environment are linked, their separation is to highlight that, particularly from a social capital perspective, ‘the social context in which women are embedded could translate into distinct non-economic gender differences that pose unique challenges to women’s enterprise’ (Brush et al., 2009, p. 12).

Brush et al. (2009) proposed in this way that a separate theory on women’s entrepreneurship may not be required if the existing theoretical concepts are expanded and incorporate analytical categories to explain the specifics of women’s entrepreneurship, giving a proper recognition to the social context and embedded nature of gender. They suggest paying less attention on the individual characteristics of the female entrepreneur and emphasising on the process, which will be useful to highlight that the household and macro-meso environmental contexts can have exclusive implications for female entrepreneurship. Moreover, considering the social context would further benefit the general understanding of both male and female entrepreneurship. Additionally, new research results that evidence the embeddedness of women’s entrepreneurship, could be useful for policy development, considering a sustainable business support infrastructure meeting the needs of male and female entrepreneurs in a more appropriate way. The authors underline that this analytical framework is not static; it is dynamic and able to incorporate or exclude other elements. After reviewing the definitions, conceptualizations, potentials, and challenges as well as future proposals for the sector, I discuss the epistemology and methodology for the present research in the next chapter.

## 4 Epistemology and Methodology

This chapter starts with the discussion on the theoretical perspective with regards to the epistemological approach, followed by the purpose and justification of the study, the description of the research questions as well as the research design, the study population sample and selection procedures. I review the data collection and processing methods and finally I describe the quality assurance and study limitations.

### 4.1 Theoretical Perspective

In this section I discuss the epistemological approach this study intends to employ. It is based on feminist critical discussions about the more adequate and necessary theoretical frames to analyse and study social entrepreneurship under a gender lens.

When discussing the epistemology and the theoretical framework in female entrepreneurship and female social entrepreneurship specifically, there are many critiques regarding the past and relatively current and mainstream approaches, which have been dominated, methodologically, by the positivist paradigm (Brush et al., 2009; Yadav & Unni, 2016). They have included essentialist assumptions, reductionist argumentations (Marlow, 2014), the use of economically focused research (Ahl & Marlow, 2012), based on a model of economic rationality supposed to be universal and a-gendered (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016), with standardized data collection and statistical multivariate techniques for data analysis (Brush et al., 2009). The general critiques and limitations of female social entrepreneurship research have been previously discussed; however, the epistemological and theoretical dimensions will be shortly underlined. Criticized are the acceptance of a unitary gender analysis, the domination of heteronormativity, the fact that gender has been used as a generic term within mainstream theory (Cala's et al., 2009 as cited in Marlow, 2014) and that it is assumed that women are deficient, then 'proved' to be deficient, and finally made responsible for their deficiencies. Even feminist research using an empiricist epistemology are not able to avoid this, as it has been demonstrated that arguing with gender and power orders of liberal and socialist feminist theory can be turned into individual 'situational and dispositional variables' and thus, avoiding the analysis of constructions of gender (Ahl & Marlow, 2012, p. 10).

The term 'social entrepreneur' seems to be associated with complex gender connotations rather than with gender-neutrality (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016) and in this way, stereotypical assumptions around gender emerge.

Some studies infer that women might be more likely to engage in social entrepreneurship compared to commercial entrepreneurship, which is mostly based on social expectations related to caring, femininity, maternal attitudes, and feelings. However, as mentioned and discussed, this as an essentialist and reductionist explanation as the hero-discourse for men is still a tendency, which instead of associating men with the 'feminine social qualities', they are positioned as protectors and providers within the mainstream hegemonic male ideal in entrepreneurship (Marlow, 2014). Moreover, social entrepreneurs are usually described as heroic, ambitious, courageous, strong, and enterprising, which are 'masculine' characteristics; but also, as concerned with exclusion or emphatic, which emphasise a 'feminine' engagement. There are also problematic assumptions about women from the Global South and their roles in the global economy. When researchers and practitioners limit the space in which particular women are legitimate entrepreneurs to microenterprise and social business (unlucrative fields), they keep excluding and economically marginalizing because of gender (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016).

Thus, stepping aside from the positivist paradigm, this research proposes to use a social constructionist paradigm as an epistemological frame. Social constructionism has a multidisciplinary background and therefore has selected its ideas from work in the humanities and literary criticism, and of French intellectuals like Foucault and Derrida. Postmodernism was its cultural background, but it has its own origins in earlier sociological works and in social psychology. In psychology, the emergence of social constructionism is normally linked with the paper from Gergen in 1973 about 'Social psychology as history', who states that all knowledge is historically and culturally specific so that social life is continually changing. In sociology the main contribution is usually the work by Berger & Luckmann's in 1966 titled 'The Social Construction of Reality' (Burr, 2006). Berger & Luckmann (1991, p. 13) sustain that 'reality is socially constructed, and that sociology of knowledge must analyse the process in which this occurs', so that the social order is not biologically given, it exists only as a product of human activity. In this way, for the authors, society exists as both objective and subjective reality, and it is understood in terms of an ongoing dialectical process composed of the three moments of externalization, objectivation and internalization. Externalisation happens when individuals act on their world, creating some artefact or practice, which after entering society begin to take on a life of their own and become an object of consciousness for people in that society (objectivation) and are experienced as if the nature of the world is pre-given. Lastly, children are born into a world where these ideas already exist so that they internalise them as part of their understanding of the world (Burr, 2006). One crucial case of objectivation is signification, which is the production of signs, which serve as a guide of subjective meanings. Thus, language is the most important sign system of human society (P. Berger & Luckmann, 1991).

Further, the reality of everyday life is intersubjective as it is shared with others. One important process involved in this inter-subjectivity is socialization. Socialization always takes place in the context of a specific social structure, so that the micro-sociological analysis of internalization must always have as its background a macro-sociological understanding of its structure. Through these social processes, the identity of the individual is formed. Once this identity is formed, it is maintained, modified, or even reshaped by social relations and on the other hand, these identities react upon the given social structure, maintaining it, modifying it, or reshaping it. Moreover, a segment of the self is objectified in terms of the socially available typifications, so that different roles appear when many actors have a common typification. By playing roles, the individual participates in a social world. As soon as individuals are typified as role performers, their conduct is vulnerable to enforcement and obedience to the socially defined role standards (P. Berger & Luckmann, 1991). It could be sustained, that one of these roles includes the role as a woman or as a man, which underlines that gender is understood as socially constructed and that social constructionism questions the assumed categories of man and woman and rejects the belief that a male or female body entail some innate and stable qualities, which determine both the body's actions and reactions to them (Ahl, 2002). Studying gender as socially constructed has consequences not only for the issues under focus, the questions asked, and the assumptions taken, but also for the methods used (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Moreover, under this paradigm, what a researcher looks for and how they look affects what they see; science is therefore also socially constructed (Ahl, 2002). Furthermore, from a social constructionism perspective, entrepreneurship is an 'enacted' phenomenon that emerges through social interactions (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2011).

Within this frame and regarding feminist theory for this dissertation, the feminist post-structuralist approach will be favoured. The origins of poststructuralist feminism can be traced back to post-structural/postmodern philosophy and social theory (Mir, Willmott, & Greenwood, 2015). Resuming on the post-modern thought, which is also an important background of social constructionism (Burr, 2006), it should be underlined that it is a rejection of the idea that there can be an ultimate truth, and that the world can be understood in terms of metanarratives and emphasises instead the co-existence of a multiplicity of situation-dependent ways of life (Beasley, 1999). In this way, the main idea of poststructuralist feminism, based on the structural linguistics of Saussure, the ideas about the impossibility of a universal truth from Derrida, the dominance of oppositional dichotomies in our thinking and deconstruction as a method and the notion of the power of discourses from Foucault, is to question the unitary notions of women and femininity, because social relations are characterized by instabilities and differences. According to poststructuralist feminism, the position of a 'man' or 'women' is constituted by multiple



performances in specific spatial-temporal settings (Mir et al., 2015). Women is a term in process, a becoming. Sexuality is therefore culturally constructed within existing power relations (Butler, 1990). It focuses on the processes through which individuals are made into gendered subjects. Through the examination of the ways the social is interiorized by the individual, poststructuralist theory shows how it is that power works not just to shape specific subjects, but to make those ways of being, desirable, such that individuals perceive them as their own. The idea is not to expose the truth of sex and gender, but to question that which is taken as unquestionable truth (Davies & Gannon, 2011).

Thus, postmodern/poststructuralist feminist writings highlight plurality rather than unity (Beasley, 1999). They propose that instead of the existence of one essential truth, there are multiple subjective, relative truths of personal construction, which are shaped by subjective experience, society, culture, and language (Frost & Elichao, 2014).

‘Its task is not to document differences between those categorized as men and those categorized as women, but to multiply possibilities, to de-massify ways of thinking about ‘male’ and ‘female’ – to play with the possibility of subjectivities that are both and neither – to understand power as discursively constructed and spatially and materially located’ (Davies & Gannon, 2011, p. 313).

Postmodern feminists emphasise that universalist assumptions could produce a repetition of the processes of oppression feminism wishes to challenge, because when making assumptions from women as a group, the Western ‘Man’ as the universal standard is replaced with another controlling norm, against which some women might be marginalised (Beasley, 1999). Therefore, it rejects conceptions of women as a homogenous category, stressing the differences both within and between subjects and the diversity of forms of power and discarding universalising and normalising women as a group. Universalism is understood as an analytical procedure that declares similarities and establishes what is ‘normal’, and therefore marginalises what is seen as dissimilar, thus relying on normalisation, which states dissimilarity as abnormal. Universalising principles are viewed as intimately connected with domination and the subordination of that which is not ‘normal’. This dissertation agrees with a poststructuralist feminist stream that ‘regard Foucault’s call to abandon (sexual) identity as premature in a context in which the feminine is marginalised as a matter of course’, in which women are unable to be represented without being related to a masculine norm (Beasley, 1999, p. 95).

‘Such feminists remain concerned that if the already marginalised feminine is not voiced as a form of resistance, its disappearance may not spell destabilisation of masculine authority so much as its reiteration. They suggest that unless we explicitly refer to the category, women, the prevailing focus on men remains uninterrupted’ (Beasley, 1999, p. 95).

The focus on the women’s ‘experience’ is often related with a recognition that this experiential identity was inseparable from women’s struggle within and

against patriarchal norms for femininity (Friedman, 1991) and as Ahl (2004, p. 30) states 'There are difficulties and dangers in talking about women as a single group but there are also dangers in not being able to talk of women as a single group'. While gender encompasses both men and women, the focus on women and their businesses is valuable because they are less often included in studies of entrepreneurship (Brush et al., 2018). Thus, this research will focus on the female group of social entrepreneurs and will analyse the gender constructions within this group and their contexts, acknowledging that there are no essential and universal traits specific to women.

Moreover, poststructuralism questions the individualism of humanist approaches, and contrasting with postmodernism it might be understood as the opposite of the emphasis on the individual of global capitalism and neoliberalism. It adopts the task of re-visualizing the past and future relations of the individual to the environment and to each other, as beings that are 'co-implicated' with others and not as individualistic actors that are separate from the world. In this way, an important focus of post-structural theory is on the way individuals become gendered subjects, and as discussed before rejecting theories which state that gender and sexuality are determined whether through social structures, cognition, or biology (Gannon & Davies, 2012). As an ongoing discursive practice, it can be intervened and re-signified, as identity is understood as an effect (neither fully determined nor fully artificial and arbitrary), as produced, opening possibilities of agency (Butler, 1990). This turn into agency, and the possibilities for action, is based on the ability to recognize the social and historical regulated nature of discursive constitution and thus does not assume freedom from it but sustains that it can be questioned and changed (Gannon & Davies, 2012).

Feminist postmodernism/poststructuralism emphasizes specificity of context and time. It recognizes how culture, history, and society influence realities, highlighting the variations of women's lives and identities and asking how they are perceived and shaped, exploring the interactions between gender, sexuality, class, race, and ableism (Frost & Elichaoiff, 2014).

In poststructuralist/postmodern feminism there is a strong focus on discursive practices of gender, deconstructing the binary logic of gender (Mir et al., 2015). Thus, by perceiving knowledge as socially constructed, unstable and contextualized, an emphasis is placed on language and discourse (Frost & Elichaoiff, 2014). A discourse is a historically, socially, and institutionally specific structure of statements, terms, categories, and beliefs, contained in organizations, institutions, words, and social relationships. They serve as 'truths' and have a powerful legitimating function (Scott, 1988). Accordingly, many feminist writers and researchers have focused on the language used to describe the world and people, to underline how understanding and perceptions are developed, accepted, and reinforced, based on Foucault and Derrida, who related power and language and the idea of deconstruction. Hence, the Foucauldian

discourse analysis has become a key method of research in feminist postmodernism. In general, this method allows the analysis of language, images, symbols, and other media representations, aiming at understanding how realities are constructed through these and identifying cultural and social influences on subjective experiences. The main idea is to challenge the questions that are asked about women's experiences. Thus, prevailing theories can be deconstructed, identifying the power dynamics and other factors that have influenced their development. Feminist researchers do not understand discourse analysis as a method per se; instead, it influences the nature and focus of the questions they ask (Frost & Elichaooff, 2014).

Additionally, feminist poststructuralism moves away from the empiricist search for objective truth and explores women's experiences and behaviour in relation to the context they are embedded in; rejecting the use of hegemonic norms that see women as deviant from the norm. As mentioned, it discards objectivity and the belief of an absolute truth, questioning the validity of differences based on cultural, social and class. It deconstructs these socially constructed categories, exploring distinctions in individual experience within these groups. Consequently, it explores the forms in which language creates and reinforces the essentialist views of women. Traditional scientific approaches are regarded as one discourse among many that are available (Frost & Elichaooff, 2014). In this way, post-structuralist theory dismisses positivism, that relies on a method as a guarantor of truth (Davies & Gannon, 2011), understanding the social world as independent of the researcher. In contrast, it proposes that objectivity must be carefully rethought, so that any interpretation is always situated; meaning that an interpretation from a specific location, time, and person, with a specific goal and for a specific audience, is therefore always partial and particular (Gannon & Davies, 2012). Thus, poststructuralism realises the mutual embeddedness in discourse and relations of power of researcher and researched (Davies & Gannon, 2011).

As previously discussed, discourse analysis is one of the main methods used by this approach, however, there are many other methodological approaches that are applied, since the emphasis is on the process of exploration rather than on following a method (Davies & Gannon, 2011). Poststructuralism's central strategy is close textual analysis, including macro-texts such as 'capitalism' and micro-level texts such as interview transcripts or literary texts. Their strategies are usually multidisciplinary. Important is that the interpretative focus shifts from language as a tool for describing real worlds, towards discourse, as constitutive of those worlds. This makes the historical, cultural, social, and discursive patterns visible through which oppressive or dominant realities are maintained; so that structures and practices of everyday life can be questioned and challenged; understanding the individual as co-implicated and not separate from the social (Gannon & Davies, 2012).

In general, adopting a feminist perspective, positions women as worthy research subjects and dispute embedded ontological assumptions. In entrepreneurship, in addition to developing a more critical use of both quantitative and qualitative data informed by feminist analyses, there should be a focus on longitudinal work (Marlow, 2014) and discourse analysis, because tales about entrepreneurship, constitutive of social reality, become important (Ahl, 2002). There is a need to embrace innovative methods to build explanations using a constructionist approach (Yadav & Unni, 2016). There should not be any aversion against quantification and statistical analysis as this often provides the information for determining the importance of research questions, yet it does not enable a detailed analysis of how a gendered construction of the entrepreneurial discourse is produced and reproduced. Accordingly, a more diverse and differentiated methodological approach is necessary (Ahl & Marlow, 2012), where gender is used as a lens and not merely as a variable and results are analysed through the intersectionality perspective and embedded in their context (Marlow, 2014). The methodology used for this dissertation will be described and discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Critics of feminist postmodern/ poststructuralism reject the affirmation that there is no universal truth, the aim to deconstruct power structures within discourse and the rejection of the conception of women as a homogenous category. Declaring that there is no universal truth has been considered harmful to feminism, because it impedes a sense of community and a common goal from the movement (Frost & Elichaooff, 2014). This relativism is seen as unable of provoking any action to improve the lives of women, which should be a main goal of feminism. However, poststructuralism does allow an analysis of the operations of power, permitting their transformation (Gannon & Davies, 2012). Still, the limits of this approach need to be recognized to avoid prescribing ‘minority world ideas in others in a uniformed and potentially damaging way’ (Frost & Elichaooff, 2014, p. 52).

Adopting a post-structuralist feminist theory in entrepreneurship research allows understanding gender as a basic organizing principle in society, assuming that through socialization and the subordinated position of women, they have different experiences and interests from men’s (Ahl, 2002). It also offers a more coherent epistemological critique of the a-theoretical nature of knowledge regarding female entrepreneurship, which would reveal, analyse, and underline the meaning of entrepreneurship through women’s experiences and therefore guarantee that their activities receive greater credibility and legitimacy (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Using a feminist research approach is not necessarily a way to generate more truthful versions of an area of study; however, choosing any perspective, and especially a feminist one, is a value-based choice, since all science reproduces or challenges a specific social construction of reality. Therefore, the aim is to challenge gender arrangements within social entrepreneurship with an interest in change (Ahl, 2002).

Within female social entrepreneurship it is important to highlight that there is a need to stop exploring if there is an essential relationship between the feminine and the social. Further, research needs to focus on analysing the form and intent of women's socially entrepreneurial activity, regarding incidence, sector, and scale, and showing the multiplicity of women's backgrounds, experiences, and motivations. Thus, the nature of women's contribution and impact in this sector can be underlined and better supported (Marlow, 2014). Applying a feminist perspective will problematize the gender-neutral and gender-blind assumptions related to the 'social entrepreneur', like the hero narrative or the general masculine advantage. Therefore, both the identity of the social entrepreneur and the context in which he/she is embedded need to be analysed from a gender perspective, examining how gender is constructed in the entrepreneurial ecosystem and consider social, cultural, political and economic reforms that might promote gender equality (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016).

Furthermore, a contextualized view on entrepreneurship can enhance the knowledge of when, how, and why entrepreneurship happens. It includes, besides the business, social, spatial, and institutional contexts, also household and family embeddedness. Moreover, it sees entrepreneurship as taking place in intertwined social and geographical contexts, which can change over time and can be perceived as an asset or a liability by entrepreneurs. Finally, in research it must be acknowledged that entrepreneurship happens in various contexts, that research takes place in specific contexts and communities, and that researchers themselves bring their own context to the research. Therefore, researching entrepreneurship includes recognizing the complexity and diversity of the phenomenon and its contexts, and recognizing contributions outside the mainstream debate (Welter, 2011).

The context in which an entrepreneurial activity is embedded simultaneously provides individuals with opportunities and boundaries. Therefore, according to Welter (2011), when analysing the context, the following dimensions should be included:

- 'who' refers to the impact of contexts on entrepreneurship, regarding who enters entrepreneurship and which ventures are created;
- 'where' refers to the various locations in which entrepreneurship happens, all of which have an impact on 'who'. This dimension can be further distinguished according to its main type, be it business, social, spatial, or institutional. It includes both distal contexts, for example, countries, political systems, or society, as well as more proximate contexts such as the social environment or the local neighbourhood of entrepreneurs. In the social dimension, for example social networks and household and family contexts should be analysed. Entrepreneurship also happens in spatial, or geographical contexts. The spatial context needs to go beyond the public sphere and include the private sphere, which refers to the household and

family. Also, the institutional context plays an important role, as formal institutions are political and economy-related rules which create or restrict opportunity fields for entrepreneurship (e.g., laws and regulations for market entry). Informal institutions, including norms and attitudes of a society, influence opportunity recognition of entrepreneurs as well as opportunity exploitation and access to resources (e.g., the value society gives entrepreneurship or the roles of women in society);

- the ‘when’ perspective draws attention to temporal and historical contexts, by referring to historical influences on the nature and extent of today’s entrepreneurship and changes in the contexts over time.

Contextualization can take place at many stages of the research process, from formulating the research problem; selecting a research design, methodology, and site; to data measurement, analysis, and interpretation. One important challenge in contextualizing entrepreneurship is to not take context for granted. Contextualizing theory implies acknowledging situational and temporal boundaries for entrepreneurship to frame research questions and research designs, which can include context descriptions or studying entrepreneurship from a comparative perspective. Research on women’s entrepreneurship and on ethnic entrepreneurs offer useful theoretical perspectives by proposing multi-layered embeddedness analysis formats, which recognize the diversity in institutional and socio-spatial contexts (Welter, 2011).

With regards to gender, for Brush et al. (2018) the entrepreneurship ecosystem includes a conducive culture, the availability of financing, the acquisition and development of human capital, new markets for products and services, and a range of institutional and infrastructural supports. Usually, it is assumed that all entrepreneurs have equal access to resources, participation, and support, as well as an equal chance of a successful outcome. However, it has been shown that entrepreneurship ecosystem factors influence men and women differently and there is emerging data that show the effects of women on entrepreneurship ecosystems. Explicitly recognizing gender could enhance theory and elaborate the understanding of entrepreneurship ecosystems generally. Thus, the authors explore how and where gender matters for entrepreneurial ecosystems at three levels: institutional, organizational, and individual.

- the institutional level influences the nature and extent of entrepreneurship, its development, and its outcomes. These include regulatory, normative, and cognitive institutions. Research has indicated that some of these institutions have a potential gender impact, including the constitution providing for gender equality in a society; labour market rules; family and tax policies, tax regulations and the overall infrastructure for childcare; and property rights that may allow or prevent female

ownership of land, together with the predominant gender ideology and gender stereotypes in a specific society;

- there are many participating organizations that provide support, training, and participate in the process of stimulating new venture creation. Gender is argued to be a constitutive element in organizational logic through underlying assumptions and practices. There are three areas where organizations may be gendered within entrepreneurship: (1) Construction of divisions along lines of gender, including division of labour, or networks, where some may be perceived as more trusting or legitimate than others. (2) Construction of symbols and images that express and reinforce gender divisions, like language, ideology and cultural aspects. In entrepreneurship, the media, support organizations, and funders develop narratives and stories about successful entrepreneurs. (3) Gendered social structures including accelerators, incubators, co-working spaces, vendors, business partners, suppliers, contractors, financing organizations and other organizations. The way organizations are structured regarding hierarchies, decision-making, and the perceptions of gender roles in these hierarchies have the potential to influence men and women differently;
- at the individual level the perception of gender identity and gender roles, and how these perceptions influence their behaviours is essential to understanding entrepreneurial ecosystems. The stereotype of the entrepreneur is perceived to be 'male', which influences how an individual's performance is perceived. Role models are another crucial aspect, so that when entrepreneurs have role models, they are more likely to see themselves as entrepreneurs. Additionally, gender roles contribute to leadership differences, which is relevant when considering who leads and is driving political, corporate, or economic activity.

Finally, because of the intercultural background of the researcher, it is most important for the idea of situated knowledge to include Latin American feminist theories. For Mendoza (2014) the dialogue between mestizos, euro-south-American, indigenous and black still presents vestiges of a power dialectic between the dominant cultural speaker and the subordinate speaker, which shows that there is still a lot to do for Latin American feminists, specially about the absence of a conceptual structure that includes the coloniality of gender in its linking with race, class and sexuality within societies and the confabulations of the ultra-right of the northern Globe.

Latin American feminism highlights that feminism needs to include not just the bourgeois white female, but also working women, women of colour, indigenous women and all other women characterisations that are not comprised in the heterosexual white female portray. In this way, issues of colonialism and seeing a differential gender construction in terms of race have been an important part of Latin American feminism. Race, gender, class, and sexuality

are constitutive of each other and cannot be understood separately (Lugones, 2014). In this way, feminism of difference, that was able to destroy the universalizing bias, monolithic and homogenizing of women from modern occident, allowed the emergence of other popular feminisms, indigenous feminisms, afro-feminisms, lesbian feminism, communitarian feminism, decolonizing feminism and others. Here the critic towards essentialism discussed before in post-structural feminism is also reflected. There is in general, a need to abandon the Eurocentric interpretative frames, and a valuable contribution of Latin American feminism is the creation of an 'amongst-us' through the recognition of the differences, a communal thinking, activating the creative possibilities and including circles of meaning and recognition that allow coalition (Alvarado, 2016).

Regarding female entrepreneurship, promoting entrepreneurship among women in Latin America has been part of a set of policies which redefine poverty in terms of an absence of individual capabilities and not as a structural and income-related problem. Aiming at strengthening capital and including women in the market, different interventions train and empower women to guarantee the basic living conditions and having flexibility in their working hours to be able to keep the caring activities outside their work. State obligations are rather absent in the provision of care services and reproduction, and the focus contributes to the idea that the problem of gender is only of poor women because they are excluded from the market and their low productivity, thus ignoring the structures that cause poverty in the first place. Feminist economy, therefore, has been fighting to create a welfare state which corrects high levels of inequality and contributes to the socialization of care, evoking European experiences, however criticising the link to an androcentric working model. It does not mention, though, that one of the main reasons the welfare state was possible was because of the relation of centre-periphery, which guaranteed the historic extraction of resources, configured in a relationship of modernity and colonialism. In research, North America and Europe are still the centres where theory is developed which leads to the dominant relation of centre and periphery, where Latin America contributes as a field for the application of the concepts. Moreover, it is necessary to discuss the theoretical implications a care economy would have based on the foundations of the *Buen Vivir* (an Andean indigenous world view), where anthropocentrism is rejected, and earth is recognized as a subject and object of care. At the same time, the community dimension, including collective autonomy and self-organization, allow considering other care dimensions that have been ignored. The decolonizing perspective contributes to the feminist economy the construction of a field of knowledge which is more porous, more willing to situate itself and discuss other pre-assumptions, opening to the possibility to produce a theory that reflects the epistemological alternatives about the causes and solutions for inequality (Quiroga Díaz, 2014). Therefore, there is a need to question the euro-



centred norm and open the theoretical, epistemological, and methodological approaches towards diversity. In this manner, this research wishes to pursue an 'amongst-us', recognizing differences and underlining a communal thinking that allows coalition.

In conclusion, the most important aspects of the epistemological approach of this dissertation are first, that it is framed in social constructionism, meaning that it understands individuals and societies as socially constructed, where subjects have a dialectical relation with social structures and where gender is therefore also, socially constructed. Second, the feminist approach is supported by the feminist post-structuralist theory, where the focus is set on the specific processes whereby individuals are made into gendered subjects, which are influenced not only by the subjective experience, but also by society, culture, language, and context in general. In this way, it underlines a contextualized view on entrepreneurship, and especially in female social entrepreneurship, it emphasises the avoidance of looking for an essential relationship between the female and the social, moreover, focusing on the analysis of the form and intent of female social entrepreneurship, examining how gender is constructed within the social entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Consequently, this research proposes an integrative frame for the analysis of social entrepreneurship, based on Isenberg's Model of an entrepreneurship ecosystem (Isenberg, 2011), the contextualized view of entrepreneurship by Welter (2011), the gender-aware framework for women's entrepreneurship (Brush et al., 2009), the work of Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan (2016) on feminist perspectives on social entrepreneurship, the research review of women entrepreneurship from Yadav & Unni (2016) and the review of the gendered entrepreneurship ecosystems from Bush et al. (2018) (Figure 7). It includes the idea of ecosystem, a term that comes from the field of ecology and refers to the 'habitat' of which social entrepreneurs are a part (Kickul & Lyons, 2016). It includes three levels of analysis: the individual or micro-level (personality, motivations, self-perception, abilities, values and identity, etc.), the meso level (education, industrial sector, country, media, income, region, social networks, regional services, etc.) and the macro level (welfare system, national policies and strategies, business culture, cultural beliefs and attitudes, social structures, social norms and expectations, technology, social stratification, as well as legislation, family, economic and tax policy, labour market structures, female business owner's involvement, third sector and social economy, etc.). Additionally, it contains the four dimensions that play an important role specifically in the study of entrepreneurship according to Brush et al. (2009): market, money, management, and motherhood, which have been adapted for social entrepreneurship as management, market and social/ecological purpose, resources and household and care (see Figure 8). It is important to note that the different levels and the different dimensions are not separate and independent from each other, as they overlap, relate, and influence each other. Also, the

phenomenon of female social entrepreneurship is the consequence of the interrelation of and with these levels and dimensions in a specific historical and geographical context. Such a differentiation of levels is in many cases problematic. However, it is used to decrease the level of complexity of such ecosystem, as well as allowing a more accurate analysis of it. Lastly, this frame, based on feminist objectives as previously described, does not intend to be an analysis frame only for female social entrepreneurship. Rather, the intention is that this frame is applied for the analysis of social entrepreneurship in general, and eventually for general entrepreneurship too. I use this integral frame for the research design and specially the design of the methodological instruments, such as interviews or surveys, as well as for the analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

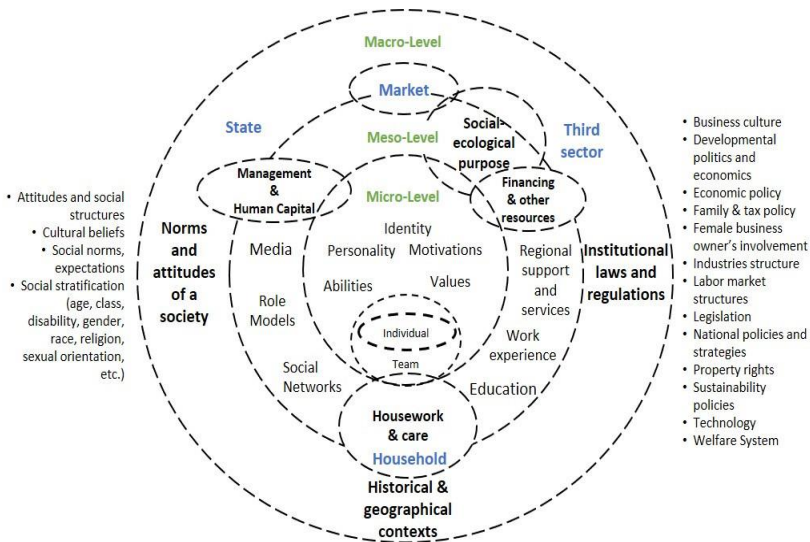


Figure 7: Integrative Frame for the Analysis of the Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem (Source: own illustration based on Brush et al., 2009; Brush et al., 2018; Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016; Isenberg, 2011; Welter, 2011; Yadav & Unni, 2016)

## 4.2 Purpose and Justification

One of the main purposes of this research study is to keep filling the gap of studies on social entrepreneurship and gender, as there is a lack of research on women-led social enterprises and gender dimensions of social economy and social enterprises (Humbert, 2012). Most academic studies have used a gender-blind analysis of social entrepreneurship, although the field of gender scholarship is relatively firm and despite a call for more gender sensitive studies of social entrepreneurship (Teasdale et al., 2011). Currently, there are only some few reports of social entrepreneurship and gender as listed previously in section 3.4 The current state of research.

Additionally, from female entrepreneurship research there is a call to continue to tell stories about women's business practices, in order to challenge the taken-for-granted assumptions of gender neutrality with regards to typical business behaviour and entrepreneurship (García & Welter, 2013). Also, regarding gender research and specifically, hegemonic masculinity studies, this research wishes to answer to the appeal to pay more attention to the practices of women, incorporating a more holistic understanding of gender hierarchy, recognizing the agency of women as well as the power of dominant groups and the mutual conditioning of gender dynamics and other social dynamics (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2016). The aim is therefore, from the perspective of women's experiences, to offer women explanations and analysis of social phenomena that are wanted and needed and not of issues that are proposed by others (Harding, 1987).

Finally, this research project intends to respond to the claim to use a social constructionist approach, which looks at any individual within a social ecosystem (Ahl & Marlow, 2012) using gender as an analytical category and not as an explanatory variable (Ahl, 2006), addressing the deeply rooted inequality structures that restrain and limit women and social enterprise (Usher Shrair, 2015), as well as those structures that encourage and promote it. In this way, highlighting the potential of social entrepreneurship to obtain feminist change (Ahl et al., 2016), and inquiring consequently the potential of social entrepreneurship, combined with feminist approaches, to transform the entrepreneurship system, thus, transforming the current male-dominated and growth-oriented paradigm into a more gender-equal and inclusive way of tackling social needs (Usher Shrair, 2015). Moreover, underlining that most feminist researchers seek to connect their study to social transformation and social change on behalf of women and other oppressed groups (Gannon & Davies, 2012), aiming at producing knowledge that is applicable to the world that women live in (DeVault & Gross, 2012).

### 4.3 Research Questions

Based on the previously mentioned purpose and justification of this study, the main goal of this research is to portray female social entrepreneurs and their political, social, and economic contexts in Germany (How can female social entrepreneurs in Germany be portrayed?); mainly by answering these secondary questions:

- what are the main personal motivations of female social entrepreneurs?
- what was their educational path and what working experience do they have?
- what are the contributions and impact they are pursuing through their enterprises?
- how are they managing their enterprises?
- how is gender 'being done' in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem? What role is gender playing for female social entrepreneurs? What discourses on gender are used?
- what structures, programmes and policies should be implemented to support and promote social entrepreneurship?
- what is the potential of social entrepreneurship to facilitate social change and more equal, innovative, and inclusive ways to tackle social issues? What is the potential of social entrepreneurship combined with feminist approaches to transform the entrepreneurship ecosystem?
- what are the political, economic, and social structures involved in (limiting or supporting) female social entrepreneurship?

Following, to answer the main and secondary research questions, I will describe the research design. A research design is used to ensure that the data obtained enables the researcher to answer the research question as precisely as possible, therefore it involves specifying the type of data needed to answer it (Vaus, 2001).

### 4.4 Research Design

The research design includes the processes that will be used and the strategies for identifying and accessing settings of informants, the approximate number of settings or people planned to be studied, the data collection, the data analysis procedures, and the significance of the research (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2015).

Feminists have created new epistemologies by incorporating women's lived experiences, emotions, and feelings into the knowledge-building process (Gannon & Davies, 2012) and this research design aims at incorporating the lived experiences of women in social entrepreneurship. Moreover, an optimal feminist analysis affirms that class, race, culture and gender assumptions, beliefs and behaviours of the researcher must be placed within the frame of the interpretation, analysis, and communication of results so that 'the researcher appears not as an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individual with concrete, specific desires, and interests' (Harding, 1987, p. 9).

This study proposes a descriptive and a cross-sectional qualitative research design (Rubin & Babbie, 2014), defining and describing social phenomena since it focuses on portraying what is relevant regarding a group and a situation. Descriptive research differentiates from exploratory research, however, in that some knowledge about the topic is available and therefore the outcome can be more accurate and precise, as it is the case in this study (Cargan, 2007). Competent descriptions can challenge accepted assumptions about the way things are and can provoke action, stimulating causal questioning. In a cross-sectional design, data is collected in one point of time, contrary to for example longitudinal design where data is collected in different periods of time (Vaus, 2001). The qualitative research design remains flexible both before and throughout the actual research, while the specific details develop during the process. Therefore, most qualitative researchers attempt to enter the field without clear hypothesis and usually only with general questions. The phenomena should be explored as they emerge during the research process (Taylor et al., 2015).

Regarding gender, research approaches should be analysed to deliberate whether they are gendered by nature. In entrepreneurship, there is a vast use of the positivist approach (e.g., standardized data collection and statistical multivariate techniques for analysis), and research on the individual entrepreneur and on enterprises usually uses instruments developed and tested on men. Therefore, the use of mixed methods is recommended, which allows researchers to portray women's entrepreneurship more broadly, with the analysis of how the process of entrepreneurship might be influenced by the social and institutional context. This type of research design can be attained including qualitative dimensions, a constructivist paradigm, and any quantitative components from positivism. With a constructionist paradigm, entrepreneurship is understood as a socially constructed phenomenon, underlining the different dimensions in which entrepreneurship is embedded. Moreover, as discussed before, often research approaches tend to overlook institutional aspects of entrepreneurship (Welter, 2011). Consequently, in women's entrepreneurship the use of mixed methods would be advantageous for understanding both dimensions (Brush et al., 2009), as the use of qualitative or combined methods allow

capturing the richness and diversity of the contexts (Welter, 2011). A feminist approach is situated and carried out in a specific historical context, and just as knowledge, it is socially structured (DeVault & Gross, 2012). Moreover, in general, all feminist approaches serve as a guide on how the research methods are practiced (Hesse-Biber, 2012).

As previously discussed, one of the main research methods used by feminist research is discourse analysis. Nevertheless, there are many other methodological approaches that can be used, as the focus is set on the process of exploration rather than on a method (Davies & Gannon, 2011). Quantification and statistical analysis can be used to obtain information needed to determine the importance of research questions. However, it does not allow a thorough analysis of the production and reproduction of a gendered construction of the entrepreneurial discourse. Therefore, more methodological diversity is necessary (Ahl & Marlow, 2012), using gender as a lens and analysing results through a contextual and intersectional approach (Marlow, 2014). Also, according to Connell & Messerschmidt (2016) existing hegemonic masculinities can be analysed at three levels. First, the local level which is constructed in face-to-face interaction of families, organizations, and immediate communities, as typically found in ethnographic and life-history research. Second, the regional level, constructed at the level of the culture or the nation-state, as found for example in discursive, political, and demographic research. Finally, a global or transnational level, like in world politics and transnational business and media, studied in the emerging research on masculinities and globalization.

Therefore, based on the epistemological approach proposed for this research (see Figure 7), the author suggests the use of the integrative frame for the analysis of social entrepreneurship. It includes the three levels of analysis, the individual, the meso and macro level, as well as the four dimensions that play an important role specifically in entrepreneurship according to Brush et al. (2009), adapted into market, management – social/ecological purpose, household and care and resources. These four dimensions will be the main categories used for the construction of the semi-structured guide for the interview. The purpose of using this frame is to understand the complexity and amplitude of the studied phenomenon. However, providing a detailed analysis of every aspect within this frame would exceed the limits of this research, thus the focus will be set on some specific dimensions that emerge from the collected data.

## **4.5 Study Population, Sample and Selection Procedures**

The study population includes all current female social entrepreneurs, experts, and academics on the field in Germany during the years 2018 - 2019. From

this study population, the sample will be selected through a purposive sampling process, trying to obtain a representative portrayal of the phenomenon to be studied (Rubin & Babbie, 2014). This type of sampling supports the selection of respondents who should be able to provide information about issues related to the goals of the study (García & Welter, 2013) and usually, as qualitative research is concerned with a deep understanding of the subject, it involves using small samples, aiming at analysing the ‘meanings’ individuals attribute to their situation and not automatically for generalization or representativeness. Purposive sampling is based on the research question, the resources available and the context (Hesse-Biber, 2010), and aims at securing a range of individuals that represent all groups that are meaningful for the phenomenon (Della Porta, 2014). From the total study population, the sample will try to concentrate on different geographical regions of Germany, industries or types of social entrepreneurs, various age groups and social contexts. Intended is to make also use of snowball sampling to reach other respondents with the recommendation of the participants (Rubin & Babbie, 2014) and if relevant also of theoretical sampling, where researchers select additional cases according to the potential for developing new insights or expanding and refining those already gained (Taylor et al., 2015).

The definitions of social enterprise are culturally, historically, socially, and politically variable, and have been influenced by different policy and practitioner discourses over time (Teasdale et al., 2011). In this way, first, the sampling is based on the definition of social entrepreneurship proposed for this study, which defines social entrepreneurship as ‘an undertaking, embedded in a social, cultural, economic and political context, where individual or individuals discover and evaluate opportunities or their own visions and ideas and bring them into reality by providing goods and services applying entrepreneurial and innovative processes based on collective and participatory decision-making, with the main purpose to generate social value and well-being and resolve social and ecological problems through the creation of systemic change. This can be realized through a wide spectrum of organizational forms’.

This definition includes two major dimensions important to specify. First, social entrepreneurship should address the legitimate politically defined social problems and operationalize them as goals and enterprise purposes, involving, mobilising, and engaging beneficiaries and all stakeholders. These purposes and specific goals will mainly include:

- serving members of the community by improving their welfare, health and well-being;
- building local capacity;
- including people socially and economically;
- giving voice to marginalized groups;
- protecting the environment;

- challenging the unequal distribution of power and resources;
- promoting civic engagement;
- reconfiguring products, resources and management/policies/rules through innovative approaches that improve one or more of the aspects previously mentioned.

Second, the range of organizational forms and legal structures will concentrate on the hybrid forms between the purely commercial for-profits and the purely philanthropic non-profits, like non-profit social entrepreneurs, non-profit with a for-profit subsidiary, explicit social enterprises, etc. as proposed in Table 2.

Moreover, as mentioned, samples will be selected from different types of social entrepreneurs, including those from the care, health, and social sector and on industries like technology and environmental protection. Important to mention is the social constructed understanding of gender, which will influence the sampling process as it will include individuals who identify themselves as females; and will use gender as an analytical category and not as a variable. Thus, this dissertation refers to ‘female’ social entrepreneurship instead of ‘women’ social entrepreneurs, to underline the fact that it includes the previously understanding of gender as socially constructed, and not to the differentiation of the ‘biological’ sex between men and women.

Additionally, the sampling process will make use of data collected through a secondary analysis about the female social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany. This review will mainly be made using online sources, available literature and entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship networks, reports, and data bases. Here, many organizations, associations, enterprises, and initiatives regarding social entrepreneurship and social innovation were searched for and listed. From many of these sources, female social entrepreneurs, who for example received a prize, or participated in a social impact lab, or others, were identified and a list of approximately 346 female social entrepreneurs was made. From this list, 83 of them were invited to participate in an interview, of which 17 accepted the invitation. The sample encompasses female social entrepreneurs from different industrial sectors, as well as different age groups and cities in Germany.

The proposed research design includes a small control group sample, which comprises male social entrepreneurs, as the focus of the research is on gender. The sampling process was the same as the sampling process for the female social entrepreneurs: the same sources were used to find male social entrepreneurs and the same invitation was sent to them. 30 invitations were sent, from which five agreed to give the interview. The interviews were executed using the same interview guideline.

Additionally, seven experts on the field were also invited for an interview, from which three were willing to be interviewed. A Junior Professor of Female



and Women's Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Education, Academic Entrepreneurship and other subjects of a German University; a co-founder and leader of the community management and communication of a franchise organization promoting social entrepreneurship through innovation labs, business incubators and event spaces in Germany; and a co-founder of a digital hub supporting people and organizations that are making an impact, through a platform that provides a job searching engine, workshops and courses, funding opportunities, networking, best practices and others.

Following, tables (Table 4, Table 5, Table 6 and Table 7) with the description of the interviewed female social entrepreneurs and enterprises, including founder(s), age group, legal form, year of funding, main activity, target group, the general social purpose they are pursuing according to the definition of this research, and the type of financing and support programmes they use(d). Afterwards, the same description is presented for the control group of five male social entrepreneurs (Table 8) and experts (Table 9).

*Table 4: Description of Interviewed Sample of Female Social Entrepreneurs in Germany (1) (Source: own elaboration)*

<b>Founder</b>	1	1	1	1	2 +MSE
<b>Age Group</b>	35-45	35-45	45-55	45-55	20-30
<b>Legal form</b>	gUG	sole proprietorship	GmbH	sole proprietorship	GbR
<b>Year</b>	2014	2014	2011	2010	2017
<b>Activity</b>	Platform for social and environmental innovative businesses	Counselling and coaching for migrant women for professional development	Contacting managers and professionals with social projects for volunteering	Educational institution for high school students	Manufacturing of sustainable furniture from bulky waste
<b>Target Group</b>	Social and environmental businesses	Spanish speaking expatriate women	Managers, professionals, and social projects	Highschool students	Public
<b>Social Area</b>	Challenging the unequal distribution of power and resources	Including people socially and economically	Building local capacity	Building local capacity	Protecting the environment
<b>Financing</b>	Volunteer work & private investment of founder	Products and Services	Products and Services	Products and Services	Cooperation, products, and Services
<b>Support Programmes</b>	Participated in conferences of Social Impact	-	-	Female founders evening + Coaching sessions from the federal government	Designer Lab

*Table 5: Description of Interviewed Sample of Female Social Entrepreneurs in Germany (2) (Source: own elaboration)*

<b>Founder</b>	2 + MSE	2	1	1	3
<b>Age Group</b>	35-45	25-35	45-55	25-30	35-45
<b>Legal form</b>	GmbH	GbR	gGmbH	sole proprietorship	gUG
<b>Year</b>	2012	2017	2005	2017	2013
<b>Activity</b>	Platform for crowdfunding sports	Female leadership programme and peer-coaching / Supporting social entrepreneurship	Programme for unemployed youth using performing arts to teach job-seeking and professional skills	Financial education for women	Global collaboration network for journalists and documentary filmmakers
<b>Target Group</b>	Public and sports	Women and social entrepreneurs	Unemployed youth	Women	Journalists and documentary filmmakers
<b>Social Area</b>	Challenging the unequal distribution of power and resources	Serving members of the community by improving their welfare, health, and well-being,	Including people socially and economically	Building local capacity	Building local capacity
<b>Financing</b>	Products and Services	Services & for every paid participant, a less privileged person will get access to services	Products and Services and donations	Products and Services	Revenues, financial support from organizations, donations
<b>Support Programmes</b>	Price winner	-	Ashoka, Price winner of the federal government	Social Impact Lab	Google Impact Challenge

*Table 6: Description of Interviewed Sample of Female Social Entrepreneurs in Germany (3) (Source: own elaboration)*

<b>Founder</b>	3	4	5	1
<b>Age Group</b>	35-45	35-45	35-45	45-55
<b>Legal form</b>	GmbH	GmbH	e.V.	gGmbH
<b>Year</b>	2014	2017	2018	1996
<b>Activity</b>	Crowdfunding/investing platform for energy efficient projects	Delivery of unpacked and sustainable provisions, cosmetic and household items in bicycle	Diner, shop, and project kitchen with sorted out food	Network for support for mothers and young families coping with parenthood // Learning modules for parents
<b>Target Group</b>	Energy efficient projects and investors	Consumers and producers of sustainable products	Public	Parents, young families
<b>Social Area</b>	Protecting the environment	Protecting the environment	Protecting the environment	Serving members of the community by improving their welfare, health, and well-being
<b>Financing</b>	Products and Services	Products and Services	Products and services, donations, cooperation, pay what you feel	Services, donations, and cooperation. Volunteering, products and services and memberships
<b>Support Programmes</b>	Start-up price	Social Impact Lab	Social Impact Lab	Start Social, Schwab Foundation, McKinsey, Ashoka

*Table 7: Description of Interviewed Sample of Female Social Entrepreneurs in Germany (4) (Source: own elaboration)*

<b>Founder</b>	1	1	1
<b>Age Group</b>	45-55	35-45	45-55
<b>Legal form</b>	sole proprietorship	e.V.	UG
<b>Year</b>	2010	-	-
<b>Activity</b>	Slow fashion, hand-crafted in Mexico, fair trade, for Germany	Open Source platform and mapping of initiatives for inclusion of transgender people	Science-based climate metric from a financial risk perspective. Supporting projects in bioenergy and microcredits for women
<b>Target Group</b>	Public and handcraft women in Mexico	Public	Public
<b>Social Area</b>	Challenging the unequal distribution of power and resources	Serving members of the community by improving their welfare, health, and well-being	Protecting the environment
<b>Financing</b>	Products and Services	-	Products and Services
<b>Support Programmes</b>	-	-	-

*Table 8: Description of Interviewed Sample of Male Social Entrepreneurs in Germany (Source: own elaboration)*

<b>Founder</b>	3	1	8	1	1 + FSE
<b>Age Group</b>	35-45	15-20	25-35	25-35	45-55
<b>Legal form</b>	UG	GmbH	e.V. + GmbH	sole proprietorship	e.V.
<b>Year</b>	2017	2017	2016	2015	2015
<b>Activity</b>	Collection of electrical devices for recycling, providing a voucher for sustainable products	App for learning and training high school content	Collective restauration of building, developing a cultural and social space for the community	A mobile training programme for children and youth to compose and make music for learning the language	Education, political education and counselling for children, youth, and asylum seekers
<b>Target Group</b>	Public	High school students and teachers	Public	Children and youth	Children, youth, asylum seekers
<b>Social Area</b>	Protecting the environment	Building local capacity	Serving members of the community by improving their welfare, health, and well-being	Building local capacity	Including people socially and economically
<b>Financing</b>	-	Monthly payment for service	Investment and funding from the city	Products and Services / Co-operation	Donations, Cooperation, Funding
<b>Support Programmes</b>	-	Start-up Teens	-	Social Impact Lab - GRIIN	Social Impact Lab

*Table 9: Description of Interviewed Sample of Experts on Social Entrepreneurship (Source: own elaboration)*

<b>Description</b>	<b>Field of work</b>	<b>City</b>
Junior Professor	Female and women's Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Education, Academic Entrepreneurship, and other subjects of a University	Niedersachsen
Co-founder and Leader of Community Management and Communication	Franchise organization promoting social entrepreneurship through innovation labs, business incubators and event spaces	Nordrhein-Westfalen
Co-founder and Author	Digital hub supporting people and organizations that are making an impact, through a platform that provides a job searching engine, workshops and courses, funding opportunities, networking, best practices, and others	Berlin

## 4.6 Data Collection and Processing

The data collection includes qualitative and quantitative methods, therefore a mixed-methods approach. Qualitative methods refer to the characteristics, concepts, definitions, descriptions, metaphors, and symbols of things and events and therefore the main methods used are observation, focus groups, and interviewing; and are usually used when the motive for the research is explanatory, evaluative, or descriptive. On the other hand, quantitative methods are structured means like for example frequencies and statistical projections (Cargan, 2007). The research questions will determine the research method (Hesse-Biber, 2010). Explicitly this research concentrates on the following data collecting and processing methods:

- conceptual and theoretical framework of entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, and female social entrepreneurship, with a social constructionist and post-structuralist epistemological approach;
- secondary analysis of female social entrepreneurship in Germany and the current context. The methods used for examining available data are

referred to as secondary analysis since the material was not originally produced for the current researcher (Cargan, 2007);

- in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted to female social entrepreneurs, and experts; inquiring professional opinions and empirical data framed by the research questions and the proposed integrative frame for social entrepreneurship.

The analysis of the data uses when possible a descriptive statistical analysis for the data collected through the secondary analysis and a qualitative content analysis for the data collected through the interviews.

The process of the data collection started with the writing of the conceptual and theoretical framework, concentrating on the definition of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, including gender issues on both sectors and concepts, highlighting the challenges for research and the potentials of the field. Additionally, the epistemological framework provides a social constructionist and feminist post-structuralist basis for the research design and methodology, as well as with the proposition of using an integrative frame for social entrepreneurship research. The second stage of the data collection includes the secondary analysis of the female social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany. Here, data was collected about frequency and number of female social entrepreneurs, female entrepreneurship, national policies, social stratification, media, and regional support services for social entrepreneurship. A list was created with all organizations, enterprises, foundations, associations, universities, governmental initiatives, and others, involved in social entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship and gender, social innovation, and sustainable entrepreneurship. Some of these organizations were used as sources to identify the sample for the interviews for this research. Therefore, two lists were created: one including supporting initiatives (180) in Germany, and a second list including a broad sample of female social entrepreneurs in Germany (346), selected according to the definition mentioned before.

Thus, the third stage of the data collection is carrying out the interviews, which were recorded with the consent of the interviewed and transcribed verbatim, a coherent text, simple to understand, representing the original wording and grammatical structure (Mayring, 2014). While the intention was to conduct every interview face to face, some had to be conducted via telephone or over online videoconferencing (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The internet and social media offer new possibilities and challenges for interviewing. Videoconferencing is also as an alternative to face-to-face interviewing, allowing the researcher to extend the geographical range of the project (DeVault & Gross, 2012).

The aim of an in-depth interview is to understand the 'lived experiences' of the individual, the way an individual 'subjectively' understands a situation (Hesse-Biber, 2010). In this way, it is essential that testimony be elicited as unobtrusive, non-directive as possible. This type of interview is useful when



the goal is to analyse the meaning individuals attribute to the world and to their own participation in it, the construction of identity, and the development of emotions. They allow the researcher to detect human agency, permitting a view into daily life. The open and flexible nature of the qualitative interview allows the generation of new hypotheses and the clarification of others (Della Porta, 2014).

This type of interview is issue-oriented, so that it can explore a specific issue or on a specific area of an individual's life. When there is a specific agenda that needs to be explored, as in the case of this research, an interview guide is required. This guide was constructed, after reviewing the literature and relevant studies, by first focusing on broader areas of analysis and then creating a series of interview questions. After defining the broad topics for the interview, the researcher organized the interview questions needed to obtain the information related to each of these areas. In-depth interviews usually start with a question posed by the researcher, followed by secondary questions seeking clarification or amplification on the answers, but most importantly listening to the respondent's answers, so that most of the conversation is coming from the respondent (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The questions can be adapted to the specific characteristics of the respondent, and consecutive interviews can take into account the results of the previous ones (Della Porta, 2014). Especially in semi-structured interviews it is central to ask narrative-generating questions and to deepen the descriptions of the interviewees through secondary questions (Nohl, 2017).

The interview guide was constructed based on the research questions, as well as considering the integrative framework which resulted from the theoretical and conceptual framework. In this way, the interview guide encompassed four main categories. First, the personal path towards social entrepreneurship, including education, work experience, personal motivations, caring responsibilities, and others. Second, the social enterprise, comprising the social goal of the enterprise, the conceptualization of social entrepreneurship, impact, management practices, working routines, financing, and others. Third, discussing gender in social entrepreneurship, which included the role of gender in their paths and the way gender is being 'done' within this ecosystem. Fourth, concerning the future and the context of social entrepreneurship, arguing about ways in which more individuals can engage in social entrepreneurship, what aspects are working and are efficient and what aspects are needed, or need to be adapted or improved, as well as the potential and challenges of social entrepreneurship as a catalyst for social change, more equality, innovation, and inclusion. For each category, one open question was asked, so that secondary questions were asked if detailed description, argumentation, or evaluation was needed (Nohl, 2017).

The collected data was afterwards analysed and interpreted through qualitative content analysis. According to Mayring (2014) this is a data analysis

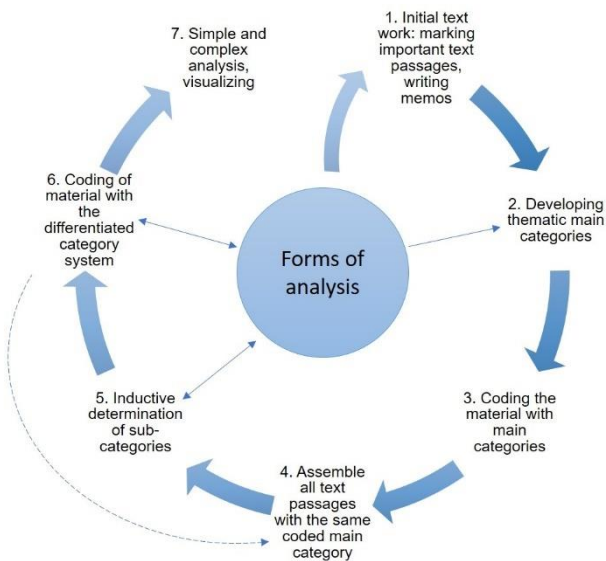
technique within a rule guided research process, which is based on common research standards, like pursuing a concrete research question, linking this question to theory, defining the research design, as well as the sample and sample strategy, pilot testing the methods of data collection and analysis, presenting results in a descriptive sense, answering the research question, and finally, including a discussion about the quality criteria. In this research study, all previously mentioned research standards were incorporated. Content-analytical procedures follow a systematic process (Figure 8), orienting towards rules of text analysis, which are defined in advance and include specific steps of analysis and their order. In this way, content analysis can be defined as an empirical method for systematic and intersubjectively comprehensible description of the content and formal characteristics of texts (Früh, 2017).

In principle, the procedure consists of two steps. In a first step, categories developed inductively on the material or postulated theoretically-deductively in advance are assigned to individual text passages. Although this process is accompanied by precise rules of content analysis, it remains a qualitative-interpretive act. In a second step, it is analysed whether certain categories can be assigned to multiple text passages. For this reason, the term ‘qualitatively oriented category-based text analysis’ would probably be the better term (Mayring & Fenzl, 2014). The category system constitutes the central instrument of analysis and contributes to the intersubjectivity of the procedure, so that others can reconstruct or repeat the analysis, the findings can be compared, and the reliability of the analysis can be evaluated. It uses theoretical arguments, so that in all procedural decisions reference is made to the latest research on the subject. Categories will be assigned to segments of text, and this segmentation must be defined in advance, so that a second coder can come to similar results. Category frequencies are also determined and statistically analysed. The categories and the segmentation were previously defined by the author while constructing the interview guide and the research questions. For the analysis, specific techniques of qualitative content analysis by Mayring (2014) can be used, which include:

- reduction: summarizing and inductive category formation;
- explication: narrow contextual analysis and broad contextual analysis;
- structuring: nominal deductive category assignment and ordinal deductive category assignment;
- mixed: content structuring/theme analysis, type analysis and parallel forms.

Regarding the type of categorization, the mix of deductive and inductive category building happens often, especially in descriptive research designs. The general sequence of the mixed form begins with the researcher with relatively few categories, based on the interview guide. These categories function as a

type of search grid, so that the material is searched for the occurrence of the corresponding content and is roughly categorized. In a second step subcategories are formed inductively, using only the material assigned to the main category (Kuckartz, 2016). Categories are never ‘invented’ by the researcher or ‘set up’ but always derived (Früh, 2017). In this way, during the first step researchers can familiarize themselves with each case and allow patterns to emerge before identifying cross-case patterns. In the second step, axial coding, data are put back together in new ways by making connections between concepts. Thus, categories are obtained which subsume two or more concepts. Finally, in the last step, selective coding, a core category is selected as the central focus in which other categories can be included (García & Welter, 2013). Operational definitions of the categories are needed to limit the scope for interpretation and to disclose the assignment of concrete text passages to categories. Context information and language competence of the researcher are therefore not suppressed, but controlled as far as possible (Früh, 2017).



*Figure 8:* Flowchart of a Content Structured Analysis (Kuckartz, 2016, p. 100)

Computer programmes for qualitative content analysis can support the researcher editing and organizing the material for the different procedures of analysis, allowing the researcher to gather all material coded with a specific category, selecting quotations, and ordering the categories hierarchically,

divided into subcategories, combined into general categories, etc. Additionally, it provides flexibility to alter the categories and revise and refine the process of analysis, as well as attaching the rules of analysis, comments, and explanations of categories, so they are available and revisable at any moment within the process of analysis (Mayring, 2014). In this research, data is organized and coded with the help of a computer-aided qualitative data analysis package (MAXQDA).

## 4.7 Quality Assurance

To guarantee the quality of the collection and analysis of data this research follows specific steps. As there are advantages and disadvantages concerning all social science methods, this study relied on more than one means of data collection, interviews, and secondary analysis. As previously discussed, a mixed methods approach is recommended to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the studied subject. It is important to note that the use of qualitative methods like the in-depth-interview has no aim of representativeness, but of richness of data.

First, the sample size adequacy is evaluated through a peer review and consensual validation and the sampling procedure are accordingly described and explained (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

Participants will be interviewed face-to-face, through online video conference or by telephone, due to the highly mobility of the sample, web-based methods were also appropriate (DeVault & Gross, 2012). The quality of the collected data and the analysis of this data was also ensured with an operationalization of the concepts with theoretical backgrounds. The interview guide was constructed based on the integrative frame for social entrepreneurship research, rooted on the theoretical and conceptual framework of this research. This frame was validated through expert's judgements and a pilot interview, which is an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the research guide, as well as receiving feedback (Hesse-Biber, 2010). Additionally, with closed and open questions, all respondents are asked the same basic questions/thematic, so that the collected information can be compared and analysed. In an interview the order of the questions and the questions themselves can be modified to solicit more adequate answers from each respondent, which brings a good response rate and rapport with the interviewer and there is less likelihood of misinterpretation since there is no forced answer and the interviewer can clarify the meanings of the questions (Cargan, 2007). To obtain authentic data and create a confident frame during the interview it is important to establish rapport with the respondents, which can be achieved by accommodating to informants'

routines and ways of doing things, establishing commonalities, and others (Taylor et al., 2015).

In feminist research specifically, reflexivity is highly valued to maintain the quality of the research process. Through reflexivity, a researcher recognizes, examines, and understands how his or her own social background and assumptions can intervene in the research process. During an in-depth interview meaning is co-created, and the main task of the researcher is to listen carefully, discerningly, and intently to the answers of the researched; as well as keeping reflexivity as a mindful practice of his or her personal positionality and that of the respondent (Hesse-Biber, 2010). It is important therefore to recognize that recounted experience is always emergent in the moment; that listening and telling shapes the interpretation, and both are shaped by discursive histories, the perspectives, and values of their communities, by identities and lines of power, cultural structures of similarity, difference, and significance and by the formats available to them. This also influences the questions researchers ask or not, the ease or difficulty of recruiting informants, the types of rapport, and the lenses through which researchers produce and analyse interview data. To create knowledge that is for rather than about the studied people, active listening, a fully engaged practice that involves taking in information and actively processing it, is needed (DeVault & Gross, 2012). To improve the objectivity of the study the researcher must acknowledge the own values, attitudes, and biases in their approaches to specific research questions and reflect throughout the research process (Gannon & Davies, 2012).

It is important to recognize the existing differences between women and assure that when describing women, the researcher is not referring to only some women (e.g., European, able-bodied, middle-class women). The research process is considered as an integral aspect of the construction of knowledge about society if the social contexts of individual's lives are understood as historically situated and created through people's behaviour (DeVault & Gross, 2012). To assure quality in feminist research, the questions that are asked are very important, which should aim at understanding women's lives and those of other oppressed groups, promoting social justice and social change, and being mindful of the researcher-researched relationship and the power and authority embedded in the researcher's role (Hesse-Biber, 2010). For the analysis and interpretation of the interview data, it is essential to note that although the idea that entrepreneurship is gendered is often accepted by researchers in the field, it is rarely a principle that women entrepreneurs themselves draw upon to understand their situation (Brush et al., 2009).

The analysis of the data, for those questions that can be quantified, was carried out with descriptive frequency analysis. Moreover, the qualitative data was analysed through qualitative content analysis, with the category system as the central instrument. Here the quality of the analysis was guaranteed by using a valid analytical tool and following the specific steps included in it (Mayring,

2014). Each category must be defined, described, and explained how the coding should be executed. Additionally, to sustain the quality of the analysis, peer debriefings, judgement of experts, and triangulation of data/the use of mixed methods was attempted when possible (Kuckartz, 2016). Moreover, the qualitative content analysis was accompanied with the mention of the frequencies of each category, which has the intention to underline and complement the qualitative interpretation, but by no means to fulfil a quantitative argumentation.

Additionally, other available methods for the analysis of the data were also considered, however, the most appropriate, in this case, the qualitative data analysis, was selected. For example, grounded theory was discarded as it explicitly aims at the generation of theory and thus sets itself apart from purely descriptive, explorative approaches of qualitative social research. Here, the integration of theory formation into the process of data acquisition and analysis is crucial (Strübing, 2014). Generating theory, was not part of the research aims of this study. Discourse analysis, on the other hand, was also discarded, as it aims to explore contemporary phenomena in their historical form, so that they are historical longitudinal studies (Traue, Pfahl, & Schürmann, 2014), which is not the case of this study.

In the analysis, the generalization claim that can be made is group-related, or from a professional group (Vaus, 2001). To guard the validity of the data, a control group should also be interviewed, including for example entrepreneurs and NGOs that are not considered social entrepreneurs and male social entrepreneurs (Gannon & Davies, 2012). For this study, a control group of male social entrepreneurs was interviewed, as the focus of this research is set on gender in social entrepreneurship.

Regarding ethical aspects, the respondent's right to informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality was protected (Cargan, 2007). Before conducting interviews, it was required to obtain an informed and written consent from participants after explaining the nature of the research, and after, conduct the interview so that it is sensitive to participants' concerns and feelings, protecting the identity of the respondents if necessary, by using pseudonyms and changing some details when representing them in reports, guaranteeing anonymity. Respondents should feel free to ask questions and not to answer those they may not feel comfortable with. Ethics should also play a role in the questions asked and in the interpretation of the data (Della Porta, 2014; DeVault & Gross, 2012; Hesse-Biber, 2010).

## 4.8 Study Limitations

This research had a limited time schedule and limited resources available. Therefore, the sample chosen for this study represents a small quantitative portion of the whole population. However, I was able to acquire samples from different geographical regions and industry sectors, as well as age groups and nationalities. Moreover, interviewing requires skilled interviewers, is time consuming and contains difficulties in organizing and quantifying the data. Also, observations, focus groups, case studies, ethnographic studies, hermeneutics, action research and other, would also be adequate research methods for the descriptive design that this research proposes (Cargan, 2007). Social science hermeneutics aims to reconstruct the social significance of social actions and interactions in the form of typologies. It is about the reconstruction of individual and social constructions of meaning. This fits optimally with the descriptive aims of this study. However, a key quality feature of sequence analysis is that it works best in a group, as having sequence analysis as a central method, it is a time-consuming and personnel-intensive process (Kurt & Herbrink, 2014). These requirements were not available and therefore, the qualitative data analysis was better suited for the research goals of this study.

With regards to online methods, these could lead for example to an overreliance on Internet contacts. Therefore, I acknowledge the advantages and risks of online and more direct recruitment procedures. Also, the ‘digital divide’, that is the social disparities in people’s access to and ability to benefit from Internet and computer technologies, should be considered, assessing whether this may exclude some potential participants. Another risk is that online interviewing can decrease the kind of ‘engagement’ of the participants and researchers, because online exchanges can lack the contextual and linguistic signals of face-to-face conversations (DeVault & Gross, 2012) such as gestures and eye contact, and might make it more difficult for the interviewer to establish rapport with the respondent (Hesse-Biber, 2010), making the building of trust with the interviewees more difficult and distraction easier (Della Porta, 2014). However, the sample includes individuals from different age groups and social sectors, and the sampling process comprised also the snowballing sampling, relying on contacts of the interviewed. In general, social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship currently rely on and use actively online resources and instruments, which reduces the risks of excluding potential participants as well as the difficulty to establish rapport.

Furthermore, relying on self-reporting is complicated as respondents may embellish their stories because individuals need to compose, make sense of and communicate meaning (García & Welter, 2013). To that matter, usually people are not able to understand optimally their own actions and there is evidence that people do not report accurately the frequency of events, and how much

change they have experienced. Also, memory is selective, so that individuals when thinking about their past tend to remember options they chose as being better than ones they rejected, and remember information relating to themselves better than information relating to others. In this way, usually people do not know why they have acted as they did, why events turned out as they did, or what factors played a key role, they think they know more than we really do, and believe that they understand their own actions, motives, and feelings, and the factors that influence them, much better than they actually do. Therefore, because human self-perception is so flawed, the field of entrepreneurship should not be built solely on their self-reporting. This data should be strengthened with other data from other dimensions and levels (Baron, 2012). Moreover, it has been taken into account that the participants in a study have a critical agency which they can and often do exercise in making decisions about granting access to their information (Bhattacharya, 2009). This limitation was considered as additional data from a secondary analysis was used. Nonetheless, the research design and goal intend to describe and precisely understand the lived experiences of female social entrepreneurs, underlining the qualitative focus of the study.

Moreover, I acknowledge my institutional position as a doctoral candidate in a German academic institution, in the sociology and gender studies department, with the multidisciplinary background of psychology and social work, as well as an intercultural or transnational background as a Peruvian and German. In accordance with Mohanty as cited in Dua & Trotz (2002, p. 74) I acknowledge that there are other economic, political, and social contexts in which entrepreneurship take place, and that this privileged position does not allow me to speak for or represent women who have their own contextualized entrepreneurship situations.

Important criticism from Marlow & Martinez Dy (2018) underlines some dangerous practices in research around entrepreneurship and gender. Current debate around gendered prescriptions for women in entrepreneurship, and their 'outsider status' as transgressing the masculine norm, have been essential to exploring the harmful influence of gendered attributions, discrimination and related stereotypes on women's entrepreneurial propensity and competencies; providing visibility and voice, correcting the balance of the research in entrepreneurship that has long been 'for men, by men, about men' (Holmquist & Sundin, 1989, p. 1 as cited by Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018, p. 1). However, the authors consider how to move forward from this position, suggesting that it is time to widen the focus beyond women as a homogenised category, with assumptions of heterosexuality, as representative of the gendered subject. They underline that the notion that only women have a gender must be challenged to recognise how gender is performed as a diverse multiplicity and so progress

8 Transnationalism refers to the practices of migrants who live their lives across multiple nation-states if not at least in two nation-states (Bhattacharya, 2009).



and challenge the gender dichotomy. In this way, they criticise also that creating a female entrepreneurship niche creates a reified, fictive construct with empirical examples removed from their contexts, the under-explored LGBTQ\* entrepreneurs and of different demographic and social backgrounds and finally, a lack of intersectional analysis. Henceforth, the authors propose that gender should be positioned into mainstream entrepreneurship debate, moving towards studying gender as a pathway to resource accumulation and exchange mechanism, analysing how gender positions, benefits and disadvantages all social sectors and all entrepreneurial activities.

This study locates more in the previous line of research, the exploration of the influence of gendered ascriptions in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany, making studies ‘for women, by women, about women’. However, this criticism was reflected about and the analysis of the results considered how gender positions, benefits, and disadvantages the social entrepreneurs interviewed for this study. Also, questioning assumptions of the normativity of the white heterosexual woman entrepreneur in the Global North, aiming at analysing her gendered profile as distinctive and contextually influenced (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018).

## 5 Results and Discussion

The following discussion of results is organized according to the four main categories of the interview guide, as well as the ‘Integral Frame for Social Entrepreneurship’ developed in this research. Theory, statistics, and results from the secondary analysis are used to support and explain any interpretation, evaluation, and qualitative analysis of the collected data. Also, the descriptions of the different categories and sub-categories that resulted from the content analysis are exemplified with some direct quotations from the interviews<sup>9</sup>.

In this way, I first present in this chapter the description of the collected data through the interviews, organized by the four main categories of the interview guide: personal path towards social entrepreneurship, the social enterprise, doing gender in social entrepreneurship and future of social entrepreneurship. Following, I present the data collected through the secondary analysis, describing some relevant dimensions of the ecosystem of social entrepreneurship in Germany. Finally, I discuss the results as well as conclusions and recommendations.

### 5.1 Personal Path Towards Social Entrepreneurship

The first category includes those aspects that can be encompassed within the micro-level of the integrative framework for social entrepreneurship, which are the educational background, the working experience, caring responsibilities, and the motivation to start a social enterprise.

#### 5.1.1 *Education and Working Experience*

All interviewed social entrepreneurs have a higher educational level, at least a bachelor’s degree, two of them a PhD. The main studied disciplines are social studies, such as media studies, sociology, social pedagogy, integrated European studies, cultural studies, journalism, economics, political sciences, social work, psychology, developmental studies, and coaching. Other few had degrees in business administration, international business, project management and accounting, while others in mechanical engineering, industrial design, and biochemistry. Many had studied some part of their education outside of

9 The direct quotations from the interviews were translated into English from the original language (German or Spanish). The translations were made by me, acknowledging the contextual and cultural inferences that are made when translating.

Germany (United States of America, Netherlands, France, United Kingdom, Mexico, Uruguay, etc.). Regarding the educational path of the male social entrepreneurs, they have studied politics and philosophy, German studies, information technology and mechanical engineering. One has recently finished high school and another interviewee has an MBA. They have, afterwards kept learning and specializing, for example in entrepreneurship, design thinking, wilderness pedagogy, or media pedagogics.

With regards to the working experience, most of the female founders had some experience before starting their social enterprises and some were still working half-time somewhere else while managing their businesses. Again, many interviewed female social entrepreneurs had working experience abroad or were working internationally through their enterprises. In general, several had already working experience in the sector of their social enterprises or in similar sectors and positions. However, for some of them their working experience included different areas from those of their social enterprises. In one case of the interviewed male social entrepreneurs the social enterprise is not his first and last established start-up.

### 5.1.2 *Caring Responsibilities*

Seven from all respondents are married and have children. For them, setting-up the enterprise happened during, while and after they had children. The rest of the respondents either have a partner but no children, or do not have children nor a partner. None of the respondents mentioned other types of caring responsibilities, such as caring for a relative with disabilities or an elderly. Most of the interviewed male social entrepreneurs have no caring responsibilities, they are not married, or have a partner and do not have children. One is married without children, and another interviewee is married and a recent father.

All interviewed social entrepreneurs have a higher educational degree and working experience. Female social entrepreneurs have international experience, while only in the case of some male social entrepreneurs there was formal education in entrepreneurship. Caring responsibilities for female social entrepreneurs are varied, while among the interviewed male social entrepreneurs only one was a recent father.
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### 5.1.3 Personal Motivation

With regards to their personal motivation to start a social enterprise, almost all respondents (17)<sup>10</sup> discussed the main motivation as a personal call, dream, and passion. They mentioned desires and dreams as children or young students, to help, study or work in professions related to the social sector, some were volunteering, some had always had some interest in such topics, in many cases, there was always the desire to do good.

FSE 09 O <sup>11</sup>	<i>Also im Endeffekt fing das ganze damit an, dass ich eigentlich mal ehrenamtlich engagiert war, aber für das Thema Energie oder Kilmaschutz.</i>
FSE 09 T	<i>At the end it all started with me doing volunteer work but for energy and environmental protection.</i>
FSE 01 O	<i>Ich hatte immer so einen Kompass im Bauch, wenn irgendwas nicht fair ist, ja, wenn es Menschen nicht gut geht, wenn andere sich fies gegenüber anderen Menschen verhalten, das war schon immer da, ja.</i>
FSE 01 T	<i>I have always had an internal compass when something was not fair, when people where not doing well, when others would behave mean towards others, that was always there, yes.</i>
MSE 04 O	<i>Also dieser sozialer Faden ist ein großer Faden in mein Leben und die Musik ist so der andere. Und die habe ich dann eben so verknüpft.</i>
MSE 04 T	<i>So that social thread is a big thread in my life, and the music is the other one. And I have connected both.</i>

Another personal motivation to start the social business for almost all respondents was that they had identified a market gap (17). Usually, through a personal (13) or a professional experience (9). They would identify a need, a problem, an unresolved issue in the social sector, and would then acknowledge that there was no solution, or if there was, any optimal solution for that problem. That motivated them to start considering the idea to create something themselves to solve it. Through personal experiences, related to the social purpose of their enterprises these founders were able to identify that particular market gap or social problem. For example, experiencing a difficult time after the birth of a child, being unable to find a needed service, reading an article or a book,

10 The number in brackets refers to the number of interviewees who stated that idea. This research is not intended to be quantitative, but the frequency underlines the relevance of the statement.

11 FSE stands for female social entrepreneur, and a number is provided for each interviewee. MSE stands therefore for male social entrepreneur, and EXP stands for expert. Moreover, 'T' stands for translation, and 'O' for original language.

attending a meeting or an event, etc. In the same sense, experiencing the social need or market gap within the working environment or in the professional realm was also common. Founders, while working, directly acknowledged that the area had potential to cover social needs, that were not being met.

FSE 02 O	<i>Yo te vendo mi programa porque a mí me sirvió y porque yo veo que a otras personas les sirve. Yo me sentí muy sola, y fue por eso que yo creee XX, porque yo no quería que a las demás les pase lo mismo que me paso a mí, no quería que se enfermaran.</i>
FSE 02 T	<i>I can sell my programme because it helped me and because I see how it helps others. I felt so alone, that is why I created XX, because I did not want that others go through the same that happened to me, I did not want them to get sick.</i>
FSE 17 O	<i>Bueno encontré diferentes tipos de barreras, a nivel de infraestructura dentro de las universidades. Relacionadas a la inclusión de las personas transgénero. Fue un, hm, no lo llamaría motivación, porque fue algo más de supervivencia. Y por sobrevivir, por no silenciarte, hacerlo.</i>
FSE 17 T	<i>Well, I found many barriers, in terms of infrastructure in universities. Related to the inclusion of transgender people. It was, hm, I would not call it motivation, because it was more survival. And for surviving, for not staying silent, doing it.</i>
MSE 02 O	<i>Ich habe als Referent für die XX gearbeitet und da gab es einen Menschen und der hat praktisch als erstes so mitbekommen was hier passieren sollte, und hat gefragt so „Kannst du mir kurz bei einer Sache helfen“, so kam das, nur eine Pressemitteilung schreiben und dann bin ich so reingekommen.</i>
MSE 02 T	<i>I was working as a Referent for XX and a colleague, who practically was one of the firsts to know what was going to happen here, and he asked me ‘Can you help me briefly with a thing’, and so I came to write a press release, and so I was involved.</i>

For many female founders (7), an important trigger to build up the motivation to start a social business was having an experience abroad, living or working in another country, or just travelling and experiencing other cultures and ways of life. There is, in many, an orientation towards learning different languages, curiosity about cultures and travel, the desire to see the world and work in a more international environment.

FSE 10 O	<i>Ich war tatsächlich mit Couchsurfing unterwegs im Nahen Osten, in der Türkei, im Libanon, in Syrien, hm, also ich habe wahnsinnig viele Menschen kennengelernt. Also, diese Reise war für mich so ein Schatz.</i>
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FSE 10 T *I was indeed with Couchsurfing in the middle east, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, hm, and I got to meet so many people, that journey was for me such a treasure.*

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FSE 05 O *Ich war Austauschschülerin in den USA, ich glaube mit so 16, und, hm, ich glaube da habe ich mich zum ersten Mal, oder überhaupt wahrgenommen was es heißt Deutsch zu sein. Und dann habe ich mich zum erstmal interessiert für so gesellschaftliche und soziale Themen.*

FSE 05 T *I was an exchange student in the USA, with 16, and I think that was the first time I thought and experienced what it means to be German. And that I was for the first time I was interested in societal and social topics.*

For many of them (7), the motivation and the actual implementation of the social enterprise, were also related to the particular life phase they were going through or a need for change. They would argue either that they were young, so that they could ‘afford’ the risk of starting an own social business, they did not have many responsibilities, no children, and had time to try things out and start over if it would not work out. Others were at a life stage where they would need change, something different, they were looking for another challenge in life, especially professionally.

FSE 08 O *Ich habe schon gewisse Arbeitserfahrung, ich habe irgendwie Wissen, ich komme von der XX, das hat so einen gewissen Expertenstatus, aber ich habe noch keine Kinder, ich habe keine Hypothek, die ich abbezahlen muss, sondern ich bin einfach ich selber, und muss nur meine kleine Miete weiterbezahlen und gut ist. Dann mache ich mich selbstständig.*

FSE 08 T *I have certain working experience, and knowledge, I come from the XX which has a certain status, but I do not have any children, and I have no mortgage that I must pay, it is just me, and I just must pay my small rent, and that is it, so I start my own business.*

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FSE 03 O *Und habe mich dann 2008 gefragt, ob das alles ist. Und habe nach dem Urlaub angefangen an der Auszeit oder an die Idee einer Auszeit zu denken.*

FSE 03 T *And then in 2008 I asked myself if this was it. And, after my vacation, I started to think about a sabbatical or about the idea of a sabbatical.*

Also important within the personal motivations to start a social enterprise was for some (6) to have more flexibility and freedom regarding their working hours and decision-making.

FSE 04 O	<i>Ich möchte mich nirgendwo jetzt von 9 bis 17 Uhr hinsetzen oder stehen und das tun was mir irgendjemand anders vorschreibt.</i>
FSE 04 T	<i>I do not want to sit or stand from 9 to 5 and do that what someone else tells me to do</i>
FSE 06 O	<i>Also ich wollte immer relativ unabhängig sein, es war immer meine intrinsische Motivation, Unabhängigkeit, und Freiheit zu haben irgendwie.</i>
FSE 06 T	<i>I always wanted to be independent, it was always my intrinsic motivation, to have independence and freedom, somehow.</i>
MSE 02 O	<i>Ich kann mir auch eigentlich überhaupt nicht mehr vorstellen in einer angestellten Stelle zu arbeiten.</i>
MSE 02 T	<i>I cannot imagine working as a regular employee.</i>

As stated earlier, regarding their dream and passion, many founders (5) mentioned that in some way they always wanted to ‘change or save the world’, make the world a better place.

FSE 09 O	<i>Ich glaube ich habe so in mir drinnen immer den Wunsch gehabt die Welt zu retten (lacht) und die Welt zu verbessern (lacht), als junges Kind schon.</i>
FSE 09 T	<i>I think I had it in me always the desire to save the world (laughs) and make the world a better place (laughs) already as a young child.</i>
FSE 06 O	<i>Es gab für mich zu wenig Sinn, ich wollte ja irgendwas verändern in der Welt.</i>
FSE 06 T	<i>That made for me no sense, I wanted to change something in the world.</i>
MSE 05 O	<i>Menschen, mit denen ich hier arbeite, da weiß ich dem Einen oder der anderen in Erinnerung zu sein und das ist meine persönliche Motivation einfach dahinter, ich möchte einen Fußabdruck hinterlassen.</i>
MSE 05 T	<i>People with whom I work here with, I know the one or the other will remember me and that is my personal motivation behind it, I want to leave a footprint.</i>

Many of the interviewed female social entrepreneurs (5), after they had identified the market gap, or the social need that was not being met, would intensely research and analyse the situation, and would encounter that there was actually no product or service in that particular sector, they would really clarify the social need, the target group, the severity of the problem, the services and products that were available, etc.

- FSE 14 O *Empecé a meterme un poco más en ese mundo, a investigar.*  
 FSE 14 T *So, I started to get into that world, to research.*
- 
- FSE 13 O *Inzwischen hatte ich viele, viele Gespräche mit anderen Müttern, aber auch mit unserem Fachpersonal.*  
 FSE 13 T *In the meantime, I had many, many conversations with other mothers, but also with our staff.*

For other few women (4), establishing their social enterprise happened because of a natural development, of how things, without forcing them, turned out for them. It was a natural path, each step just happened, and they accepted the terms and followed along. The clear idea to start that specific type of enterprise was not at the beginning, it slowly and naturally formed and developed.

- FSE 05 O *Das war jetzt kein Plan, es hat sich dann so ergeben.*  
 FSE 05 T *It was not a plan, it just turned out that way.*
- 
- FSE 10 O *Also es war nicht so, dass ich schon ewig was gründen wollte, dann hat man sich eingelese und dann macht man das irgendwann, es ist eher so, es ist so passiert, es ist so gekommen aus der eigenen Arbeit heraus.*  
 FSE 10 T *So, it was not that I wanted to start an enterprise for a long time, and then you read and research and then you dot, it was rather, it just happened, it came out my own work.*

For only two of the female respondents, role models or upbringing was part of the motivation to start a social business. Both interviewees, had mothers that were self-employed and entrepreneurs, and they mention that this influenced their decision. For all other respondents, upbringing, or the influence of their parents was not relevant.

- FSE 02 O *Porque vi que mi mama toda la vida fue una emprendedora. No sé si es algo que lo heredé de ella porque lo vi toda mi vida.*  
 FSE 02 T *Because my mother was her whole life an entrepreneur. I do not know if it is something that I inherited from her, because I have seen it my whole life.*
- 
- FSE 15 O *Meine Mutter ist übrigens auch selbstständig. Aber, hm, ne, ich kann mir schon vorstellen, dass ich da so ein bisschen was mitbekommen habe, vielleicht nicht was genetisch gleich, aber auch einfach aus der Erziehung.*  
 FSE 15 T *My mother is also independent. But hm, I can imagine, that I caught a little, maybe not through genetics, but just through upbringing.*

The sample includes three social entrepreneurs that were born in Latin America and live in Germany for many years. They started their social enterprises in Germany. During the interviews, there were two personal motivations that only



they discussed. On the one hand, to have financial independence from their husbands. This was important for two of them because having to start all over again in a new country, they were at first dependent on the salary of their husbands, as well as dedicated to the care of their children. For them it was important to gain financial independency, such as what they had before they moved to Germany. On the other hand, the three of them were motivated by the fact that their social businesses are part of their identities, they remind them of who they are, and they can honour that identity through their enterprises. For one case, setting-up the enterprise was a very subjective process of introspection and transforming a personal need into something useful for more people.

FSE 02 O	<i>Yo había estado 5 años sin poder trabajar y para mí eso era una tortura, porque yo no solía depender de nadie, entonces lo único que quería era trabajar, ganar dinero y no depender de mi esposo.</i>
FSE 02 T	<i>I spent five years without being able to work, and for me that was torture, because I had never been dependent on anybody, so the only thing I wanted to do was work, earn my money, and not depend on my husband.</i>
FSE 14 O	<i>Cuando uno llega a un país, en este caso a Alemania, y tienes a tus hijos ahí, como que eso se vuelve fuerte que quieres estar en contacto con tus raíces, porque es como que tú quieres transmitir a tu familia, eso, y esa herencia cultural, y por ti, porque yo a través de esa, se puede decir regreso a mis raíces.</i>
FSE 14 T	<i>When you arrive to a country, in this case Germany, and you have your children there, it becomes very strong that wish to be in contact with your roots, because it is like you want to impart your family that, that cultural inheritance, and for yourself too, because through that, you can say, I go back to my roots.</i>
FSE 17 O	<i>Yo inicio con XX que para mí es un proceso también, interseccional, introspectivo, donde se toman en consideración aspectos subjetivos también del contexto, de tu biografía, porque no te ves representada dentro de la, dentro del marco que existe, no existen ni siquiera leyes que te protejan.</i>
FSE 17 T	<i>I start with XX, which for me is also a process, intersectional, introspective, where you consider subjective aspects also from the context, of your biography, because you do not see yourself represented in the, within the existent frame, there are not even laws that protect you.</i>

The main personal motivations to start a social enterprise were a personal call, dream or passion, the identification of a market gap, whether through a personal or professional experience. Also important were aiming at having more flexibility and freedom as well as a specific life phase or a need for change, and the desire to change or save the world. Specifically, for FSE experiences abroad were in many cases triggers for the establishment of the social enterprise.

#### 5.1.4 Self-Actualization

The interview included a discussion around happiness and self-actualization. This last term is defined by Maslow (1970) as a person's desire for self-fulfilment, the tendency to become actualized in what the person is potentially. There is great variation on the specific form that these needs will take. The clear emergence of these needs usually rests upon some prior satisfaction of the physiological, safety, love, and esteem needs. The social entrepreneurs were asked how the establishment and development of their social enterprises impacted their levels of happiness and self-actualization. For many of them (12), starting the social business was making a dream, a vision, a mission come true, they feel grateful and state they have a meaningful life and had fun running their businesses. Male social entrepreneurs highlighted that it has been a possibility to follow their inner guideline, to what makes sense to them.

FSE 06 O *Ja. Ich mache das, also hm, also ich würde sagen, ich tue das, wofür ich auf der Welt bin. Also, da, da kann man, da gibt es nicht, ich kann auch nichts anderes.*

FSE 06 T *Yes. I do that, hm, I would say, I am doing what I was born to do. Well, there, there you can, there is nothing else, I cannot do anything else.*

FSE 11 O *Seitdem ich mein Unternehmen habe, denke ich, oh das war die beste Entscheidung warum war ich nicht mutig genug das früher zu machen.*

FSE 11 T *Since I have my company, I think, oh that was the best decision, why was not I brave enough to do it sooner.*

FSE 17 O *Hay un proceso de sanación, y hay un proceso de, hm, a ver como lo puedo decir, hm, siento que mi vida tiene más sentido, siento que mi vida es útil, y que es útil de una manera muy positiva para otras personas.*

FSE 17 T *There is a healing process, and there is a process of, hm, how can I say it, hm, I feel that my life has more meaning, that my life is useful, and that it is useful in a very positive way for others.*

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MSE 04 O *Ich glaube ich habe nie einen Job gehabt, der mich so glücklich gemacht hat.*

MSE 04 T *I think I had never a job that made me this happy.*

For many others (8), having started the social business has provided them with self-determination and freedom surrounding their professional lives. They feel more independent and in control, being able to make their own decisions.

FSE 03 O *Ich für mich sage es war die richtige Entscheidung. Bin heut zu Tage mein eigener Chef, ich kann das Unternehmen so ausrichten wie ich es gerne möchte. Dieser Spielraum, den ich habe, diese Freiheit, das ist Klasse. Es ist in der Tat eine Selbstverwirklichung. Klar, ich wusste auch es wird so viel kommen am Ende des Monats in mein Konto, das weiß man heute nicht mehr. Aber ich habe diese Sicherheit einfach gegen Freiheit vertauscht.*

FSE 03 T *I say for me it was the right decision. Nowadays I am my own boss, I can shape the enterprise in any way I want to. So just that scope that I have, that freedom, that is great. It is indeed a self-actualization. Of course, I knew it would come that much at the end of the month to my bank account, you do not know that anymore. But I have traded that certainty for freedom.*

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MSE 02 O *Also ich kann hier machen was ich möchte, hm, also, bei uns ist es immer so, derjenige eine Idee hat kann diese erarbeiten, wenn diese im Plenum gut gefunden wird, das ist alles möglich.*

MSE 02 T *So, I can do here anything I want, hm, so, we work so that anyone who has an idea can develop it if it is evaluated as good at the plenum, everything is possible.*

Starting a social enterprise has provided for many (6) of them an opportunity to learn and grow, not only professionally, but also personally.

FSE 11 O *Da lernt man schon ganz viel, da sind wir froh, dass ich das gemacht habe, weil in kurzer Zeit, glaube ich, so ein Lernprozess den hat man nicht, wenn man kein eigenes Projekt umsetzt.*

FSE 11 T *You learn a lot, we are very happy that I did this, because in a short period of time, I think such a learning process you do not usually have if you do not execute your own project.*

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FSE 10 O *Man bekommt unheimlich viele Kontakte, man baut sich hm, also ich glaube jetzt mal ganz blöd gesprochen, für mich persönlich, karrieremäßig, kann glaub ich gar nichts Besseres passieren, weil auch wenn es nicht klappen würde, hat man so viel Erfahrung gesammelt.*

FSE 10 T *You make so many contacts, you build, I think, spoken all dumbly, for me personally, career-wise, I cannot think anything better can happen, because if it would not work out, you have had so much experience.*

Also important for some (5) social entrepreneurs and their self-actualization has been the fact that starting their own social business allowed them recognition and receiving direct feedback about their behaviour, performance, and decisions.

FSE 11 O *Zumindest in der Anfangsphase ja auch ganz viel hm, von den Kontakten, die man bekommt, von der Anerkennung, von den Erfolgen, und hm, davon das man selbst, also das ich selbst sehe ok, wenn ich das jetzt mache habe ich das Ergebnis.*

FSE 11 T *At least at the start-up phase, yes, many of the contacts that you get, of the recognition, of the successes, and hm, that you, that you can yourself see, ok, if I do this, I have this result.*

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FSE 03 O *Ich finde es einfach, hm, wahnsinnig toll direkt an Menschen zu arbeiten, also ich merke sofort, ob es passt oder nicht passt, ich kriege sofort ein Feedback.*

FSE 03 T *I find it just great working directly with people, I notice instantly if it works or not, I receive instantly feedback.*

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MSE 04 O *Hm, vor allem halt so, ja es in die Augen zu sehen von kleinen Menschen, die irgendwas tun von dem sie gar nicht wussten das sie das können, so.*

MSE 04 T *Hm, especially, yes to see it in the eyes of children, that do something that they did not know they were able to do, so.*

However, although most of them perceive that their happiness and self-actualization has improved, some of the respondents (6) pointed out the danger of burn-out, of suffering under the social pressures and competition that self-employment entails.

FSE 10 O *Das waren natürlich für alle auch wahnsinnig schwierige Jahre, wo man eben ehrenamtlich dann arbeitet, also es hat bei allen so die Beziehungen belastet, das ist hm, das wächst hm, Existenzängste. Also ich glaube man muss da sehr, hm, eine Balance finden glaube ich.*

FSE 10 T *Those were, of course for all also insanely difficult years, where you work on a volunteer basis, it burdened relationships of all, that is hm, that grows hm, existential fears. I think you must find a balance there.*

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FSE 15 O	<i>Also ich war zwischenzeitlich fast im Burn Out, das ist nicht so selbstverwirklichend. Also da muss man aufpassen, dass da nicht so eine Art Sucht entsteht, man ist natürlich im Wettbewerb, nicht nur im eigenen Markt, um Fördergelder, Kunden, Presseartikel, und damit muss man umgehen lernen. Und dann natürlich auch dieser Druck, der dann auch von der Gesellschaft ausgeübt wird, oder auch von Medien. Das wir keine Investoren haben, dass wir eben nicht so stark gewachsen sind, dass wir keine 100.000 Facebook Follower innerhalb von 2 Monaten hatten, war schon was, damit hatte ich schon zu kämpfen.</i>
FSE 15 T	<i>But you must be careful. I was in the meantime almost with burn out, which is not self-actualizing. You must be careful not to create a sort of addiction, you are of course in competition, not only in the own market, for funding, clients, press articles, and so forth, so you need to learn to deal with it. And then there is this pressure from society, or from the media. You do not have investors, you have not grown that much, that you do not have any 100.000 followers on Facebook in 2 months, and with that I struggled with.</i>

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MSE 04 O	<i>Ja und ich glaube ich möchte nicht nochmal so Jahre erleben, wie die letzten drei, wo ich einfach nur gearbeitet habe, von morgens bis abends, und hm, das war so das meine sozialen Kontakte, alles aufgefressen, mein Sport, aber man muss ja am Ball bleiben, wenn man anfängt und man kann sich einfach keine Pausen erlauben, weil man sonst kein Geld hat.</i>
MSE 04 T	<i>Yes, and I think I do not want again to experience years as the last three, where I just worked, from morning to night, and hm, all my social contacts were devoured, my sport, but you have to keep playing, if you start and you cannot allow yourself a pause, because then you do not have money.</i>

It was also underlined (3) that being the founder of a social enterprise is just one in many dimensions that make up their happiness or self-actualization, including other dimensions like their families, friends, and work-life balance.

- FSE 15 O *Ich glaube Selbstverwirklichung hat nicht nur was mit Unternehmen zu tun, sondern mit vielen anderen Bereichen des Lebens.*
- FSE 15 T *I think self-actualization is not only related to entrepreneurship, but with many other areas of life.*

Several interviewees discussed the fact that having founded a social business is a process. This process involves times when happiness and self-actualization are not paramount, or even negatively affected, other times when the awareness

of them is greater. There is no static goal, and therefore there is no complete and constant feeling of happiness.

FSE 10 O *Jetzt fühlt sich ja alles toll, und jetzt bin ich entspannt und jetzt läuft es, sondern, jetzt ist halt die nächste Herausforderung, Nachhaltigkeit, also und es hört nie auf (lacht), man hat es nie geschafft, oder so, glaube ich.*

FSE 10 T *Now it all feels great, and now I am relaxed, and all is working, but now is the next challenge, sustainability, so it never stops (laughs), you have never made it, I think.*

For most of the interviewees establishing the social enterprise, as underlined by their personal motivation, has allowed them to self-actualize through the realization of their vision and mission, and has provided them with self-determination and freedom, as well as an opportunity to learn and grow, professionally and personally. However, many also acknowledged the danger of burn-out.

## 5.2 Social Enterprises

In this section I discuss the results regarding the social enterprises, describing their social purpose and impact, the conceptualization and understanding of the term ‘social entrepreneurship’, their management practices, working routines, financing and support and future goals.

### 5.2.1 Social Purpose, Contribution, and Impact

The sample included diverse sectors and industries, as well as target populations. The social missions they pursue can be organised in five different social areas as explained in the definition of social entrepreneurship: Building local capacity, challenging the unequal distribution of power and resources, including people socially and economically, protecting the environment and serving members of the community by improving their welfare, health and well-being. However, it is important to note, that this categorization just facilitates the analysis, because many of these social purposes intersect and are difficult to detach.

## 1) Protecting the environment

- offering unpacked products delivered by bike, protecting the environment for future generations, supporting healthy nutrition, questioning the consumption of society, integrating it easily into people's everyday routines;
- providing a science-based climate metric for the risk category climate through climate management from a financial risk perspective. Supporting also projects in bioenergy and microcredits for women;
- decreasing food waste by collecting, redistributing and preparing it, raising awareness, educating and creating alternatives in the value chain so that in the future this project is no longer needed;
- upcycling bulky waste as urban raw material, into a useful stool, and working with a carpenter's workshop with people with disabilities. Educating people to upcycle, providing workshops and sensitize about over-consumption;
- implementing a crowdfunding platform for energy efficient projects, making a difference in climate change;
- providing collecting points for discarded electrical appliances, such as cell phones, razors, electrical toothbrushes, etc. As a reward people receive a voucher of their choice for sustainable products/services (MSE).

## 2) Building local capacity, focussing on education

- educating women about finances and sustainable finance, supporting them in understanding that money is a lever, how to use that lever, so that the game rules are faire for everyone;
- supporting students in the optimal training for their baccalaureate in short time periods, combining coaching and teaching;
- implementing a learning and development platform for professionals who want to take a social sabbatical/volunteering time, matching professionals with NGOs in the world and accompanying them during the process;
- providing a network platform for journalists, underlining the social relevance and task of journalism, to clarify and educate, to build an access to the world, and focus on diversity, facilitating international understanding, promoting cross boarder cooperation and diversity in journalism;
- supporting high school students to prepare and learn for class and tests through a cell phone application, specifically for the subject and textbook of their choice. It can be used together with the teacher, who can add questions, topics, and look at the learning development of the class (MSE);
- promoting language learning, social and creative skills in children and teens through music. A mobile recording studio approaches schools and organization, etc. and executes a one-week workshop where the group produces their own music (MSE).

3) Serving members of the community by improving their welfare, health, and well-being

- supporting and helping young families the first year of a child, providing practical help after the birth for young families through a network of volunteer neighbours;
- providing a long-term peer-coaching for women and supporting social entrepreneurs in geographical areas where the SDGs are not achieved; based on communication at eye level;
- developing an open-source mapping platform for initiatives regarding the inclusion of transgender people in universities of the world, as part of an initiative that creates art, technology and stories that offer reflection and a vision for a better possible future;
- maintaining and creating cultural open spaces as well as affordable rental areas for creative and social initiatives in the city harbour through a collective initiative (MSE).

4) Challenging the unequal distribution of power and resources

- implementing a platform to network, communicate and support social organizations;
- implementing a crowdfunding platform for sports, supporting diversity in sports and providing services of white labelling for businesses;
- promoting the culture of the work of artisans from Mexico in Germany as well as slow fashion through the production and retail of sustainable clothes and accessories.

5) Including people socially and economically

- providing coaching, mentoring, and a network and support platform for expatriates, Spanish-speaking women who want to develop professionally in their new homes;
- developing through theatrical training the processes of self-knowledge and self-awareness, supporting people to take responsibility over their lives and finding a long-term job/occupation, with intrinsic motivation through performing arts;
- working for the inclusion of refugees as well as for the political education and educational support in general of children and teens (MSE).

### 5.2.2 *Conceptualization of Social Entrepreneurship*

During the interview, social entrepreneurs were also asked about their understanding of social entrepreneurship, and the reasons why they consider their enterprise a social enterprise. For many respondents (13) a social enterprise has to do with executing ideas to improve society, having a social purpose, or



pursuing a social goal and implementing an internal ‘social management’ of the enterprise, like for example managing the profits in a sustainable way, including fair-trade regulations, or taking all stakeholders into account for decision-making.

FSE 15 O	<i>Also die Mission ist schon sozial, ich glaube auch unsere Unternehmensführung ist sehr sozial. Sozial heißt für mich, dass man, ich sage mal für die Gesellschaft, oder auch für die Verbesserung der Umstände in der Gesellschaft, halt entsprechend Ideen umsetzt.</i>
FSE 15 T	<i>So, the mission is indeed social, I also think our management of the enterprise is very social. Social means for me, that, let us say, to execute ideas for society, or also for the improvement of the circumstances in society.</i>
FSE 12 O	<i>Für mich glaube ich war das von Anfang an klar, dass es ein Sozialunternehmen ist, weil es einmal diesen Umwelt- und Klimaaspekt hat und auf der anderen Seite eine klare soziale Ausrichtung.</i>
FSE 12 T	<i>For me I think it was from the beginning clear that it was a social entrepreneurship, because of, on the one hand, the environmental and climate aspect, and on the other hand, a clear social focus.</i>
MSE 02 O	<i>Für mich ist es zum Beispiel das Sozialunternehmen als ein Mittel sehen kann wie man eben die Herausforderungen oder die Probleme die es ökologisch, ökonomisch, sozial gibt angehen kann und auch lösen kann unmittelbar für viele oder für einige Menschen.</i>
MSE 02 T	<i>For me is for example social entrepreneurship a tool to address the challenges or the ecologic, economic, or social problems and solve them for many or for some people.</i>
EXP 03 O	<i>Unternehmen, deren raison d'être es ist einen positiven sozialen oder ökologischen Impact herbeizuführen. Können profit-orientiert sein aber sollen nachhaltig mit dem Gewinn umgehen und alle Stakeholder berücksichtigen.</i>
EXP 03 T	<i>Companies whose raison d'être is to create a positive social or environmental impact. These companies can be profit-oriented, but they should deal with profits sustainably and take all stakeholders into account.</i>

In accordance with the previous definition, some (7) interviewees described social entrepreneurship as the combination of having the major impact in society and using the most efficient business model to be able to build up infrastructure and generating more positive impact, without having existential fears.

- FSE 13 O *Aus dieser Kombination, von dieser größtmöglichen sozialen Wirkung, das unternehmerisch effizienteste System ergeben. Diese echt große Herausforderung gewesen, wie kriegen wir das soziale trotzdem mit Effizienz zu versehen, wenn es, zum Beispiel könnte ein Unternehmen ohne das gar nicht überleben, weil das Geld immer an den falschen Stellen ausgegeben würde.*
- FSE 13 T *From this combination, of this greatest possible social impact, to generate the most entrepreneurial efficient system. This was a really huge challenge, how do we get the social related to efficiency, if its, for example a company would not be able to survive without that, because money would be spent in the wrong places.*
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- MSE 01 O *Deswegen ist es auch gut, dass jetzt so viele hm, so viele Daten inzwischen entstehen die zeigen das hm, Nachhaltigkeit und soziales Handeln, hm, ein sehr guter Risiko-minimierer ist, sozusagen, wenn man dabei seine Business Score Card, da im Blick behält, und nicht nur immer nach Gewinn geht, sondern auch eine sinnvolle Investition in Menschen, in Umwelt und natürlich auch in Innovation, die Produkte und den Kundenkontakt steckt.*
- MSE 01 T *That is why it is good that now so many, hm, so much data is nowadays generated that shows us that, hm, sustainability and social trade, hm, a very good risk mitigators, so to say, if you look at your Business Score Card, and not only profit at the focus, but the meaningful investment in people, in environment and naturally also in innovation, the products and contact with clients.*

For other respondents (9), one important issue of social entrepreneurship is that the most relevant is the product or service that is being offered. Money in this type of enterprise is just a resource that makes the offering of the products and service and the functioning of the enterprise possible, most importantly it allows the enterprise to be independent and sustainable in a long-term, and to start change processes in the economy from within the economic system.

- FSE 13 O *Geld spielt eine Rolle, dann nur als Mittel zum Zweck, während für genuin Unternehmen ist es ja der Zweck überhaupt Geld zu verdienen und das Produkt ist beinahe nebensächlich, bei uns ist es exakt umgekehrt, wir buchen ja wirklich schwarz Null, sonst können wir nicht helfen, hm, wir helfen nicht weil es Geld in die Kasse bringt. Der Fokus ist im Produkt, und also nicht im Geld, aber natürlich geht das Produkt nicht ohne Geld.*
- FSE 13 T *Money plays only a role as a means for a goal, whereas for genuine entrepreneurs the goal is to make money and the product is almost secondary, for us it is almost the contrary, we make really just black numbers, if not we could not help, we do not help*
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*because it brings money to the cash register. The focus is on the product, and not in the money, but of course the product is not possible without money.*

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FSE 11 O	<i>Ich glaube, dass sich ein nachhaltiges Unternehmertum in diesem Kapitalismus, in dem wir nun mal leben, nur durchsetzen kann, wenn es sich wirtschaftlich rechnet, weil nur damit wird man andere Leute überzeugen.</i>
FSE 11 T	<i>I think a sustainable entrepreneurship in this capitalism, where we live in, can only survive, if it is economically viable, because only that way you can convince others.</i>

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FSE 07 O	<i>Und beim sozialen, gehen halt immer alle davon aus, dass es nichts mit Geld zu tun hat, also Geld ist wirklich ein schwieriges Thema, wo alle von immer wahnsinnig von Abstand halten. Und man sollte halt die Hemmung brechen, dass man auch Geld verdienen darf, und wie das Ganze auch geht. Ja da ist das Wort sozial drinnen, und mit sozial halt, bekommst du kein Geld, weil es ja oft mit Sozialhilfe verbunden wird.</i>
FSE 07 T	<i>And when it comes to social issues, everyone always assumes that it has nothing to do with money, so money is really a difficult topic where everyone keeps their distance from. And you should just break the inhibition, that you can also earn money, and how the whole thing works. Yes, there is the word social in there, and with social, you do not get any money, because it is often connected with social welfare.</i>

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MSE 01 O	<i>Also es geht darum, dass dieses soziale so viel Wert kreiert das es zum Fokus der Aufmerksamkeit macht, und dass man immer mehr davon machen will, um immer mehr Impact aber auch Profitabilität zu haben, und das ist echt wichtig, dass das Leute verstehen.</i>
MSE 01 T	<i>So, it is about, that that social goal creates so much value that it becomes the focus of attention and that you always want to do more to have more impact and more profitability, and that is really important that people understand that.</i>

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EXP 01 O	<i>Automatisch wird so eine neoliberale Idee von Erfolg angenommen. Also das Profit rein monetär ist, hm, es wird viel Unternehmerinnen einfach nicht gerecht. Das Geld ist fürs Machen, aber dafür müssen nicht non-profit sein, um weiterhin sense-making Aktivitäten einzustellen, der Unterschied ist das wir als Profit-Unternehmen anders im Markt wahrgenommen werden.</i>
EXP 01 T	<i>Profit has automatically a neoliberal idea of success. For many entrepreneurs, the idea that profit is only monetary is not appropriate. Money is for doing, but therefore we must not avoid being for-profit, to be able to keep making sense-making activities, the</i>

*difference is that as a profit-company you are perceived differently in the market.*

However, for some of them (7), the concept is still unclear. It is not explicit what the term involves, if it is just about being non-profit, or having a non-profit legal form or if it has to do with the goal of the enterprise. In some few cases (3), the respondents would not state that they consider themselves social entrepreneurs, mostly, because they were earning their income through the enterprise, as their understanding of the concept included only non-profit organizations. Others confirm that there is still a lot of misperception around the term. There is confusion regarding the profit debate and which areas are considered social. Also, culturally, there is the idea and belief that social services, and their financing are provided by the state and should not become a private, profit-making issue.

FSE 04 O *Ob ich mich mit dem Wort Sozialunternehmerin anfreunden kann, weiß ich noch nicht. Das ist so irgendwie ein Widerspruch zu diesem social, weil social heißt für mich, für immer und ewig ist die Unterstützung da. Und das kann ein Unternehmen einfach nicht bringen.*

FSE 04 T *If I can be friends with the word social entrepreneur, I do not know yet. It is kind of a contradiction to that social because social means for me, for ever and ever is the support there. And a company simply cannot do that.*

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MSE 03 O *Ja weiß ich ja nicht, ob ich mich noch so nenne. Es ist schwierig, was heißt es, ich tue was Soziales, ich tue was Nachhaltiges? Ich weiß nicht, ob ich das beantworten kann. Es sind zwei Wörter die echt krass, Unternehmer ist ja immer der in der Wirtschaft Geld verdient so, und social ist aber, also es ist eigentlich, aber klar also, dann muss mal halt gucken, wie sie sich verbinden lassen.*

MSE 03 T *Yeah, I do not know if I call myself that. It is difficult, what does social entrepreneurship mean, I do something social, I do something sustainable? I do not know if I can answer that. These are two words that are really extreme, entrepreneur is always the one who earns money in the economy, and social is, but it is actually, but of course so, then you just have to look at how you can connect both.*

The legal structure and to not depend on donations, were specially emphasised by male respondents.

MSE 01 O	<i>Hm, also man kann das sehr formal betrachten, und dann würde ich einmal sagen, wir haben schon eine GmbH, wir gründen gerade eine gGmbH, und dann ist es definiert über die Abgabenordnung und quasi ist es dann was wir irgendwie sozial nennen, weil wir irgendwie diese Zwecke der Abgabenordnung erfüllen, wie Förderung von Kunst und Kultur, und Bildung und was der Gesellschaft zugutekommt.</i>
MSE 01 T	<i>Hm, so, we could see it very formally, then I would I say, we have already a limited liability company (GmbH), and now we are establishing a non-profit limited liability company (gGmbH), and then it is defined over the tax code, which is almost what we call social, because we somehow fulfil those goals of the tax code, like promotion of art and culture, education and what is good for society.</i>
MSE 03 O	<i>Also wir machen halt Geld damit am Ende, aber ich bin einfach der Meinung „ok es ist vernünftig“, also es ergibt sich eine unglückliche Abhängigkeit, und dann haben wir gesagt, ne wir machen es nicht, nicht dieses komplett gemeinnützige.</i>
MSE 03 T	<i>So, we make money at the end, but I just think 'ok, that is reasonable', so it generates an unfortunate dependence, and then we said, no, we will not do it, we do not do this complete non-profit.</i>

Lastly, an important add-on made by the experts, mainly the professor, is the concept of sustainability. For one expert social entrepreneurship are enterprises that are socially, ecologically, and economically sustainable. Moreover, the professor mentioned that the overall concept should rather be sustainable entrepreneurship, under which social and ecological entrepreneurship are sub-categories. It is about general sustainable core values, which brings with it a specific form of leadership, of good economy, and human resources. This coincides with the definition of sustainable entrepreneurship of Schaltegger & Johnson (2019) who define the sustainable value creation as value created for all sustainability dimensions simultaneously (economic, social, and environmental) and integrating individuals and societies with both economic and non-economic benefits. Additionally, for the professor, there is societal entrepreneurship which has to do with future societal issues that involve the whole society, aiming at societal transformation, shaping future societies. Lastly, innovation, an important part of social enterprises, must include three dimensions: technological progress, market reach and social impact. In that way, the social impact should be always considered when referring to innovations in general.

EXP 01 O *Weil wenn ich Sustainable Entrepreneurship eigentlich ernst nehmen müsste, hätte auch die eine soziale Dimension. Sustainability ist ja eigentlich der ökologische Blick, der ökonomische Blick und der soziale Blick.*

EXP 01 T *Because if I take sustainable entrepreneurship seriously, then I would have a social dimension. Sustainability is actually the ecological focus, the economic focus and the social focus.*

For most of respondents and experts, social entrepreneurship is about executing ideas to improve society, combining the use of the most efficient business model with achieving the major impact. In this way, the service or product is the most relevant, and money or profit is just a resource to be able to have the impact, independently and within the economic system. However, for many there are still many misunderstandings and unclarities surrounding the concept. The experts added the concept of sustainable entrepreneurship.

### 5.2.3 Success

All respondents, when asked if they were satisfied with the success of their enterprises, although they mentioned that there is still room to grow and improve, were in general satisfied. Some are satisfied with their management practice and the workload and satisfaction of their employees, with the relations they are building with volunteers and suppliers, with the growing demand based on their current success, with accomplishing the first year with revenues, their success rates with their target groups or clients and their development and growth through the years, as well as the positive feedback received from their clients.

FSE 15 O *Ich glaube, zufrieden, ich meine besser geht es natürlich immer, es geht aber auch schlechter, also ich glaube alle unseren Mitarbeitern geht es gut, keiner ist im mega Stress, keiner ist überarbeitet, das ist mir sehr wichtig auch als Geschäftsführerin.*

FSE 15 T *I think I am satisfied, it can always be better, but it can always be worse. I think all our employees are doing well, nobody has super stress, or is overworked, which is very important for me, also as a CEO.*

FSE 06 O *Die normalen Projekte machten also 30-40% Vermittlungsquote, und wir hatten dann in dem ersten Projekt direkt 60%. Vermittlungsquoten in Düsseldorf waren 100%. Wir haben neue Projekte entwickelt, und auch zum Beispiel eine Ausbildung.*

FSE 06 T	<i>At the very beginning we had a success quote of 60% compared to 30-40% of others. Now we have places, like in Düsseldorf, where we have 100% rates of success. We have developed new projects such as a training programme.</i>
FB 02 O	<i>Mucha gente me ha escrito, oye mira gracias al club conocí a alguien aquí donde vivo. Y eso a mí me pone los pelos, me eriza, porque cómo puede un grupo, ser un soporte tan grande para la gente, y eso fue lo que a mí me faltó cuando yo llegue acá.</i>
FB 02 T	<i>And so many have written to me that thanks to the group they have met someone where they live, which makes me so happy, because how can a group be such a great support network for these women, which was what I missed when I arrived.</i>
MSE 04 O	<i>Hm, und das alles hat so seinen Höhepunkt gefunden, dass wir den Publikumspreis gewonnen haben, beim Act For Impact Award von der Social Entrepreneurship Akademie</i>
MSE 04 T	<i>Hm, and we had a peak when we won the prize of the public, by the Act for Impact Award from the Social Entrepreneurship Academy.</i>

#### 5.2.4 Management Practices

In general, the management practices of the interviewed social entrepreneurs vary in type and form. Some use specific methods, like roadmaps, controlling, and online tools for communication and project management. Many (8) present a tendency to prefer a non-hierarchical, as well as flexible and adaptable working structure. They usually have half-time working models, as well as cooperative decision-making processes and the respondents, as leaders of their enterprises, want to maintain an eye-level communication, create an agreeable working environment, that is flexible and allows changes for the specific needs of their employees and gives each employee autonomy to plan and execute their tasks; all this without undermining their accountability and legitimacy as leaders.

FSE 10 O	<i>Mein Stil ist halt, also, hm, auf Augenhöhe arbeiten, und habe es auch nicht raushängen lassen, also, wie soll ich es sagen, ich habe halt meinen Hintergrund, meine Kompetenz, ich weiß das ich bestimmte Sachen gut machen kann.</i>
FSE 10 T	<i>My management style is at eye level, and I do not have to show-off, so, how do I say, I know what my competencies are, I know I can do certain things good.</i>
FSE 09 O	<i>Wir haben festgelegt, dass unsere Mitarbeiter, die ein gleiches Level an Verantwortung, Ausbildung und Leistung haben, dass sie</i>

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	<i>alle dasselbe Gehalt bekommen. Auch dass ich mich sehr viel immer abspreche, wenn es darum geht, wollen wir jemand neues einstellen, weil ja auch alle mit diesem Menschen arbeiten müssen. Und zum dritten noch viel wichtigerer Punkt, dass man auch sich an die persönlichen Bedürfnisse der verschiedenen Mitarbeiter anpasst, mit Arbeitszeiten und Home-Office und so.</i>
FSE 09 T	<i>So, for us, every worker at the same level of responsibility and education earns the same money. And if we want to hire someone new, we look at it with the team, because they will have to work with that person. And the third more important point is that we adapt to the personal needs of employees, with flexible schedules and home-office and so.</i>

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FSE 01 O	<i>Mein Stil ist, so „Das Ziel ist das, was haltet ihr davon, habt ihr noch mal eine andere Idee?“, und jetzt finden wir den besseren Weg wie wir da hinkommen, und dann haben alle zusammengearbeitet, es war klar, dass keiner höhergestellt war, also ich möchte keinen kontrollieren, ich will das Menschen sich gut fühlen, das wir zusammenarbeiten, nicht mit diesem Stress „Oh Gott ich mache jetzt was richtiges, ich mache jetzt was falsch“, für mich ist das das richtige.</i>
FSE 01 T	<i>My management style is more ‘We have a common goal, what you think about that’, how can we accomplish that, what is the best way to do it; so that everyone has worked together, nobody was higher in the hierarchy. I do not want to control anyone, I want them to feel good, not feel stressed and think ‘Oh god, I am doing it right or wrong?’, for me it is the right way.</i>

However, some (5) have in common that they underline and focus on pursuing excellent communication processes, where everyone on the team is informed about the tasks and goals, where discussion and exchange is prioritized, and decisions are usually made cooperatively. Goals and objectives are regularly reviewed and discussed among the employees, to be able to see if and how they are being met and how to improve.

FSE 12 O	<i>Es ist immer wieder für uns wichtig miteinander zu reden und zu gucken, sind wir noch auf den richtigen Weg, kriegen wir auch alle mit ins Boot, und reden wir auch die richtigen Dinge miteinander, kommt alles bei allen an.</i>
FSE 12 T	<i>It is important for us to communicate and to see if we are still on the right track, if we are all on the boat, is everyone receiving the information, has everyone understood it.</i>

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MSE 02 O	<i>Wir haben bei uns einen extrem hohen Kommunikationsaufwand, einmal im Team, weil wir so funktionieren, also dass wir eben</i>
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*versuchen Entscheidungen immer gemeinschaftlich zu treffen, möglichst im Konsens, das ist super krass anstrengend, das nervt mich auch tierisch, das ist unheimlich gut, aber das ist auch sehr belastend, hm, und gleichzeitig haben wir auch einen immens hohen Kommunikationsaufwand nach außen.*

MSE 02 T *We have an extremely high communication activities, first in the team, because we function in such a way, that we just always try to make decisions together, preferably in consent, that is super exhausting, that annoys me enormously, that is incredibly good, but that is also very stressful, hm, and at the same time we also have external immensely high communication activities.*

These results match those from Usher Shrair (2015), who stated that 88% of the interviewed female social entrepreneurs manage their enterprises in a participatory and collaborative way as well as the results by a study by Ashoka (Taberna et al., 2019) analysing their global female Fellows. Here they found that female social entrepreneurs practice inclusive and collective leadership, which is a shared process that considers the expertise of people at all levels to address a situation, with the aim to create a deeper impact. In general, creating open collaborations is a shared strategy for both male and female social entrepreneurs, such that 90% of Ashoka Fellows are openly encouraging other institutions or groups to replicate their idea. Women, however, are even more likely to ensure women (55% vs. 43%) and children and youth (60% vs. 51%) are central to the focus of their work. There are three key forms that these leaders practice collective leadership. First, they ensure that communities have decision-making power and enable community members to lead with their own resources and expertise. Second, they create ways for people to take ownership and contribute toward a shared vision, recognizing that individuals directly impacted by a challenge have the most knowledge about the solution to problems within their own communities which in turn can lead to more powerful, systemic solutions. Third, they trust youth to lead, engaging them in decisions such as on resources, strategy, and policies, ensuring their voices are heard consistently. While this strategy is not exclusive to female social entrepreneurs, not only were women more likely to work with children and youth, but they also provide opportunities for young people to start their own initiatives as a core part of their strategy.

Finally, many female respondents (5) mention that any important decision, mostly about growing or changing, was made very mindfully, calmly, taking enough time and energy for this process.

FSE 10 O *Das ist so der Versuch der Strategie, hm, aber auch gleichzeitig sehr achtsam*

FSE 10 T *Now we are developing the strategy, but very mindful.*

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FSE 07 O	<i>Weil, nur weil man die Möglichkeit hat, halt etwas zu tun, heißt ja nicht das ich es auch machen muss. Weil eigentlich geht dann meine kleine Idee verloren. Ich habe jetzt erstmal auf die Bremse getreten, und sage, „Ne, jetzt Stopp, zurück“. Aber das ist ja auch auf diesem Gründungsprozess so.</i>
FSE 07 T	<i>Only because we have the possibility to do something, it does not mean that we must do it. For me with scaling the small idea is lost. So now I am using the breaks, and saying ‘No, now stop, go back’. Which I think is part of the founding process.</i>

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FSE 11 O	<i>Wir haben 1,5 Jahre gebraucht, um das so zu stabilisieren das wir gesagt haben, wir stellen uns jetzt an. Und viele haben gesagt, „Ihr müsst schneller, ihr müsst es wirtschaftlicher machen“, aber wir wollten uns auch nicht kaputt machen.</i>
FSE 11 T	<i>It took us 1,5 years to make it so stable that we could afford to employ us. Many said to us ‘hurry up, make it more profitable’, but we did not want to burn us out.</i>

Regarding the management practices mentioned specifically by the male social entrepreneurs, they discussed that one of the most important aspects is to have employees for a long term and creating for that a healthy environment. Moreover, one interviewee finds it fair to pay high loans (more than double as the average), because of the intense emotional work that the activities require. Central for their work is to maintain a critical culture, where during and after every workshop have a quality review process through peer-to-peer feedback. He also explained that he had to change his leadership style from laissez-faire to providing structure and taking responsibility. Finally, an interviewee mentioned that it was important for them to stay independent from political parties and other, as well as to cooperate with all stakeholders.

Ryland & Jaspers (2019) present their findings from interviews with successful female entrepreneurs, proposing to rethink the world of work, precisely through the way these female entrepreneurs were managing and leading their enterprises. Thus, they provide guidelines with regards to organizational development, leadership, recruitment, personal development, team building, innovation, and fundraising. One important aspect was that all entrepreneurs used a transparent goal setting, decision-making, and feedback process, they were all creating a people-centred work culture, embracing their vulnerability, investing in their own personal development, and growing only if it would serve their missions and their teams. These findings match the findings of this research and confirm that female leaders and entrepreneurs are also applying alternative management and leadership formats and contributing to the transformation of the functioning structures in business. In the future, definitions of leadership, management, and entrepreneurship, should consider these goals and practices as well.

All respondents were satisfied with the success of their enterprises, although for all there is still room to grow and improve. For many interviewees, the main management practices they are using are non-hierarchical, flexible, and adaptable working structures, as well as pursuing excellent communication processes and cooperative decision-making. Specially for female social entrepreneurs, the important decisions are made very mindfully, taking enough time and energy to consider all aspects.

### 5.2.5 Innovation

Regarding innovation practices, all interviewed social enterprises have been an innovation in a specific sector. All founders have created an innovative way to solve a problem and support a social purpose. Many of the services and products provided by them did not exist in that specific way before, they are pioneers in their sectors. Some of them underline the fact that if they would have not been innovative, they would not have succeeded. Consequently, innovation is part of their enterprises and management processes. Innovation is always serving the purpose to solve the social problem more optimally, to pursue that social mission or serve the target group/clients more effectively. Some acknowledge that their enterprises are constantly changing and transforming, and this through innovation. Nonetheless, no interviewee mentioned innovation when describing the concept of social entrepreneurship, which points out that although innovation is a valuable part of their enterprises, it is still not as relevant for its definition.

FSE 13 O *Wir sind dazu Social Franchise Pioniere in Deutschland. Innovation aber nicht als Selbstzweck. Weil hm, wir nicht hm, die Innovation machen, um innovativ zu sein, sondern es ist hm, in unserer DNA. Erfolg wäre ohne die Innovation nicht gekommen.*

FSE 13 T *We are pioneers of the Social Franchise system in Germany. Innovation plays a role but not as an end in itself. Innovation is in the ADN of entrepreneurs. Success would not have come if we would not have been innovative at the first place.*

FSE 10 O *Innovation hat uns so weiterentwickelt. Ich glaube, wenn es halt irgendwann gut ist, und nichts Neues entdecken kann, dann würde ich ja, dann auch da wäre es dann nicht mehr spannend.*

FSE 10 T *Innovation develops us further. So, I think if you cannot discover anything new it would not be exciting anymore.*

MSE 04 O *Also es gibt viele, unzählige so Angebote mit Musik, es gibt auch ganz viel Sprachförderungsprogramme, aber es gibt kein einziges*

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	<i>in ganz Europa, zumindest in meiner Recherche vor 2-3 Jahren, kein Angebot, dass das so verbindet.</i>
MSE 04 T	<i>There are many offers with music, there are also many programmes to promote language learning, but there is not one in all Europe, at least after my research 2-3 years ago, no offer that combines it the way we do.</i>

### 5.2.6 Working Routines

Working routines of most of the interviewed social entrepreneurs usually involve flexibility regarding their working location (many do home-office some days, many must be a lot on the road on conferences and meetings, some even spend half the year in another country due to the enterprise, others use a coworking space, etc.). Therefore, most of them underline the importance of organization and communication with the team, clarity with the tasks each employee has, as well as the use of technological tools and regular meetings. As previously mentioned, some have another half-time job, which also requires self-organization and appropriate time management. Many mention the life quality this freedom and flexibility has provided them. However, some also mentioned that they work 12 hours daily, being always available and working due to the internet, so they also underline that it is a hard path which requires a lot of work. In one case for a male social entrepreneur, the work for the social enterprise is still on a volunteer basis and he survives financially thanks to his half-time job. In another case, the enterprise has been paused for some months to resolve some personal issues and work on another project.

FSE 14 O	<i>Yo voy dos veces al año, por dos semanas a México.</i>
FSE 14 T	<i>I travel two times a year to Mexico and stay there for two weeks.</i>
FSE 10 O	<i>Hm, also ich bin viel unterwegs. Deswegen dieses Teilzeit Modell, aber wir haben ein Büro, da treffen wir uns im Moment drei Mal die Woche, und haben dann nochmal einen halben Tag, den wir halt flexibel von Zuhause arbeiten.</i>
FSE 10 T	<i>I am a lot on the road. We have like a part-time model, we meet three times a week at our office, and we have a day where we can work from home.</i>
FSE 07 O	<i>12 Stunden ununterbrochen. Zwei Tage Arbeit, in einer Unternehmensberatung, dann in der Residenz und Stipendium, und Studium.</i>
FSE 07 T	<i>I work 12 hours a day without interruptions. I am studying a master's degree, work two days a week at a consulting firm, and then I am at the residency with the social enterprise.</i>
FSE 05 O	<i>Mein Alltag, ist, hm eigentlich schon ziemlich routiniert, ich habe natürlich kein Büro, wo ich hingehe. Ich arbeite halt immer, ich</i>

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*habe keine Wochenenden, keinen Urlaub, aber das ist ja auch so eine Internetgeschichte, immer erreichbar. Das Problem ist halt, was heißt das Problem, „Blessing in disguise“, egal, mir macht es alles unheimlich viel Spaß und ich bin halt bei meinem Purpose.*

FSE 05 T *My every day is quite repetitive. I do not have an office where I can go. I am always working, I do not have weekends, no vacations, always available due to internet, but it is a 'blessing in disguise', I have so much fun doing it, it is my purpose.*

### 5.2.7 *Employees, Financing and Resources*

Of the 17 female respondents, seven of them are solo entrepreneurs – without employees. Some of them work with volunteers, some work with temporary staff (like a lawyer, a web developer, etc.), and some have either a half-time assistant or interns. Those who have employees have between 6 and 15 employees with full and half-time contracts. Many have additionally also some freelance workers supporting them. The interviewed male social entrepreneurs have established middle or small sized enterprises. They have either half-time employees, freelance employees, volunteers, or in some cases one or two minimum wage employees. None of the male social entrepreneurs are solo entrepreneurs.

Because of the sampling process, many of the respondents had received a prize (which in some cases was not financial but counselling and professional support) through an organization or initiative for start-ups or social enterprises. Six of the interviewees started with own capital, either personal savings or the loan of a relative. The rest started and work with a hybrid model, which is usually upheld at the beginning by their own pro bono work, in some cases for more than a year, and by receiving a financial prize or financial support by a foundation or association, donations, volunteer work, income generated by their products/services, cooperation's and others. The main supporters have been the Social Impact Lab, the Google Impact Challenge, Ashoka, Schwab Foundation, McKinsey, as well as other foundations, associations, and the federal and regional state. One of the male founders was funded by a private investor, and for another private investors and their own capital were also part of the hybrid model of financing. In this way, all were in some way supported by some initiatives, programmes, or funding.

### 5.2.8 *Future Goals*

All the interviewed social entrepreneurs have future goals and further development goals for their enterprises. They all are planning some sort of growth or improvement, including some strategic plans to accomplish them. Some are

planning to fund new enterprises, organizations, or associations, some to expand or create a first or second location. They are looking for investors, developing new services or products, including new target groups (also new countries), and new objectives, developing a more efficient social business model, using new tools and methods. For many of them, these plans and changes have started naturally or organically, and they are including them as goals after calmly and mindfully having reviewed the motivations, consequences, needs, etc.

FSE 14 O	<i>He buscado más que nada inversionistas, yo incluso hice un plan de negocios, para darme cuenta cuánto dinero yo necesitaría para abrir un negocio físico. Pero encontrar inversionistas es difícil porque yo no quiero irle a que las ganancias del negocio para pagar una renta, quiero crecer, pero con una estrategia. Uno de mis planes por ahora, es juntarme con otra gente, rentar un local en conjunto, puede ser como un café cultural.</i>
FSE 14 T	<i>I have been looking for investors and I have made a business plan, to realize how much money I needed to open a small store. But it has been hard to find investors because I do not want to make the move just to pay rent. I want to grow with a strategy. One of my plans has been to come together with others, rent a place together, like for a cultural coffee shop.</i>
FSE 09 O	<i>Wir müssen noch weiterhin wachsen, um noch profitabler zu werden. Da haben wir jetzt auch überlegt, wie wir an mehr Märkte kommen können, also wir haben das, was wir hier in Deutschland machen, bei weitem noch nicht ausgeschöpft.</i>
FSE 09 T	<i>For the next five years we want to grow and become more profitable, we are figuring out how to get to more markets, I mean the German market is by far not exhausted.</i>
MSE 02 O	<i>Genau, also wir sind jetzt schon seit letztem Jahr Dezember, haben wir Architekten, und wir sind da schon in einer Bauphase, wir sind gerade in der dritten, das heißt es wird viel geplant. 2019, dadurch das wir mit sehr vielen öffentlichen Geld was machen, d.h. fast das ganze Jahr werden nur die Aufträge dann ausgeschrieben und Genehmigungen geholt, und 2020 wird dann der erste Stein bewegt, und 2021 soll das fertig sein.</i>
MSE 02 T	<i>Exactly, now we are since December from last year, we have architects, we are on the construction phase, now on the third, so currently is a lot of planning going on. 2019, as we are doing a lot with public funds, which means the whole next year are going to be filling orders and applying for permits, and 2020, the first stone will be moved, so that in 2021 it should be finished.</i>

All respondent's social enterprises are innovations in their sectors. Their working routines involve flexibility and efficient time management. For the majority, the financing of the enterprises was allowed through some sort of support either by the state, foundations, or organizations, as well as using a financing hybrid model. However, some have financed their enterprises with private investments and their own pro bono work, as well as half-time jobs. All have future goals to grow and expand.

### 5.3 Doing Gender in Social Entrepreneurship

The assignment of a person to a sex is ordinarily justified based on the possession of female or male genitalia; however, sex categorization involves the display and recognition of socially regulated external signs, such as manner, dress, and behaviour. The relationship between sex category and gender is the relationship between being a recognizable mandatory of a sex category and being accountable to current cultural conceptions of behaviour compatible with the 'essential natures' of a woman or a man. This is conceptualized as an on-going situated process, a 'doing' rather than a 'being', transforming an ascribed status into an achieved status, moving masculinity and femininity from natural, essential properties of individuals to interactional, social properties of a system of relationships. In this way, one can never not do gender, because it is such an integral part of individual identity as well as societal structures, because gender is relevant in every social situation. Moreover, the accomplishment of gender is at once interactional and institutional, and therefore it has political implications. Members of society 'do difference' by creating distinctions among themselves, as incumbents of different sex categories, different race categories, and different class categories. These distinctions are discriminatory, thus not natural, normal, or essential. But once the distinctions have been created, they are used to affirm different category incumbents 'essentially different natures' and the institutional arrangements based on these, generating for example, patriarchy, racism and class oppression. Therefore, if gender attributes positioned as a basis of maintaining men's hegemony are social products, they can be changed (West & Zimmerman, 2009).

The challenge of research is to show how these forces combine. In that way, any method that captures members of society's 'descriptive accountings of states of affairs to one another' (Heritage, 1984, p. 136–37 as cited in West & Zimmerman, 2009, p. 116) can be used for the study of doing gender, and in this way includes the systematic analysis of unstructured interviews (West & Zimmerman, 2009). This research therefore proposes a systematic analysis of semi-structured interviews, about the descriptive accountings of the role of

gender in social entrepreneurship, trying to analyse how assignment and categorization practices combine with the doing of gender and difference.

The study of Nentwich & Kelan (2014), which aimed at identifying a topology of doing gender, found that 'doing gender' is linked to structures, which influence how gender is done. Further, it also involves 'doing hierarchies', which normally means that the masculine is privileged over the feminine. Additionally, 'doing gender' means to explore how identities are constructed in a specific situation and focus on the ways people adopt and create subject positions, exploring the context-specificity of 'doing gender' and gender identity. Finally, gender is not always made relevant in the same way and can even be done in a subverting way. The present study aims at analysing doing gender as doing structures and hierarchies, as gendered structures are embedded in entrepreneurship and enable the construction of gender identity. In order to fulfil the expectations attached to entrepreneurship, the person often has to enact a certain gender identity according to these structures. Gendered structures (re)inforce gendered interactions. In the same way, as already discussed, the embeddedness of entrepreneurship in masculinity, shows the hierarchy in which the 'masculine' is seen as superior to the 'feminine', this hierarchical order was established through the development and research of entrepreneurship along history, a result from the dissemination of masculine attributes in entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2006), rooted in the epistemological bias of scholars (Hechavarria et al., 2017). Most importantly, this study concentrates on doing gender as doing identities, aiming at analysing how identity, the gendered identity and the professional identity are constructed, intertwined, and achieved as a social practice.

In this sense, Bruni, Gherardi & Poggio (2004) explored entrepreneurship and gender as practical accomplishments and found five processes and one metaphor of the construction of gender and entrepreneurship as intertwined practices: managing the dual presence, doing ceremonial and remedial work, boundary-keeping, footing and gender commodification. Moreover, García & Welter (2013) examined how women entrepreneurs construct their identities differently, finding that some of them perceive dissonance between womanhood and entrepreneurship discourses whereas others do not. Their results show specific ways of constructing gender identity which result in gendered practices: how women act as entrepreneurs by 'doing' and 'redoing' gender. Here the authors distinguished a group of three concepts in which women referred to practices for managing their business: the 'juggling act' as women juggled expectations with emotions and different roles, 'finding things that women bring to the business realm' such as developing a family-friendly workplace, and 'finding things in the business realm that empower women' such as participation in business networks. Moreover, an additional group of concepts refers to practices for managing relationships. Women business owners either engage in 'clearing the hurdles' or 'look for fellowship with high/similar status



women'. Thus, the concepts of 'juggling act' and 'clearing the hurdles' were embraced in the category of 'doing gender' where women apply culturally available practices. The remaining three concepts were included in the category of 'redoing gender', where women challenge the gender difference. More recently, Stead (2017) studied how women navigate gendered assumptions in order to belong, by theorising how women's performing of belonging takes different forms: labelled by proxy, modelling the norm, concealment, tempered disruption, and identity-switching.

### 5.3.1 *Discourses on Gender*

After discussing with the interviewees their own path towards social entrepreneurship, as well as their understanding of it and specificities of their enterprises, the interview focused on the role that gender had played throughout these dimensions. It is important to mention, that the invitation sent for the interview revealed the general subject of the research: female social entrepreneurship. In that way, respondents had already an expectation about the possible questions around this topic, and in some cases, even personal and professional interest.

The different categories analysed in this section are referred to as discourses on gender. In general, discourses can be defined as modes of speech and language, they are form and content of statements. Language is seen as a reflection and mediation of social reality. Thus, discourses, as social modes of speech that are institutionalized, have power effects because and insofar as they determine the individual's actions (Bublitz, 2019; Jäger, 2004). Moreover, within discourse theory, the concept of discourse is understood as a form of knowledge and (power) practice (Bublitz, 2019) and a social structure which on the one hand is historically constituted and acted by subjects and on the other hand, the subjects are constituted by it. Thus, without subjects there is no discourse, and without discourse there would be no subjects (Jäger, 2004). The origin and constitution of (social) reality is not attributed to an acting, sense-constituting subject, but to anonymous, rule-guided practices and structural patterns. These can be reconstructed by discourse analysis (Bublitz, 2019). In this way, discourse analysis answers the question of what can and cannot be said, by whom and how, at a certain point in time. The overall discourse of a society can be analytically divided into different strands of discourse which in turn are produced and reproduced on different levels of discourse, which interact and relate to each other. A line of discourse denotes a thematic extract from the historical overall discourse (e.g., ecological discourse, medical discourse, legal discourse, discourse of gender, etc.). The strands of discourse change in history, whereby they are usually related to previous courses. One strand of discourse, in turn, can be split up into different fragments of discourse. These

are individual statements which together make up the strand of discourse (Jäger, 2004). Therefore, ‘discourse’ as a concept in this dissertation is understood not as merely statements by several subjects, but as a reflection and mediation of social reality and as institutionalized social modes of speech, underlining the different fragments of discourse within the strand of discourse of social entrepreneurship and gender. Important here is that this research has not used discourse analysis and therefore does not intend to describe discourses of social entrepreneurship and gender as expected from such a theoretical and methodological approach.

The discourses around gender during the interviews can be categorized into five discourse groups: discourses creating gender differences, discourses exhibiting gender discrimination, discourses endorsing intersectionality, discourses minimizing gender influence and discourses proving a ‘re-doing’ of gender in social entrepreneurship. Following I describe each discourse category and exemplify them, as before, with direct quotations from the interviews.

Almost all the interviewed (15) provided discourses creating gender differences, stating that women and men are different, mostly regarding the way they work, their values and priorities in work, and especially underlined was their relation to money and the way it is valued and pursuit.

FSE 09 O *Ich glaube aber, dass man als Frau tendenziell sozialer ist, von der Genetik her (lacht), und deswegen viele Frauen auch so auf sozialen Berufen arbeiten. Aber wie gesagt, die wenigsten haben dann, oder denken dann, dass sie daraus Geld machen können, ja? Hm, die denken immer man kann das dann ja nur ehrenamtlich machen. Hm, deswegen war mir das auch wichtig mit Ihnen sprechen zu können, weil das ein ganz großer Missstand ist und ich immer noch auf das für mich einsetze, dass die Frauen mutiger sind und tun, ja?*

FSE 09 T *I think that women have a genetic tendency to be more social (laughs), and that is why women work so often in social jobs. But, as I said, very few think that they can make money out of it, yes? Hm, they always think they have to do it on a volunteer basis. Hm, that is why it was important for me to talk to you, because this is a big misconception, and for what I engage for, that women are braver and just do, yes?*

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FSE 03 O *Aber ich glaube, dass es noch für einen Mann, Karriere und Karriereweg auch eine höhere Priorität hat. Tatsächlich dann zu sagen, „Ich steige jetzt aus, ich mache eine Auszeit“, oder „Ich ver-schreibe mich jetzt irgendetwas mehr sozialem“, braucht mehr Mut noch Bedarf. Ich denke es ist in unserer Gesellschaft dann auch von vorher noch so geprägt.*

- FSE 03 T *But I think, that for a man, career has a higher priority. Indeed, there to say, 'I am quitting, I am taking a sabbatical', or 'I am engaging in something more social', that needs more courage and need. I think it is in such way socialized in our society.*
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- FSE 16 O *Frauen gründen anders, Frauen gründen eher, um Probleme eher der Familie oder der Gemeinschaft zu lösen. Also ich bin mir ganz sicher, dass es bei den Frauen mehrere einfach den Sinn darin zu sehen, und vielleicht auch so ein Stück weg, mehr zu reflektieren. Hm, das sind einfach andere Projekte, die anderen Finanzierungsbedarf haben, und Frauen sind einfach vorsichtiger und weniger risikofreudig.*
- FSE 16 T *Women found differently, women rather found to solve problems in the family or the community. I am quite sure that in the case of women it is just a matter of seeing the sense in it, and maybe a bit away to reflect more. Hm, these are simply other projects that have other financing needs, and women are simply more cautious and less risk friendly.*

In this discourse category, for many, caring responsibilities and gender was an important issue as well, creating gender differences based on the role of motherhood in the life of a woman. For some of them, being a parent that has a purpose, is self-actualized, fulfilled and happy is more important than being always with the children. Having happy parents is important as role models and for the environment at home. Here also it was mentioned (5) that without the support of their male partners, who in some cases funded their enterprises, but also showed significant emotional support and 'helped' with household and caring responsibilities, they would have not been able to start the companies. This recognition, gender as an entrepreneurial resource in households, was underlined in research, stating that women contribute substantial time and labour to spousal firms, reflecting an expectation of feminised support for male economic activity, which is less likely to be reciprocated for women business owners by male partners, who may transfer greater amounts of financial capital into their female partner's venture (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). These results confirm that the support of their male partners receives special recognition, which might not be the case when male entrepreneurs consider in general the support they received from their female partners.

- FSE 15 O *Dann habe ich halt gesagt, hm, jetzt bin ich noch jung, also als Frau denkt man daran auch anders als Männer, und ich habe damals wirklich bewusst, weil ich damals ja 23 war, dass ich vielleicht in 5-6 Jahren mal Kinder ins Spiel kommen könnten, und dass ich, man etabliert ist.*

FSE 15 T	<i>Then I just said, hm, now I am still young, as a woman you think about it differently than men, and I really knew then, because I was 23 at the time, that maybe in 5-6 years I could have children, and that I could be more settled.</i>
FSE 14 O	<i>Como mujer, o sea te digo, si tiene uno que romper con esos estigmas, que la mujer en la casita cocinando para los hijos o para el marido. Entonces al principio si tenía cargo de conciencia, la verdad, pero poco a poco me lo he ido quitando. Porque también es una ayuda y es algo bueno para ellos, que ellos vean que su mama hace algo.</i>
FSE 14 T	<i>As a woman, I tell you, one must break with those stigmas, of woman in the house cooking for the children or for the husband. So, at first, I did feel guilty, to be true, but little by little I have been getting rid of it. Because it is also some help, and it is a good thing for them, for them to see that their mother does something.</i>
FSE 02 O	<i>Él siempre estuvo apoyándose con dinero y con tiempo. Pagó mis formaciones, y de decir "No mira, yo por las noches tengo que trabajar", "No pasa nada, yo me ocupo". O sea, sí, yo pienso que sin el apoyo de él no lo hubiese podido hacer.</i>
FSE 02 T	<i>He was always supporting me with money and time. He paid for my training, and like, I would say, 'Look, I have to work at night', he was, 'No problem, I take care of it'. In other words, yes, I think that without his support I would not have been able to do it.</i>

Some of the respondents argued with traits women are missing, must or should develop in entrepreneurship, work or, in general, that can help them and are necessary to succeed in the field, like taking more risk or being more self-confident and showcase their successes.

FSE 16 O	<i>Zum Teil, und es ist auch nicht des einen oder anderen Schuld, also, Frauen müssen mehr fordern was sie wollen, anstatt irgendwie zu warten das da irgendwie jemand eine Gehaltserhöhung gibt, hm, Frauen müssen sich mehr zutrauen und nicht einfach hinten verstecken, wenn sie wahrgenommen werden wollen.</i>
FSE 16 T	<i>Partly, and it is not one or the other fault either, so women must demand more what they want instead of somehow waiting for somebody to give them a raise, hm, women have to dare more and not just hide if they want to be noticed.</i>
FSE 10 O	<i>Ich hatte, habe, also es ist ein Klischee, dass denken Frauen, wir arbeiten alle super, aber dann heften wir uns das Blümchen nicht an das Jackett.</i>
FSE 10 T	<i>I have had, so it is a cliché that women think we are all working great, but then we do not show off our accomplishments.</i>

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FSE 07 O *Dass es nicht immer, ja klingt blöd, aber viele Frauen haben Angst vor der Verantwortung, die da kommt, und wenn man halt das System dann runterbricht und erklärt, ist gar nicht so komplex, da nimmt man da Berührungsängste weg.*

FSE 07 T *It is not always like that, yes it sounds stupid, but many women are afraid of the responsibility which comes, and if you break down the system and explain, it is not that complex, then you take away some fears.*

Some of the respondents argued with traits women are missing, must or should develop in entrepreneurship, work or, in general, that can help them and are necessary to succeed in the field, like taking more risk or being more self-confident and showcase their successes.

FSE 09 O *Ich glaube, dass ich keine typische Frau bin, und dass die Frauen auch unternehmerisch unterwegs sind im social Business, hm, nicht die typischen Frauen sind. Die Frauen, die ich kenne, ich kenne viele Frauen, die sozial aktiv sind, aber die machen immer alles unentgeltlich und setzen ihr eigenes Licht, also setzen sich viel niedriger als ihre männlichen Kollegen und haben einfach nicht dieses selbstverständliche Selbstbewusstsein, zu sagen „Mensch ich bin toll“ oder „Mensch ich kann unternehmerisch sein“.*

FSE 09 T *I think that I am not a typical woman, and that the women who are also entrepreneurs in the social business, hm, are not the typical women. The women I know, I know many women who are socially active, but they always do everything free of charge and put off their own light, they put themselves lower than their male colleagues, and just do not have this self-evident self-confidence and to say, 'I am great' or 'I can be entrepreneurial'.*

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FSE 08 O *Für mich, dadurch dass ich, also, ich bin zum einen ja gewohnt, als Frau im XX-Sektor, eher unter Männern zu sein, das heißt es ist jetzt für mich keine ungewohnte Umgebung irgendwie, und ich brauchte ja kein, hm, keinen Kredit oder dergleichen, das sind ja Sachen, wo man auch immer wieder hört, dass da mehr Frauen mehr Probleme haben. Hm, genau. Und jetzt habe ich das Gefühl, und man muss dazu sagen, ich bin 1,87 m groß, das heißt, es passiert mir nicht häufig, dass ich solche dummen Sprüche bekomme, die Leute haben tendenziell Respekt vor mir (lacht).*

FSE 08 T *For me, because, well, on the one hand I am used to being a woman in the XX sector, being rather among men, that means it is not an unfamiliar environment for me somehow, and I did not need any, hm, no bank loan or the like, those are things where you hear*

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*that women have more problems. Hm, exactly. And now I have the feeling, and you have to say, I am 1.87 m tall, which means, it does not happen often that I get such stupid comments, people tend to respect me (laughs).*

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FSE 06 O *Hm, es ist meine Persönlichkeit, ich, weiß es gar nicht, ne, also. Ich bin rothaarig, ich bin auch nicht blond, und hm, ich habe eigentlich, keine Ahnung, ich bin eine laute Frau, wie Sie ja mitkriegen. Eh...pff, ich kann dieses, ich kann diese Diskussion nicht nachvollziehen [über Gender].*

FSE 06 T *Hm, it is my personality, I do not know, well. I am redheaded, I am not blond, hm, I actually have, no idea, I am a loud woman, as you are aware now. Eh...pff, I cannot understand this discussion [about gender].*

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MSE 02 O *Ich lerne hier auch unglaublich viel, vor allem die XX die eine sehr, sehr starke Frau ist*

MSE 02 T *I learn here a lot, especially from XX who is a very, very strong woman.*

In the same way, many (7) recounted the socialization based on gender. In this way, gender differences are explained because of different forms of socializations experienced by women and by men, which creates different behaviours and attitudes in men and women. This corresponds to the socialist feminist theory which states that differences between the performance of women and men entrepreneurs are caused by variances in early and ongoing socialization, underlining the complementarity of these different traits (McAdam, 2013).

FSE 09 O *Ich befürchte es hat was mit Erziehung zu tun, weil mein Vater mich immer so erzogen hat, dass ich alles erreichen kann was ich will, und meine Brüder und mich und meine Schwester als gleich erzogen hat, und ich glaube einfach, dass die Gesellschaft die anderen Frauen so gemacht hat, weil, ich glaube nicht, dass man so geboren wird.*

FSE 09 T *I am afraid it has something to do with upbringing, because my father always thought me that I could achieve anything I want, and he raised my brothers, me and sisters as equals, so I think that society has made other women in such a way, I do not think that you are born that way.*

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FSE 05 O *Wobei ich da auch nicht weiß, ist es generell so bei Frauen und Mädchen, oder ist es das Mädchen auch in einer Art erzogen worden ist, die vielleicht mehr so dieses, „Ach du bist ein Mädchen, das hast du ja ganz fleißig gemacht“, und bei Jungs vielleicht eher, „Ja da hast du dich gut was getraut, und du bist so ein richtiger Rabauke“ und ich glaube es ist so ein bisschen diese Narrative, die*

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*einen irgendwo unterschwellig beeinflusst wie man dann halt in solchen Gesprächen dann auftritt oder was sich für einen so ange-  
nehm anfühlt.*

FSE 05 T *Although I do not know about that either, is it generally so with women and girls, or has the girl also been brought up in a way that is perhaps more like this, 'Oh, you're a girl, you've done that very thoroughly', and with boys perhaps more like, 'Yes, you really dared to do something, and you're such a little troublemaker' and I think it is so a bit of this narrative, that somehow unconsciously influences how you then talk with people or what feels comfortable.*

Within the discourses creating gender differences, affirmations include that women and men are different, mainly in the way they work and their values and priorities. Mostly those differences were explained because of caring responsibilities (motherhood) or socialization based on gender. Many also mentioned traits and competencies women are missing or should develop and, in some cases, interviewees differentiated themselves from typical women.

The second large discourse category has to do with discourses exhibiting gender discrimination. Many reported experiences of gender discrimination (14), however, some of them did not label them as such. This was also observed during the study by the Women's Lobby (Usher Shrair, 2015), the Spanish study (Cordobés, 2016), and the study by Braches & Elliot (2017), describing that either women felt that 'societal attitudes' (25%) pose a barrier to their success, rather than 'discrimination' (8%) specifically, or do not believe (56%) that being a woman has made it more difficult to start a business compared to a male entrepreneur. Additionally, frequently women stated that they did not experience gender discrimination, but then later in the interview, gave several examples of situations in which they had been treated negatively because they were women. In this way, women do not perceive discriminatory behaviour, expressing an unawareness of it or considering it normal behaviour. This can be a reflection of the post-feminism process (an undoing of feminism) described by McRobbie (2004), where, among many other elements, feminism might be regarded ambivalently by women who must distance themselves from it to maintain their social and sexual recognition, arguing that equality is already achieved, and that women now are empowered and have the choice to create the lives they want.

For the present study, several interviewees narrated personal experiences, mostly in a working environment or even in their experience as social entrepreneurs. They stated that if they had a male partner, he would get asked all the questions and all communication was directed towards him; they narrated experiences where they were harassed by men, asking them to go out, or

making uncomfortable comments and questions. Others explained how they were discriminated at work just because they were women, for example by not getting the position they deserved. It was also underlined that there is discrimination against gender diverse or beyond binary people, so that the inclusion of trans, intersex and non-binary people is ignored and often restrained.

FSE 15 O	<i>Ja ich wurde halt nach Bildern gefragt und so, und hm, Einladungen vom Sponsoringleiter auf irgendwelche Partys, oder eine E-Mail die auch so Samstag nachts um 24 Uhr kam, wo ich mir denke hm, weiß ich jetzt nicht ob ich die Einladung wegwerfen soll, es gab auch schon so einen Termin wo es wurde halt nur mit meinem Geschäftspartner gesprochen, und mit mir nicht, da habe ich damals was gesagt, ein bisschen lauter.</i>
FSE 15 T	<i>Yes I was asked for pictures and so, and hm, invitations from partners to parties, or an e-mail that came Saturday night around midnight, where I think hm, I do not know if I should throw away the invitation, there was also an appointment where all conversation was directed to my business partner, and not to me, then I did say something, a little louder.</i>
FSE 07 O	<i>Bei Events und Veranstaltungen reden am Anfang eher alle mit ihm, und nicht mit mir, er wird eher als kompetenter gesehen. Aber wenn ich anfangen zu reden, dann verstehen sie auch, dass ich auch was weiß, ich kann ja sehr gut präsentieren und reden.</i>
FSE 07 T	<i>During events, everyone talks to him at the beginning, not to me, he is seen as a more competent person. But when I start talking, they understand that I also know something, I can present and talk very well.</i>
FSE 06 O	<i>Mein Mann damals, der Papa von meiner Tochter, der hat hm, der hat diesen Karriereschritt, den fand er ganz blöd, und mit einem kleinen Kind, noch stillend, und hat es so gar nicht mitgetragen.</i>
FSE 06 T	<i>My husband back then, my daughter's father, he had hm, he took this career step, he thought it was quite stupid, and with a little child, still breastfeeding, and he did not support it at all.</i>
FSE 05 O	<i>Ich wurde 100% diskriminiert, ob es Gehalt war, ob es Aufstieg ist, ob alles Mögliche ist. In der Uni vielleicht jetzt nicht, aber im richtigen Arbeitsalltag, 100%.</i>
FSE 05 T	<i>I was 100% discriminated against whether it was my salary, whether it was a promotion, whether it was anything. Maybe not in the university, but in the real working day, 100%.</i>
FSE 15 O	<i>Immer nur eine nervige Rolle. Weil ich zum Beispiel immer nur zu Podiumsdiskussionen eingeladen werde, weil sie eine Frau brauchen. Und dass ist schon nervig, ich würde da schon gerne wegen meiner Firma eingeladen werden, und nicht, weil ich eine Frau bin.</i>



FSE 15 T *Always an annoying part. Because, for example, I am only invited to panel discussions because they need a woman. And that is annoying, I would like to be invited there because of my company, not because I am a woman.*

Some respondents even had clear information or even statistics and numbers evidencing gender discrimination, showing a keen knowledge and reflection about the issue.

FSE 16 O *Aber man kann es relativ klar daran festmachen, dass Frauen im Prinzip nur 2% des Venture Capitals bekommen, ganz einfach, was das Venture Capital anbelangt, noch nicht wach geworden ist, dass es Frauen gibt die was machen.*

FSE 16 T *But one can make it relatively clear by the fact that women in principle only get 2% of the venture capital, quite simply as far as venture capital is concerned, they have not yet realized, that there are women who are doing something.*

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FSE 05 O *Also makroökonomisch kann man dann sagen, „There is a pay gap between males and females“, hm, mehr Männer in Führungspositionen, das sind ja einfach gewisse Statistiken und Fakten, die da sind, und wo wir ziemlich klar sagen, wir sind halt für mehr equality, dass das pay gap verschwindet und so weiter, das ist so zusa-gen ein no-brainer.*

FSE 05 T *So macroeconomically you can say that there is a pay gap between males and females, hm, more men in leading positions, those are just certain statistics and facts that are there, and where we say quite clearly, we are for more equality, that the pay gap disappears and so on, that is like a no-brainer.*

However, the third discourse category, discourses minimizing gender influence, focuses on the belief that gender does not play a role or did not play a role in their personal path and within the social entrepreneurship ecosystem (9). It seemed difficult for these respondents to acknowledge the role of gender in their lives, affirming that it has not been a barrier, a burden, or a problem. Further, they rejected the influence of gender in their decisions or life circumstances. It is important to underline that the question made during the interview was open and aimed at knowing if gender had played any role in their paths as social entrepreneurs, however, many respondents answered as if the question would have been regarding any problems they confronted because of their gender, probably being used to having to answer this question. This discourse category could also be related to the previous difficulty to name gender discrimination (Braches & Elliott, 2017; Cordobés, 2016; Usher Shrair, 2015), and to the post-feminism process (McRobbie, 2004) previously described.

FSE 08 O *Welche Rolle spielte Geschlecht in meiner Reise? Hm, also, gar nicht.*

FSE 08 T *Which role played gender in my path? Hm, so, none.*

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FSE 15 O *Ich bin auch kein großer Fan von Frauennetzwerken, weil wir wollen ja keine Männer Netzwerke, hm, und machen eigentlich dann genau das gleiche was wir an Männern scheiße finden (lacht). Also das man immer beide Geschlechter im Fokus hat, und nicht das ein Geschlecht irgendwie ausschließt, deshalb gender pay-gap, kann man auch anders sehen, gender happiness-gap, und kann man den Männern sagen wie geil es eigentlich ist einfach mal 6 Monate Elternzeit zu nehmen, und wie glücklich man sein kann, wenn man sich um die Erziehung des eigenen Kindes kümmert. Kann man halt immer von zwei Perspektiven sehen, und ich glaube die Perspektive ist auch so stark, Frauen sollen so sein wie Männer, und das ist glaube ich nicht unbedingt so notwendig. Keiner kümmert sich um den gender happiness-gap, und wie viele Männer eigentlich, hm, 15 Stunden am Tag arbeiten, um irgendwie Karriere zu machen, um viel Geld zu verdienen. Also manche tun mir da schon leid, und den Frauen sagen, die müssen jetzt mehr verdienen, vielleicht kann man den Männern auch sagen, es gibt eine Möglichkeit weniger zu verdienen (lacht).*

FSE 15 T *I am also not a big fan of women's networks, because we do not want men's networks, hm, and then do exactly the same thing that we find in men shitty (laughs). That you always have both sexes in focus, and not that one sex is somehow excluded, so gender pay-gap, you can also see it differently, gender happiness-gap, and you can tell men how awesome it actually is to just take 6 months parental leave, and how happy you can be if you care for your own child. You can always see it from two perspectives, and I think the perspective is also strong, women should be like men, and I do not think that this is necessary. Nobody cares about the gender happiness-gap, and how many men work, hm, 15 hours a day, to make a career, in order to earn a lot of money. I feel sorry for some of them, and telling women, they must earn more, maybe you can also tell the men, there is a possibility to earn less (laughs).*

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FSE 06 O *Hm, ja, da hatte ich mir, vorher hatte ich mir auch gedacht, hu, das ist eine schwierige Frage für mich. Hm, weil, ich halte auch davon überhaupt gar nichts. Also so, hm, ich habe, ich habe noch nie, auch nicht ein einziges Mal erlebt, dass mein Geschlecht mich in irgendeiner Form benachteiligt. Im Gegenteil. In der Kunst arbeitet man extrem viel damit, dass man die Probleme, die es gibt, im inneren Bewusstsein hat, und, in dem Bild des hm, Erzengels*

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*Michaels, zum Beispiel, hält man den Fuß auf den Drachen, und richtet den Blick nach vorne. So. Der Künstler guckt nicht die Probleme an, der hat die im Bewusstsein und geht weiter. Diese Haltung, das ist eine Lebenshaltung, das heißt dass ich die Probleme nicht habe oder vergesse, darum geht es nicht, ich habe die im Bewusstsein, aber ich gucke die nicht an, ich habe keine Lust über Probleme zu sprechen. In der Kunst sind alle gleich. Wir betreten alle einen Raum, und wir sind alle in dem Raum nicht-wissend, ich weiß, dass ich nichts weiß. Und wir müssen diesen Raum gemeinsam gestalten. Kann man auf alles übertragen, auf Männern und Frauen, Schwule, Lesben, Hetero, Schwarze, Weiße, violette, karierte Menschen, das kann man auf alles anwenden. Also, für mich ist es kein Thema.*

FSE 06 T *Hm, yes, I had thought to myself before, hu, that is a difficult question for me. Hm, because I do not think of it at all. So, hm, I have never, not even once, experienced that I have been discriminated against because of my gender. On the contrary. In art you work much with the fact that you have the problems that exist in your inner consciousness and, in the image of Archangel Michael, for example, you hold your foot on the dragon and look forward. The artist does not look at the problems, he has them in his consciousness and goes on. This attitude is a way of life, which does not mean that I do not have problems or forget them, that is not the point, I have them in my consciousness, but I do not look at them, I do not feel like talking about problems. In art we are all the same. We are all entering a room and we are all not-knowing in the room, I know that I do not know anything. And we must create this space together. You can apply it to anything, to men and women, gays, lesbians, heterosexuals, blacks, whites, violets, chequered people, you can apply it to anything. Well, it is not an issue for me.*

For most of these narratives, the belief was based on the argument that they had themselves either never experienced gender discrimination, or that any experienced difficulties or discrimination, was not because of gender (6); that there are other dimensions that played a role, in some cases downplaying their experiences of gender discrimination. Many of the respondents mentioned that they are used to dealing with men, or being in a male environment, and that they have never had problems or difficulties because of being a woman.

FSE 05 O *Also bei mir muss ich sagen, ich habe viele Freundinnen, auch gerade so im Forschungsbereich, die sagen, ja, die wurden irgendwie, hm als Frau gemobbed, oder die werden nicht ernst genommen. Da muss ich persönlich sagen, dass ich da eigentlich die*

*Erfahrung nicht so gemacht habe, nur so als meine persönliche, ich hatte auch das Gefühl bei der Uni war ich nicht diskriminiert, bei den Jobs, die ich gemacht habe, mag auch sein weil ich in der Mode Branche, Nutzerforschung und so, ist es vielleicht auch so wo man als Frau, wo es vielleicht leichter ist, ich weiß es nicht.*

FSE 05 T *So, with me I have to say, I have many girlfriends, in the field of research, who say, yes, they were somehow bullied, hm as women, or they are not taken seriously. Personally, I have to say that I did not really experience it that way, I do not know, I also had the feeling I was not discriminated against at the university, in the jobs I had, may be because I was in the fashion industry, user research and so on, it is maybe that there as a woman, where it might be easier, I do not know.*

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FSE 15 O *Ansonsten, ich meine klar gibt es da Situationen, oder da wo Menschen überrascht sind, aber da würde ich fast sagen wegen meinem Alter, weil ich damals Anfang Mitte 20, eher als mein Geschlecht. Klar ich habe Sexismus erlebt, aber jetzt nicht in so großen ausmaßen, wie ich von anderen gehört habe. Aber, hm, natürlich bin ich auch häufig die einzige Frau in Männerrunden, also in so irgendwelche Konferenzen. Aber es hat mich auch nie gestört. Und ich komme auch mit Männern gut klar, ich habe viele männliche Freunde. Aber ich habe es auch so erfahren, da sind auch im XX nicht so viele Frauen unterwegs. Aber es waren wirklich vereinzelt, also im Großen und Ganzen, war es bei meinem Geschäftspartner, auch meine Mitarbeiter, es war eigentlich nie ein Thema, das ich eine Frau bin.*

FSE 15 T *Otherwise, I mean clearly there are situations, or where people are surprised, but there I would almost say because of my age, because at that time I was in my early 20s, rather than my gender. Sure, I have experienced sexism, but not as bad as I have heard from others. But hm, of course I am also often the only woman in meetings, in conferences. But it never bothered me either. I get along with men, I have a lot of male friends. But I have also experienced it that way, there are not so many women in XX. But they were really isolated, so overall, it was with my business partner, my employees, it was actually never a topic that I am a woman.*

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FSE 12 O *Ich habe eigentlich immer mit sehr starken Frauen zusammengearbeitet, habe mich aber nie so gefühlt, dass Männer mir irgendwie im Weg gestanden hätten, oder tatsächlich meine Arbeit behindert hätten, oder vorzüglich bevorzugt wären, also es hat für mich nie persönlich eine Rolle gespielt, aber ich freue mich trotzdem sehr mit Frauen zu gründen*

FSE 12 T *I have always worked with very strong women, but I have never felt that men have stood in my way, or actually hindered my work, or were preferred, so it has never played a role for me personally, but I am very happy to start-up with women.*

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FSE 02 O *No sé si jugó, o sea yo no me vi como con desventaja, nunca me vi, por ser mujer, ni por ser inmigrante, nunca me sentí discriminada. Como si me sentí en España, aquí no me sentí, hm, y no, o sea, no sé qué decirte, o sea. Es que para mí no fue una barrera.*

FSE 02 T *I do not know if it played, I did not see me at a disadvantage, I never saw myself, because I was a woman, or because I was an immigrant, I never felt discriminated against, as I felt in Spain, here I did not feel, I do not know what to tell you. For me it was not a barrier.*

For some interviewees (6), we should be careful when generalizing regarding gender, as they are aware when talking about ‘women and men’ it is problematic to generalize characteristics on one group or the other and to make inferences about their behaviours only based on their gender.

FSE 11 O *Hm, ich glaube nicht, dass man das so generalisieren kann (lacht). Hm, weil das Eigenschaften sind, die ich auch bei dem anderen Geschlecht sehe. Ich glaube das ist eher wichtiger ist Mut und Kreativität für eine Gründung.*

FSE 11 T *Hm, I do not think you can generalize it that way (laughs). Hm, because those are the qualities which I also see in the opposite sex. I think more important is courage and creativity for a start-up.*

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FSE 15 O *Hm, aber wie gesagt es ist ein total dünnes Eis, weil man so schnell in so Stereotypisieren reinfällt, und ich das auch eigentlich nicht machen will.*

FSE 15 T *Hm, but as I said it is a totally thin ice because you fall so quickly into stereotyping, and I do not really want to do that either.*

Some respondents (6) when asked about the role of gender were hesitant and doubtful of the answer. For them, the question was difficult to answer and the topic too complex.

FSE 16 O *Ja das ist eine spannende Frage. Kann man von außen besser beantworten als von innen. Das ist relativ schwierig zu, zu, zu, beantworten, ja? Hm, also, das, das, ist so schwierig zu, genau zu benennen.*

FSE 16 T *Yes, that is an exciting question. It can be answered better from the outside than from the inside. That is relatively difficult to, to, to, answer yes? Hm, so, that, that, is so difficult to name exactly.*

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FSE 11 O	<i>Keine Ahnung. Wo könnte es halt eine Rolle spielen? Hm, ich muss nachdenken, also (Pause).</i>
FSE 11 T	<i>I do not have a clue. Where could it play a role? Hm, I must think about it (pause).</i>
FSE 02 O	<i>¿En mi camino, el ser mujer? La verdad que no sé qué decirte. ¿Te refieres a que si fue un impedimento para poder emprender? No sé qué contestarte, realmente no sé. O sea, hm. Ahora en todo este camino el ser mujer, la verdad que no sé qué decirte.</i>
FSE 02 T	<i>On my path, to be a woman? The truth is that I do not know what to tell you. Do you mean it was an impediment to be able to establish the company? I do not know what to answer you, I really do not know. I mean, hm. In all this way, to be a woman, the truth, I do not know what to tell you.</i>

Additionally, many respondents tried to reflect about gender while comparing themselves to men or thinking about if it would have been different would they have been men, but they were not sure about the answer.

FSE 16 O	<i>Hat, hm, hätte ich in der Firma, obwohl ich schon weit gekommen bin, noch größere Jobs machen können, wenn ich mehr mit den Decision Makers mich vernetzt hätte, und hm, was weiß ich, abends mehr in die Clubs gegangen wäre, ja wahrscheinlich schon.</i>
FSE 16 T	<i>Did, hm, would I had been able to do even bigger jobs in the company, even though I already come a long way, if I had networked more with the decision makers, and hm, what do I know, would I have gone more to the clubs in the evenings, yes, probably.</i>
FSE 12 O	<i>Ich weiß nicht, ob es in reinen Männer-Teams tatsächlich auch so wäre.</i>
FSE 12 T	<i>I do not know if it would actually be the same in a men-only team.</i>
FSE 03 O	<i>Ich könnte mir vorstellen, wenn ich ein Mann gewesen wäre, hätte ich damals den Ausstieg aus der Wirtschaft nicht gemacht.</i>
FSE 03 T	<i>I could imagine that if I had been a man, I would not have left the economy at that time.</i>

Regarding discourses minimizing gender influence, these were mostly based on the idea that gender did not play any role throughout their paths, so that the respondents did not feel that their gender has been a problem or a burden. It includes also narratives downplaying gender discrimination experiences, those that warn of the problematic of generalizing, those hesitant and doubtful on their answer about the role of gender in their lives and finally, those trying to figure out this role by comparing themselves to men.

Moreover, a fourth discourse category contained those discourses endorsing intersectionality. This concept was mentioned by many of the respondents, in some way or the other, underlining that it is not only gender, but that there are many other dimensions that also play an important role in social stratification, such as age, race, migration, religion, ableism, and others.

FSE 10 O *Wenn ich noch was ergänzen darf, also ich bin total dabei, mit dem Female – Male, und so weiter, aber ich glaube das ist ja auch nur ein Zwischenschritt, Race kann man dann natürlich auch dazu, ich meine wie sind, hm, männliche asiatische Gründer, ist ja auch eine ganz andere Schiene, oder hm, schwarze Gründerinnen, ne, also da gibt es so viel, also ich glaube, ich würde das glaube ich gar nicht so eindeutig trennen, sondern eher welche Skills braucht wer. Also, asiatische Gründer, muss vielleicht mehr Klischees bekämpfen als eine weiße Gründerin in Deutschland, und so weiter.*

FSE 10 T *If I can add something, I am totally there, with the female - male, and so on, but I think this is also only a step in between, Race comes too, I mean how are, hm, male Asian founders, is also a completely different track, or hm, black female founders, so there is so much, so I think I would not separate it so clearly, but rather what skills needs who. So, a male Asian founder, perhaps must fight against more clichés than a white female founder in Germany, and so on.*

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FSE 05 O *Mir war dann irgendwie lieber mit Männern zu arbeiten, gemischtes Team zu haben, und gerade auch so ein Diversity Team, also bei XX sind wir Hälfte-Hälfte, Hälfte Männer, Hälfte Frauen, wir sind auch Hälfte Jungen, Hälfte Alt, alle in unterschiedlichen Bereichen, ob jetzt Uni oder Entwicklungsorganisationen, hm, national und international, also da haben wir eine Variety of People. Hm, ich finde es halt wichtig, dass man alle Leute so dabei hat. Ich glaube das Ziel muss sein, weder im Konflikt der Andersartigkeit, ob es jetzt Age ist, Generational, Gender, hm, Equality, alle diese verschiedenen Facetten, Race, die muss man überbrücken können.*

FSE 05 T *I somehow preferred to work with men, to have a mixed team, and just a diversity team, so at in XX we are half-half, half men, half women, we are also half young, half old, all in different areas, whether university or development organizations, hm, national and international, so there we have a Variety of People. Hm, I just think it is important that you have all the people with you. I believe that the goal must be neither in the conflict of difference, whether it is age, generational, gender, hm, equality, all these different facets, race, which we must be able to bridge.*

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FSE 17 O *Yo no soy mi identidad de género, y yo tampoco soy el lugar de donde vengo. Es un aspecto de mi multidimensionalidad. Pero, se*

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*me ha reducido a una o dos cosas, obviamente lo que es el origen, y el género, también se va intersectar, este, pero que yo tampoco soy eso, no porque estés utilizando la etiqueta transgénero, o la etiqueta migrante latinoamericana, quiera decir que solo sea eso, y que no me gusta escuchar música barroca, o que no me gusta comer comida china, pero que si han habido, si te das cuenta que hay barreras que están ahí, no.*

FSE 17 T *I am not my gender identity, and I am not where I come from either. It is an aspect of my multidimensionality. But, I have been reduced to one or two things, obviously what it is the origin, and the gender, it is also going to intersect, but I am not that either, not because you are using the transgender label, or the Latin American migrant label, does it mean I am just that and that it means that I do not like listening to baroque music, or I do not like eating Chinese food, or anything else, but there have been, you realize there are barriers.*

When discussing the role gender had played in the paths of the interviewed men towards social entrepreneurship, many provided discourses minimizing gender influence. Again, as in the case of the interviewed female social entrepreneurs, when discussing in more detail, three respondents acknowledged that gender does in general play a role, and in this way, also narrated some experiences of gender discrimination against women they had witnessed and provided discourses creating gender differences in general and related to work. Some were at the beginning doubtful and hesitant about their answer. Finally, two respondents also mentioned intersectionality as a better approach than only gender.

MSE 01 O *Hm, ja durchaus, aber nicht nur Geschlecht, sondern es geht eigentlich immer darum, ob man den Normen entspricht und dadurch Vorteile hat, oder ob man der Norm durch irgendwelche Merkmale nicht entspricht und daraus Nachteile ziehen kann. Hm, ich habe ein internationales Team, mit Männern und Frauen gegründet, mit ganz unterschiedlichen Hintergründen. Also Female ist die zweitbeste Ausprägung eigentlich, hm, da ist man ja schon Teil einer großen Minority, wenn ich jetzt irgendwelche andere, ja Merkmale habe, ist es vielleicht viel schlimmer, für mein Gefühl der Schwäche oder der Benachteiligung. Ansonsten definiere ich mich schon als Mann, und als Familienvater jetzt auch, und habe damit ein paar Sachen, die mich definieren, aber das entscheidet nichts über meine Arbeitsqualität, glaube ich. Mein Alter wird immer, ne, ich bin noch zu jung, um durch Seniorität zu überzeugen, das merke ich manchmal, also Ageism ist durchaus noch ein Thema, aber, ja, sonst kann ich dir leider nichts zu sagen.*



MSE 01 T	<i>Hm, yes, it is, but not only gender, it is actually about whether you comply with the norm and thus have advantages, or whether you do not comply with the norm through any characteristics and can draw disadvantages from it. Hm, I have founded an international team, with men and women, with very different backgrounds. Female is the second-best form, actually, hm, you are already part of a big minority, if I have any other, characteristics, it might be much worse for weakness or disadvantage. Otherwise, I define myself as a man, and as a father now, too, and have a few things that define me, but that does not decide anything about the quality of my work, I think. My age is always, I am still too young to convince because of seniority, I notice that sometimes, so ageism is still a topic, but, yes, otherwise I cannot tell you anything more.</i>
MSE 03 O	<i>Weiß ich nicht, ich weiß nicht, ob das Interesse da fehlt, also das ist total schwierig, ich weiß nicht, ob es Desinteresse ist in den Bereich, wahrscheinlich gibt es Leute, die sagen es ist Quatsch, es wird nur zu wenig gefördert bei Frauen. Da würde ich mir ehrlich ungerne auf eine Seite schlagen, da ich es nicht weiß. Also in der Schule war es dann immer so, dass dann die Jungs gesagt haben „Programmieren ist cool“, aber ich weiß auch nicht, weil es so gesellschaftlich vorgegeben ist, also das ist schwierig zu beantworten.</i>
MSE 03 T	<i>I do not know, I do not know if the interest is missing, it is very difficult, I do not know if it is disinterest in the area, probably there are people who say it is nonsense, it is only promoted too little among women. I would honestly hate to take one side, because I do not know, so at school it was always like that, so the boys said, 'Programming is cool', but I also do not know, because it is socially prescribed, so that is difficult to answer.</i>
MSE 04 O	<i>Hm, ich muss kurz darüber nachdenken, ich habe nie darüber nachgedacht, weil meine Welt einfach anders funktioniert, aber ja, ich weiß schon was du meinst. Ich weiß, ich habe auch nie, also währenddessen mit so einer Genderlinse gesehen, aber es ist einfach witzig da zurückzuspielen, und einfach mal durch eine andere Perspektive sich das anders anzugucken.</i>
MSE 04 T	<i>Hm, I must think about it for a moment, I never thought about it, because my world just works in a different way, but yes, I know what you mean. I know I have never seen through a gender lens, but it is funny to play back and just look at it from a different perspective.</i>
MSE 05 O	<i>Also, eigentlich nein. Wir sind egal ob Geschlecht, Herkunft, sind wir vollkommen offen und legen auch viel Wert drauf. Das da man</i>

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MSE 05 T	<p><i>eine absolute Wertfreiheit ist, wird jeder so angenommen wie, ich sage mal, unsere Hilfe auch.</i></p> <p><i>Well, actually, no. We are, whether sex, origin, we are completely open, and this is very important for us. To be there absolute independent of values, everyone is accepted as, I say, our help as well.</i></p>
MSE 02 O	<p><i>Also, ich weiß das mein Geschlecht eine Rolle spielt, auf jeden Fall. In ganz verschiedenen Aspekten, also einmal nach außen ist es sehr, fällt das immer sehr stark auf, weil die Partner mit dem wir zu tun haben, also erstmal sitzen da nur Männer. Da habe ich wirklich unglaublich viel schon allein gelernt, und weiß, dass es eine Rolle spielt, und nach innen ist es natürlich ein Universum an Dingen, weil hm, also, sobald man eine Gruppe ist, die darüber nachdenkt, und das reflektiert, ist das sehr schwierig. Erstmals sind wir mehr Männer als Frauen hier. Aber dann die Frage warum und wie können wir das ändern, und das ist etwas mit was wir alles gleichzeitig sonst machen, das ist manchmal schwierig dem dann denselben Stellenwert zu geben, wie wichtig das eigentlich ist. Wie man auch in dem Plenum damit umgeht, etwas was uns öfters nicht gut gelingt.</i></p>
MSE 02 T	<p><i>So, I know my gender plays a role, definitely. In quite different aspects, so once to the outside, it is always noticeable, because the partners we have to do with, so first only men sit at meetings. I have really learned an incredible amount on my own, and I know that it plays a role, and to the inside it is of course a universe of things, because hm, so as soon as you are a group that thinks about it, and that reflects it, it is very difficult. First, we are more men than women here. But then the question of why and how we can change that, and that is something we do with everything else at the same time, that is sometimes difficult to give it the same value to how important it actually is. How we deal with it in the plenary, something that we often fail in doing well.</i></p>

Finally, the fifth category involves practices of re-doing gender. In general, the discussion around ‘doing gender’ in entrepreneurship has involved Butler’s understanding of doing, which focuses on the question of how alternative performances might allow transforming the dominant gender order and therefore changing the binary understanding of masculinity and femininity (Butler, 1990; Nentwich & Kelan, 2014). In this way, to ‘do’ one’s gender in certain ways sometimes implies ‘undoing’ dominant notions of personhood (Butler, 2004). Women business owners have a selection of socially available culturally embedded gendering practices through which they can do and redo gender using social interaction to challenge gender differences. Thus, gender is in constant fluctuation and reproduced consciously or unconsciously, depending on

context and agency. As a consequence, identities are both the product of self-determination (agency) and determination imposed by others (structure); and individuals act strategically through specific practices aiming to achieve particular outcomes (García & Welter, 2013). This doing and redoing gender can be seen in the performance of multiple, and often hybrid male/female identities by women entrepreneur's in a shifting positioning and identification as entrepreneurs. Moreover, it underlines how women are agentic repositioning themselves, opening up spaces actively that disrupt gendered norms and managing resistance in tempered and strategic ways (Stead, 2017). Examples of these practices of re-doing gender have been described through processes like 'footing', which enables people to adjust their stance within a particular frame and provides an occasion for them to disrupt its referents. Also 'gender commodification', a process which is acted reflexively on organizational practices, initiated where the symbolic spaces of male and female are produced to be allocated in the most efficient manner possible, 'meaning the exploitation of the symbolic space of gender as terrain on which to (re)construct market relations' (Bruni et al., 2004, p. 424).

García & Welter (2013) explain that some women who engage in 're-doing gender' practices, built their identity on challenging the perceived difference between being a woman and an entrepreneur. These women attempt to overcome gendered assumptions that the masculine business context marks different from the entrepreneurship norm. In this way, one practice in this category draws attention to the attributes that women bring to the business realm ('women's weapons'), perceiving their outsider status as a chance to innovate and reject common practices and assumptions. For example, using intuition and a more comprehensive view on decision-making, developing their customer orientation by being very attentive to them, using their empathy, etc. A further related gender practice informing redoing gender is identifying that which is within the business realm to empower women as a group. The authors noted for example the use of telecommunications, the use of horizontal management, active involvement in business networks and the ability to learn from the useful practices of other business owners. Another practice was the search for fellowship with higher or similar status women. For example, by being members of a network club for women in leadership positions or finding a mentor within a women's association or in the university. The authors conclude that by focusing upon women's experiences, they are giving them a voice rather than assuming that they will conform to the status quo, which prioritizes a male standard. They observe that women do not challenge the gender order ('doing masculinity'), but either 'do' gender, or challenge the gender difference by 'redoing' gender. That is, they try to add value to their femininity within the business context where traditionally womanhood has been seen as 'the other' gender that has to be fixed and adapted to a male norm.

In the same sense, the results of this study point out to discourses of ‘re-doing’ gender, especially in social entrepreneurship, mainly highlighting, as named by García & Welter (2013), ‘attributes that women bring to the business realm’. Most of the respondents (7) underlined that women have different values and priorities and work differently. For them, women usually start businesses to solve problems, not to earn money or status. This discourse could be analysed as a discourse creating gender differences, however, by feminizing values and priorities, they are drawing attention to those attributes that women bring to the social entrepreneurship sector.

This corresponds also to the results of the study by Ashoka (Taberna et al., 2019) about their Fellows, which discovered four distinctive practices that female social entrepreneurs apply. Besides practicing inclusive and collective leadership, they create new roles for girls and women to accelerate social impact, generating pathways for them to see themselves in new leadership roles that did not exist before, collaborating to empower others to create change. While this strategy is not exclusive to female social entrepreneurs, the new roles they create tend to leverage gender-specific identities. Moreover, they assert women’s life experiences, such as motherhood, as an asset for leadership and entrepreneurship, showing how their unique life experiences (daily, gender-based struggles and caregiving) catalyse and fuel their success in innovation and effective leadership. In general, caregiving roles remain undervalued. Female social entrepreneurs are demonstrating through research, platforms, and storytelling, how caregiving experiences strengthen soft skills that are instrumental for leadership and entrepreneurship. Lastly, Ashoka female Fellows include men in solutions to problems typically viewed as only affecting women (e.g., reproductive health), entrusting men as allies in a context-specific way and encouraging them to respect and support the change led by women.

FSE 16 O *Weil wir gesehen haben, dass Frauen eben anders gründen, Frauen gründen eher, um Probleme eher der Familie oder der Gemeinschaft zu lösen, es ist eine Verallgemeinerung, mit ganz tollen Ausnahmen von Männern, die es auch machen, ist ein bisschen blöd es nur am Geschlecht festzumachen. Hm, also, hm, also ich glaube es gibt vieles von den Sachen auch schon, dass du Frauen mehr darüber begeisterst über den Sinn in irgendwas.*

FSE 16 T *Because we have seen that women found differently, women found to solve problems of the family or the community, it is a generalization, with quite great exceptions of men, who also do it, it is a bit stupid to tie it only to gender. Hm, well, hm, ... I think there are a lot of things that show that women are more motivated if they see the sense in something.*

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FSE 13 O *Bei Frauen ist es überwiegend so wie bei mir, wir sind aus Versetzen Unternehmerinnen geworden, sind aber sehr, sehr*

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*pragmatisch, wir wollen vor allem, dass das Ding auf die Straße kommt und dass die Menschheit auch was davon hat. Status ist uns nicht so wichtig, man muss uns eher dazu ermuntern uns höhere Gehälter zu zahlen, weil wir ein schlechtes Gewissen haben, weil unseren Mitarbeitern schlechter bezahlt werden. Bei Männern habe ich das nicht einmal miterlebt, das ist auch, dass sie sagen, „Also ich brauche erstmal meinen Computer, und eine Businesskarte, und das Büro muss die richtige Größe haben, und ach ja, die Arbeit, die machen ja meine Mädels“. Also sehr gemein gesagt. Die Motivation für die Männer ist weniger der soziale Auftrag, sondern die reizt die Führungsrolle, grüner zu sein, auf diese Events zu können, sich darstellen zu können. Aber ich glaube es gibt definitiv eine Tendenz, dass der Status, die Rolle der Geschäftsführung, des Gründers, dass die für Frauen weniger wichtig ist als für Männer. Also wir wissen einfach extrem viel über unsere Zielgruppen, weil das soziale ebenso eine große Rolle spielt, wir wollen eben helfen, die wollen wachsen, dieses Unternehmen führen, und die wissen dann über anderes mehr.*

FSE 13 T *In the case of women, they are mostly like me, we accidentally became entrepreneurs, but we are very, very pragmatic, we want above all that the thing comes on the street and that humankind gets something out of it. Status is not so important to us, we must be rather encouraged to pay us higher salaries, because we feel guilty, because our employees are paid less. With men, I have not experienced that once, either they say, ‘So, I need my computer and a business card, and the office has to be the right size, and oh yes, the work, my girls will do it’. To be very mean. The motivation for the men is not so much the social purpose, but the leadership role, or to be greener, to be able to be at these events. But I think there is definitely a tendency that the status, the role of the management, the founder, that is less important for women than for men. So, we know extremely much about our target groups, because the social also plays a big role, we just want to help, they want to grow, they want to lead a company, and they know more about other things.*

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FSE 11 O *Hm, also, es geht nicht ganz um die Führungsposition, sondern eher, um die Art das Geschäft zu organisieren, und hm, an die, die ich denke, die spielen mit offenen Karten. Also das ist nicht so, verhandeln und hm, „Ich sage nicht wie viel der Kollege verdient“, und hm, „Ich erzähle es nicht den anderen im Betrieb, weil, das ist mein Konkurrent“. Sondern, die spielen einfach mit offenen Karten und die gehen halt über Kooperation und ich habe aber auch, muss ich dazu sagen, ich glaub einfach es ist ein Generationswechsel.*

FSE 11 T *Hm, well, it is not all about the leadership position, it is more about the way the business is organized, and hm, the ones I am thinking of are playing with open cards. So that is not so, negotiate and hm, 'I do not say how much the colleague earns', and hm, 'I do not tell the other company, because that is my competitor'. Rather, they simply play with open cards and they are just about cooperation and I also have, I have to say, I just think it is a generation change.*

In this way, women have in general, again, a different relation with money and success. This is perceived as a benefit or strength for women in the business realm as well as for women in social entrepreneurship and in general, in the working environment. Being able to set-up, develop and grow an enterprise not entirely dependent on the goal to make profit, as well as not defining the own identity, worth and success in terms of money/profit, women feel more freedom for doing what fulfils them, and dedicating the time and energy they consider appropriate, without jeopardizing their health, well-being, and other dimensions of their lives.

FSE 10 O *Ich glaube das ist auch ein Unterschied zu vielen männlichen Gründern, die ich sehr schätze und kenne, aber, viele haben dann dieses „Muss unbedingt“, und „Ich will“, und strecken dann Geld und alles. Und wir von vornherein, wir wollen keine Existenzangst deswegen haben, also ein Risiko ja, aber wir wollen erstmals testen, ob es funktioniert. Es war ein langer Prozess. Oder da halt auch meine Bezahlung ich würde bei weitem keinen anderen Menschen finden, der meinen Job für das Geld machen würde, und lerne dann auch gerade hm, also ich bin gerade in Verhandlungen, ob ich mehr bekommen kann, also ich glaube es gibt Sachen, die man lernen muss oder so, aber hm, der Antrieb ist halt, ich weiß auch nicht, es ist halt nicht Geld zu bekommen, was uns antreibt.*

FSE 10 T *I think that is also a difference to many male founders, whom I appreciate and know very well, but many have this 'I absolutely must', and 'I want', and then stretch money and everything. And we do not want to have existential fears because of it right from the start, so there is a risk, but we want to test whether it works at first. It was a long process. Or also my payment I would by far not find any other person who would do my job for that money, and then I am learning, hm, so I am currently in negotiations whether I can get a bit more, so I think there are things you must learn or something, but hm, the drive is just, I do not know, it is, it is just not money what drives us.*

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FSE 03 O *Also ich kenne hm, auch verschiedene Organisationen die natürlich auch von einem Mann gegründet wurden. Ich glaube aber schon,*

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- dass die Tendenz zu Frauen hingeht. Wir sind glaube ich feinfühli-  
ger, wenn ich mich mit meinem Mann vergleiche, dann sind gewisse  
Dinge dann auch komplett anders. Und stellt Dinge in Frage, ich  
denke schon, dass das hm, so ein „Frauen-Ding“ ist.
- FSE 03 T *So, I know hm, also different organizations which were founded  
also by a man. But I think that the tendency is towards women. We  
are more sensitive, I think, when I compare myself with my hus-  
band, then certain things are completely different. Questioning  
things, I think it is a 'woman's thing'.*

For other respondents, the social entrepreneurship sector, and the world in general need the promotion and the application of competencies and values that are related to 'femininity', such as focussing on efficient communication, developing trusting relationships, mindful and cooperative decision-making, co-operation, transparency, etc.

- FSE 10 O *Und ehrlich gesagt, wenn ich generell den Markt anschau, ich  
glaube was früher als männlich galt, hm, diese Durchsetzung und  
hm, also sind wir wieder bei dem Führungsstil, ich glaube das  
Frauen sowieso viel besser aufgestellt sind heute, weil dieses, ‚lo-  
nely wolf‘, ich bestimme, Adrenalin-gesteuerter Typ, und will eh  
niemand mehr haben, ne. So was ein bisschen ausufern, aber du  
weißt was ich meine. Ich glaube, dass ehrlich gesagt, generell  
Frauen gleich besser einen Vorsprung haben, weil der Job hat viel  
mit Kommunikation und vertrauen zu tun, und dass halt vermeint-  
lich weibliche Skills betrifft.*
- FSE 10 T *And to be honest, if I look at the market in general, I think what  
used to be considered male, hm, this enforcement and hm, so we  
are back to the leadership style, I think that women are much better  
positioned today anyway, because this, lonely wolf, I determine,  
adrenaline-controlled type, and I do not need anyone. This is a little  
out of hand, but you know what I mean. I honestly believe that in  
general women have an advantage, because the job has a lot to do  
with communication and trust, and that has to do with supposedly  
female skills.*

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- FSE 13 O *Und vielleicht spielt ja Geld tatsächlich nicht die große Rolle, also  
es könnte ja sein, dass es auch richtig ist das ich nicht €100,000  
verdienen muss, sondern 70 völlig ausreichend sind, wenn ich Che-  
fin bin von einem sozialen Unternehmen. Und dass es ok ist, auch  
wenn vielleicht ein Mann sich €100,000 ausbezahlen lässt. Aber ich  
brauche es nicht, ich brauche die Wirkung. Also es könnte sein,  
dass man es auf die Werteebene setzen muss, sagen muss, ja dann  
lass die nach dem Geld gieren, später fragt man, was hat man selbst*

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davon. Ich will aber auch nicht, dass es so rüberkommt zu sagen, na ja wir sind kleine ‚Naivchen‘, lassen uns ausnehmen und die Kerle stecken sich das Geld in die Tasche, aber schon was wir auch in der Hinsicht, was wir umwerten können. Es ist unsere Chance, den großen da draußen, also eher an die Wirtschaft, wo eben viele soziale Probleme von Leuten, die sich dann auch umbringen, die krank werden, die mit Anfang 50 entlassen werden müssen, weil sie die Leistung nicht mehr bringen können, und so weiter. Und wir sagen, ne, es geht auch bescheidener. Man kann auch mit weniger Geld ein richtig gutes Leben haben, und trotzdem reicht es bei der Gestaltungsmöglichkeit, alles Attribute, die sonst mit Führung zu tun haben. Und Führung wird immer mit Geld gekoppelt, also warum eigentlich, das ist keine Gleichung die hm, naturgegeben ist. Die ist gewählt, und man müsste so nicht wählen. Und wir hätten da schon eine Chance die auch am Laufen zu halten, zu sagen wir wollen fair bezahlt werden, wir wollen gut bezahlt werden, weil wir haben hohe Verantwortung, aber in der Tat, sind wir mit unseren Mind-set, gesamt-gesellschaftlich unterwegs, und dann können wir nicht sagen, nur weil wir eine Führungskraft sind, die in der Wirtschaft €120,000 im Jahr kriegen würde, müssen wir Minimum €100,000 kriegen. Da würde ich sagen, da stimmt irgendwas in der Wertestruktur nicht. Und ich glaube da sind wir Frauen auch besser drinnen, so ein bisschen weniger zu kriegen, und sich trotzdem gut zu fühlen.

FSE 13 T *And maybe money does not really play the big role, so it could be that it is right that I do not have to earn €100,000, but 70 are completely sufficient if I am the boss of a social enterprise. And that it is ok, that a man is paid €100,000. But I do not need it, I need the impact. So, it could be that you have to set it at the value level, let us say, let them greed for the money, later you ask what you get out of it. But I also do not want it to come across like this to say, well, we are little naive, we let others take advantage of us, and the guys put the money into their pockets, but what we can do in terms of what we can revalue. It is our chance to get the big one out there, that is to say the economy, where there are many social problems, people who then kill themselves, who get sick, who must be dismissed at the age of 50 because they can no longer perform, and so on. And we say, no, it can also be done more modestly. You can also have a really good life with less money, and yet, when it comes to the possibility of shaping things, all attributes that have to do with leadership, and leadership is always coupled with money, so why is this actually a natural equation? It is chosen, and one would not have to choose like that. And we already have a chance to keep*



*them up to date, to say we want to be paid fairly, we want to be paid well, because we have high responsibility, but in fact, we are with our mindset, overall social, and then we cannot say just because we are managers who would get €120,000 a year in the regular economy, we must get minimum €100,000 here. I would say there is something wrong with the value structure. And I think we women are better off getting a little less and still feeling good.*

Finally, in many cases, the respondents recounted the different ways they are challenging gender discrimination or stereotypical gender roles (4). Some would travel and leave their homes to see the world and have more freedom, others would raise their children to be respectful and independent, knowing that they can do anything they want, distributing caring and household responsibilities at home more equally, in other cases, they themselves were raised by their parents to be strong individuals, who could do and be anything they want, or who would challenge any stereotypical gender roles. They are in this way breaking gender stereotypes by not modelling the norm and acting as role models for younger generations.

FSE 14 O *Yo me fui muy chica de casa, y traté de ser muy autosuficiente, no me afectó lo que ellos dijeran, porque ellos, aunque sean alemanes, vienen de un pueblo, para decir la verdad. Entonces dije, no tienen idea de mi background, lo que yo he hecho sola antes de conocer a mi marido, ¿no? Entonces, no me dejé en ese sentido intimidar, y poco a poco he ido mostrando que es lo que soy y que es lo que hago, y como mujer, si tiene uno que romper con esos estigmas. Yo poco a poco y a veces el sí me lo dice así, “Oye, ya le estas dedicando mucho tiempo a tu trabajo”, y yo le digo, “Pues sí, pero tú también te vas a las 8 y regresas a las 8, ¿y qué?”.*

FSE 14 T *In that sense, I left home very young, and tried to be very self-sufficient and it did not affect me what they said, I am not going to be listening to everything, because they, even if they are Germans, come from a small town, to tell you the truth. So, I said, you have no idea of my background, what I did alone before I met my husband, right? So, I did not let myself be intimidated in that sense, and little by little I have been showing what I am and what I do, and as a woman, that is, I tell you, one must break with those stigmas. Little by little, and sometimes he says to me, ‘Hey, you are dedicating a lot of time to your work, to your project’, and I say to him, ‘Yes, but you also leave at 8 and come back at 8, so what?’.*

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FSE 10 O	<i>Also mein ganz persönlicher Hintergrund, ich bin mit einer Mathematikerin und einem Musiker aufgewachsen, und hm, und meine, die Verteilung die ich halt zu Hause mitbekommen habe, also wir waren immer mehr Frauen, und meine Mutter hat die Finanzen geschmissen. Also ich bin mit einer sehr starken Mutter aufgewachsen, und ich habe sozusagen, den Stolperstein, der nicht immer so sein muss, aber was irgendwie heißt, dass Frauen öfter Probleme haben, irgendwie ihre Meinung zu sagen, oder den Raum, hm, sich halt zu äußern, und die Aufmerksamkeit für sich in Anspruch zu nehmen oder so, da habe ich gemerkt, es fällt mir nicht so schwer.</i>
FSE 10 T	<i>So, my very personal background, I grew up with my mother, a mathematician and my father, a musician, and hm, and mine, the distribution I just got at home, so we were more women, and my mother threw the finances. So, I grew up with a very strong mother, and that was somehow hm, so I did not had, so to speak, the stumbling block, which does not always have to be like this, but which somehow means that women often have problems to say their opinion, or the space, hm, to express themselves, and to claim the attention for themselves or something, I noticed, it is not so hard for me.</i>

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MSE 02 O	<i>Ich unterhalte mich auch mit XX ab und zu darüber, hm, ich versuche das zu reflektieren aber trotzdem nicht immer einfällt, also inwieweit XX unterbrochen wird, oder wenn sie was sagt damit anders umgegangen wird und so, und man halt auch versucht irgendwie ja auch die anderen Gesprächspartner da zu erziehen, für die anderen ist es auch eine Herausforderung, weil man hat damit auch nichts zu tun, und das spielt in der Wirtschaftsförderung auch keine Rolle, da ist glaube ich keine Reflektion.</i>
MSE 02 T	<i>I also talk to XX from time to time about it, hm, I try to reflect on it but it still does not always occur to me, to what extent XX is interrupted, or if she says something it is handled differently and so on, and you just try somehow to educate the others, it is also a challenge for the others, because they have nothing to do with it, and that does not play a role in the business world either, I do not think there is any reflection there.</i>

Discourses about redoing gender, especially in social entrepreneurship, include ideas that underline ‘attributes that women bring to the business realm’, stating that women have different values and priorities and work differently, as well as highlighting the different relation women have with money, profit, or success. Also, the idea that social entrepreneurship needs the application of ‘female’ traits and finally, challenging gender discrimination and stereotypical gender roles.

### 5.3.2 *Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem and Gender*

When discussing gender and their personal and professional paths the interview also entailed the discussion about gender and social entrepreneurship in general, as an ecosystem and as a specific sector in the industry. Within each of the discourse categories previously discussed, arguments relating gender and social entrepreneurship can be found. In this way, coupled with discourses creating gender differences, many respondents, as well as the experts (8) mentioned that social entrepreneurship has benefits, mainly because it is a sector where the ratio men-women is relatively equal and where women feel more comfortable compared to other sectors, such as commercial start-ups or the corporate world. Also, as already discussed, for a few, women have a natural, even biological tendency to be more ‘social’.

FSE 10 O *Und ich selbst merke einfach noch, dass ich mich in der Nische einfach sehr wohl fühle und sehr wieder finde, und halt, hm, dass ein Rahmen ist, an dem ich mir diese Sachen aneignen möchte, mit Spaß, während hm, in Berlin, es gibt ja so einen Hype, und es gibt da die Gründerszene in Berlin und es ist halt so viel heiße Luft, und so nervig. Und alle bieten sich mit ihren tolle, wie geil sie sind, das ist dann auch echt dann ein Kontext, in dem ich einfach keine Lust habe, die Leuten kennenzulernen, und ich finde mich da nicht wieder. In Social Entrepreneurship, was ich sehr schön finde, so eine offene Kultur, ne, dass es nicht ein Zeichen von Schwäche ist, zu zeigen was nicht geklappt hat, sondern es ist eher so ein gemeinsames Lernen. Und ich habe halt schon einen Eindruck, wenn man so nach Business Angels und jetzt dieses ‚top of the top‘ Ding, da geht es halt stark um bluffen und irgendwie Gelder an Land ziehen und Kontakte einsacken, und ich habe halt da keinen, das ist irgendwie, brauche ich nicht.*

FSE 10 T *And I just notice that I just feel very comfortable in the niche and I find myself in there, and just, hm, it is a framework in which I want to learn things, it is fun, while hm, in Berlin there is such a hype, and there is the founder scene in Berlin and it is just so much*

*hot air, and so annoying and all of them, offer themselves with how great, awesome they are, that is then also a context in which I just, do not feel like getting to know people, and I do not find myself there. In Social entrepreneurship, what I find very nice is the open culture, it is not a sign of weakness, to show what did not work out, but it is rather a joint learning. And I have the impression, if you go to Business Angels and now this top of the top thing, it is all about bluffing and somehow getting money and making contacts, and I just do not need that.*

FSE 13 O	<i>Also es ist vielleicht für Frauen was zu führen, aber sich nicht so, in so ein DAX Unternehmen wagen, ist es glaube ich ein schönes Feld sich zu verwirklichen und weiterkommen, es ist nicht so hart.</i>
FSE 13 T	<i>It is maybe for women to lead something, but for those who do not dare in a DAX company it is a nice sector to fulfil that and make progress, it is not so hard.</i>
MSE 04 O	<i>Da kann ich mich natürlich auch irren, aber ich habe in dem Feld so das Gefühl das diese klassische Geschlechterscheiße, so dass Frauen weniger verdienen, bla, bla, bla, so es geht da noch gar nicht. Hm, und ich war auch in ganz, ganz vielen pitches und Vorträgen und weiteres, und ich glaube es war da sehr ausgewogen, wenn nicht Richtung Female hin.</i>
MSE 04 O	<i>I can of course be wrong, but I have in the sector the feeling that the classic gender-crap, so that women earn less and bla, bla, bla, that does not exist. Hm, and I was also in many, many pitches and conferences and others and I think it was very balanced, if not towards female.</i>
EXP 03 O	<i>Frauen gründen wahrscheinlicher ein social Enterprise als ein "normales" Unternehmen.</i>
EXP 03 T	<i>Women are more likely to set up a social enterprise than a 'regular' company.</i>
EXP 01 O	<i>Frauen sind typisch die, die einen Sinn brauchen und Sinn sehen sie aufgrund ihrer kommunalen Haltung. Sozialunternehmertum für Männer ist agentisch ausgerichtet, aber agentisch zu sozialen Wertversprechen. Frauen sehen häufig Probleme in dem engeren Umfeld, Männer sehen häufig eine Marktchance.</i>
EXP 01 T	<i>Women are typically the ones who need a sense and see a sense because of their communion attitude. Social entrepreneurship for men is agentic, but agentic for social value. Women see problems in their near contexts whereas men see often a market opportunity.</i>

Related with discourses exhibiting gender discrimination, few interviewees (4) affirm that the sector of social entrepreneurship has still many needs. On the one hand, some affirmed that social entrepreneurship should and must be

related to profit, especially when women are leading these projects. Also, the concept is still unclear, so the relation of social entrepreneurship, profit and the market should be clarified.

FSE 16 O *Und es kann sein das die Leute nicht das Geld haben dafür zu zahlen, ok, dann, muss ich ja aber programmatisch dafür sorgen, wer hat ein Interesse dafür zu zahlen für diese Leute und mache dann eine public private partnership oder irgendwas anderes, aber was eben keine Option ist, dass die Frauen das umsonst machen. Das ist nicht nachhaltig.*

FSE 16 T *And it may be that people do not have the money to pay for it, ok, then, I have to make sure who has an interest to pay for these people and then do a public private partnership or something else, but what is not an option is that women do it for free. That is not sustainable.*

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FSE 09 O *Hm, deswegen war mir das auch wichtig mit Ihnen telefonieren zu können, weil, das ist ein ganz großer Missstand und immer noch auch das, wofür ich mich einsetze, dass die Frauen mutiger sind und tun, ja? Weil ich bin auch ein ganz normaler Mensch, ich koche auch nur mit Wasser, und hm, alle die ich kenne, Frauen die social Business Frauen, der einzige Unterschied ist, dass sie das machen, man muss einfach machen, und der, wenn man eine gute Idee hat, es gibt so viele Leute die dafür Geld geben, für gute Ideen, glauben Sie mir. Hätte ich nie gedacht. Das ist die größte Erkenntnis, die ich hatte als Unternehmerin, dass es genug Geld gibt (lacht).*

FSE 09 T *Hm, that is why it was so important for me to be able to talk to you on the phone, because that is a very big misunderstanding and something I support, that women are braver and just do more, yes? Because I am just a normal person, I cook only with water, and hm, all I know, women in the social business I know, the only difference is that they are doing it, you just have to do it, and if you have a good idea there are so many people who give money for good ideas, believe me. I would never have thought so. This is the biggest realization I had as an entrepreneur that there is enough money (laughs).*

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EXP 01 O *Diese sense-making Idee, das ist wo aufgepasst werden soll, dass Frauen nicht ausgebeutet werden, wenn ihre Idee „Sie sollen gutes mit Unternehmertum tun“, und dann ist dieses, na ja, du bist ja schon bezahlt dadurch das es dir gut geht, das ist genug (lacht), ne, irgendwie die Frau muss auch ein gutes Leben führen können.*

EXP 01 T *This sense-making idea, this is where to pay attention that women should not be exploited, if their idea 'they should do good with entrepreneurship', and then this, well, you are already paid for because you are feeling good, that is enough (laughs), no, somehow the woman must also be able to have a good life.*

For other respondents, the social sector in general, and in social entrepreneurship as well, there is still discrimination against women, so that for example, leading positions are usually still filled by men, and the representation of women in international meetings on social entrepreneurship is still lower than that of men.

FSE 13 O *Trotzdem es macht mich schon nachdenklich, wir haben ja unter den Friedensnobelpreisträgern, hm, 2 social Entrepreneure, und es sind halt beide Männer. Und hm, wenn ich gucke, ich bin in New York, da feiert dieses XX das 20. Jubiläum. Dann habe ich mir die Teilnehmerliste angeguckt, das sind 100 Leute, es sind sicherlich 60% Männer, 40% Frauen, vielleicht auch 65-35. Und wenn man guckt, wer ist international bekannt, sind es fast nur Männer.*

FSE 13 T *Nevertheless, it makes me think, we have among the Nobel Peace Prize winners, hm, 2 social entrepreneurs, and they are both men. And hm when I look, in New York, this XX celebrates its 20th anniversary. Then I looked at the list of participants, 100 people, there are certainly 60% men, 40% women, maybe 65-35. And if you look at who is internationally known, it is almost only men.*

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FSE 12 O *Genau, genau. Das ist tatsächlich in Wohlfahrtsstrukturen schon häufig, dass in Leitungspositionen tatsächlich Männer sitzen.*

FSE 12 T *Exactly, exactly, that is indeed in welfare structures frequent, that leading positions are filled by men.*

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EXP 02 O *Da gibt es halt zwei recht große und recht schon erfolgreiche social Start-ups im XX-Gebiet so, die immer wieder vorgeführt werden, und das sind tatsächlich aber auch nur Männer.*

EXP 02 T *There are two quite big and quite successful social start-ups in the XX area, which are shown again and again, and they are actually only men.*

Within those discourses minimizing gender influence, some few respondents mentioned that social entrepreneurship is independent from gender (3), the traits and competencies needed to succeed are not related to gender, but to other variables, such as the age generation or the start-up scene, or indeed to specific competencies or a special 'mind-set' a person requires or must become a social

entrepreneur. The professor in this sense underlined that researchers must step away from thinking that social entrepreneurship is a woman's thing; she recalls many reproductive activities that are also done by men (e.g., waste collection, elderly care, recycling, carpenters' workshops for young and unemployed). In general, for the expert, this is a question of socialization. It is important to set the boundary, social entrepreneurship is a lot, but not inherently gender-specific, because it has to do with improving something social through the proposition of value. The idea of entrepreneurship is not gender-specific, all what happens around it can be.

FSE 01 O *Also ich glaube das die Kombination von unternehmerischem Denken und Handeln und, dass es dann auch ausgerichtet ist auf „Ich will was Gutes tun“, zieht glaube ich einen gewissen mind-set an, der sowohl in Männern als auch in Frauen vorhanden ist. Und, deswegen war es da auch so schön ausgeglichen, zwischen den reinen weiblichen Stärken, und den rein männlichen Stärken, weil es da eigentlich schon zusammenkam. Und du hast einen gewissen Typ Mann, gewissen Typ Frau, mit einem gewissen mind-set einfach in dem Bereich vorgefunden. Und es waren meistens Leute, die total offen waren, die sofort im Community Gedanken, „Hier lass uns austauschen“, die viel Visionär gedacht haben, sich wenig so an Grenzen aufgehalten haben, ja da war der Unterschied nicht mehr so groß.*

FSE 01 T *I believe that the combination of entrepreneurial thinking and acting and that it is lead towards 'I want to do something good' I believe attracts a certain mind-set that is present in both men and women. And that is why it is so balanced, it is far from the pure female strengths and the pure male strengths, because it is already together. And you find a certain type of man, a certain type of woman, with a certain mind-set just in that sector. And these are mostly people who are open-minded, who immediately thing about the community, let us exchange ideas, who think more visionary, who are not limited by borders, yes, the difference was not that big anymore.*

FSE 11 O *Ich glaube das ist eher wichtiger ist Mut und Kreativität für eine Gründung. Aber ja doch, insgesamt ist es glaube ich schon ein Start-up Thema. Hm, zum Beispiel wenn ich zu den IHK gehe, fühle ich mich da total unwohl, weil, die haben kein Angebot für Start-ups, das sind nur alte weiße Männer, hm, also es passt einfach alles nicht. Anlaufstellen für Unternehmer sind dann manchmal doch eher so (lacht).*

FSE 11 T *I think that is more important is courage and creativity for founding. But yes, I think it is in general a start-up thing. Hm, for*

*example when I go to the IHK, I feel totally uncomfortable there, because they have no offer for start-ups, they are just old white men, hm, so nothing fits. Usually contact points for entrepreneurs are like this (laughs).*

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FSE 05 O	<i>Was viel wichtiger als „Frau zu sein“, ist so ein richtiges mind-set zu haben, also was für eine Person bist du, bist du kooperativ, oder denkst du nur an dich selbst, also, bist du jetzt nur ein Kopf, oder siehst du noch andere Sachen.</i>
FSE 05 T	<i>What is more important than 'being a woman', having a real mind set like that, so what kind of person are you, are you cooperative, or are you just thinking about yourself, so you are just a head, or do you see other things?</i>

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MSE 04 O	<i>Vorher hätte ich das gesagt, das sind weibliche und männliche Attribute, jetzt sehe ich das anders. Also ich kenne Frauen, die sind viel, viel risikofreudiger als ich, und ich kenne Männer, die sind viel, viel jammerlastiger als ich. Ich kann das nicht am Geschlecht ausmachen, überhaupt nicht.</i>
MSE 04 T	<i>Before I would have said those are female and male attributes, now I see it differently. I know women who are much, much more risk-averse than me, and I know men who are much, much whiners than me. I cannot make that about gender, not at all.</i>

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EXP 02 O	<i>Ist so ein bisschen schwierig, ich kann es ja nicht so kategorisch direkt sagen. Man findet für beides Beispiele glaube ich, vom Gefühl her kann ich schon sagen das vielleicht bei Frauen das mehr auf den Sinn, das Produkt oder was Gutes damit zu tun, oder was zu verändern ist, und vielleicht die Männer noch ein bisschen mehr das finanzielle noch im Hintergrund haben.</i>
EXP 02 T	<i>It is a bit difficult; I cannot say it so categorically. You can find examples of both, I think, intuitively maybe in women it is more about the meaning, the product or to do good, or to change something, and maybe the men have a little bit more of the financial in focus.</i>

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Some experts underlined, within the discussion about gender and the ecosystem of social entrepreneurship, discourses of re-doing gender, drawing attention to those traits that women can bring to the business world. Moreover, underlining the potential of feminist theories to transform the current entrepreneurship and economy models towards more egalitarian and sustainable models. In this way, for one expert, it would be important that systempreneurs<sup>12</sup>,

<sup>12</sup> Systempreneurs can be defined as experts who identify the root causes of problems and set about finding long-term and long lasting solutions: through collaboration, narrative, theory and practice, creating liminal spaces, and change through movements and embracing uncertainty (Love & Sinha, 2015; Sophia Parker, Saltmarsche, Robinson & Sinha, 2015)



who are often women, also become visible. The expert states that women frequently take on a connecting role, which is needed as a systempreneur, and this certainly has to do with socialization, so that women think a lot in relationships and in bringing everyone together, not necessarily putting themselves at the foreground, but creating a nice environment for all. Social entrepreneurship, as a new type of business, needs new leadership styles, less egocentric, more focussed on relationships and on the own identity.

The professor on the other hand, underlined that the success category, and what makes an entrepreneur successful is strongly male coined. This is connected to the idea of a successful future, and what is innovative, especially in the social sector. There is probably a need for a feminist or feminist economic re-orientation for the understanding of good and successful entrepreneurship. If researchers get to change the practice of entrepreneurship in a feminist economic sense, so that automatically social entrepreneurship can be found in all forms of entrepreneurship, then no specific concept of social entrepreneurship would be needed. However, research and practice still need the term female social entrepreneurship, or even social entrepreneurship, because they do not identify with the mainstream or within the general categories of social entrepreneurship or entrepreneurship. For the expert, the question is whether there is a need to transform social entrepreneurship with a feminist economical focus, or rather transform the classic entrepreneurship with a feminist economic focus so that social entrepreneurship as a specific category is no longer required. She underlines that creating a social entrepreneurship 'ghetto' is not right, as it does not transform the whole system. In this way, the concept of innovation, which is the result of entrepreneurship, is relevant for this transformation. Often innovation is confused with invention, but an invention becomes an innovation when it is marketable. In that sense, for her, the next step is to make an invention marketable and socially acceptable, or even societal acceptable, and not engage in green or social washing practices. At the moment innovation is not sustainable, because only the economic aspect is addressed. However, if it is understood that to be able to create growth, it should be economically feasible and not self-destructive, then social, and ecological dimensions become mandatory, and not a possibility.

Table 10: Summary of Discourses on Gender and Social Entrepreneurship of Interviews (Source: own elaboration)

Discourses creating gender differences	Discourses minimizing gender influence	Discourses exhibiting gender discrimination
Social Entrepreneurship has benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are many women in the sector</li> <li>▪ I feel comfortable in social entrepreneurship</li> <li>▪ Women are genetically more social</li> </ul>	Social entrepreneurship is independent from gender. The traits and competencies needed are not related to gender.	Social entrepreneurship has still many needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It should and must be related with profit and value</li> <li>▪ There is still discrimination against women</li> </ul>
<b>Discourses re-doing gender</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Systempreneurs are usually women</li> <li>▪ Social Entrepreneurship as a new type of business needs a new type of leadership, less egocentric, more focussed on relations and identity. Traits that are usually feminine</li> <li>▪ Potential to transform entrepreneurship and the success-concept through a feminist focus towards a more egalitarian and sustainable economy, so that specific sectors like female entrepreneurship or social entrepreneurship will no longer be needed.</li> </ul>		

## 5.4 Future and Context of Social Entrepreneurship

This section of the interview focused on the social entrepreneurship ecosystem and the future of the sector. Discussed were on the one hand the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany, and on the other hand, regarding the future, ideas about how to promote social entrepreneurship as well as the potential of social entrepreneurship as a catalyst for social change.

### 5.4.1 Social Entrepreneurship Context in Germany

Some respondents discussed the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany during the interview. In general, there were some optimistic opinions, stating that as Germany has already a social economy, compared to other countries, it is closer to an economy where social entrepreneurship as a label is not needed. They know many mid-size companies that are leading global markets and doing fair and sustainable work, providing meaningful jobs. The experts mentioned that the creation of the SEND association (German Social Entrepreneurship network) has been a positive development for the sector, as they are lobbying and are politically active, which is causing that social entrepreneurship gets discussed in the federal parliament. It was mentioned that people have realized they cannot rely entirely on the government and non-profit organizations, and they are understanding the positive outcomes of social enterprises

and are willing to cooperate and learn from them. An additional strength of the ecosystem was for another expert that the living costs in Germany are relatively low, which allows establishing a start-up without much capital, which makes the ecosystem more friendly for experimentation, compared to other countries like for example the United Kingdom.

FSE 16 O *Also ich finde social Entrepreneurship wäre dann am erfolgreichsten, wenn man gar nicht mehr über social hm, reden müsste und eigentlich ist Deutschland da auch am nächsten dran. Ja, also da haben wir in Deutschland aufgrund unserer Sozialen Marktwirtschaft, sind wir näher am social Entrepreneurship als ganz viele andere Modelle.*

FSE 16 T *So, I think social entrepreneurship would be most successful if you did not have to talk about social hm anymore, and actually Germany is closest to it. Yes, so, there we have in Germany because of our social market economy, we are closer to social entrepreneurship than many other models.*

However, there were some opinions that were rather critical about the ecosystem. The efficiency of the social sector is criticised, and the fact that impact measurement is not rewarded with support and funding. For this interviewee, Germany ‘has not a financial problem, we have an efficiency problem. If the financing of all big social organizations would work efficiently, we would not have any financial problems’ (FSE 13 T)<sup>13</sup>. This social entrepreneur stated also that traditionally, there is the belief in Germany that business in general is bad, especially in the social sector, which was sort of confirmed with the marketization of the social sector. So, expecting that social entrepreneurship is welcomed and celebrated is not realistic. She believes that to provide credibility to social entrepreneurs it is necessary to develop an efficiency report for the Ministry of Finances, however, she thinks the sector is not ready to do that. Another interviewee also criticises the fact that social entrepreneurship in Germany, or in Berlin at least, is not a movement as it is in many other cities of the world (Lebanon, Delhi, Beirut). She states that there is no common call for social entrepreneurship, projects must compete against each other for funds, grants and subsidies/prizes, and there is no real exchange between them. For the interviewed a real movement has the underlying motivation of citizenship and its role in society. For her, this still does not exist in Germany’s social entrepreneurship ecosystem. Finally, another critique is that in Germany the discussion about social entrepreneurship has been focussed on the definition of a social enterprise, regarding its legal structure and the profit issue, but the

13 FSE 13 O ‘Also wir haben im Kern kein Geldproblem. Aber wir haben ein Effizienzproblem. Wenn alle ihre Finanzen, auch die großen Verbände so effizient einsetzen würden wie wir es tun, hätten wir kein Finanzierungsproblem’

call, or the social goal is not really discussed. The discussion should focus more on what can be done better, how much more can be achieved, and not about if an organization is a social enterprise by a strict definition. One male respondent stated that there is a lot of competition, that it all works through connections, and between the founders and social entrepreneurs there is a lot of envy (for example, he was pushed out of a photo for a newspaper), and this competitive attitude is also the case for funding and funding application. Additionally, he mentioned, the ecosystem is as conservative as many other sectors in Germany. Specially in the social sector, you need a specific legal structure, which regulates the use of profit. For the respondent, this leads for such organizations to use the profits for unnecessary acquisitions. In general, he also complained that there is no funding for social entrepreneurship, although it is getting better. He underlines how stressful it has been to get funding and clients, and how his work was not valued.

Some of these critiques are confirmed by Zimmer & Bräuer (2014). The authors state that in the context of discussions on the transformation of the German welfare state and the potential role social entrepreneurship might have in it, some scholars perceive social entrepreneurs as those carrying hope to solve the problem of welfare provision in times of budget cuts. Others are more critical towards social entrepreneurs, perceiving the churches and the state as the only responsible agents for welfare provision. Moreover, a network centred development approach of social entrepreneurship bears some risks. The strong dominance of a closed network circle of social entrepreneurs and supporters can turn the aim of an inclusive society in the opposite, meaning an exclusive (support) group, which only admits actors fitting criteria which are however determined by a small group of social entrepreneurs and supporters, who had the right networks to influence the debate.

FSE 13 O *Und das ist halt, wir sind extrem hm, geprägt im sozialen Bereich durch das, „Das Geld ist ja da“-Thema, also es kommt ja vom Staat und keiner will auch so ganz genau wissen, wie es dann am Ende ausgegeben wird. Also wir haben im Kern kein Geldproblem. Aber wir haben ein Effizienzproblem: die Wirkungsmessung, sie wird nicht belohnt mit Bewilligung.*

FSE 13 T *And that is, we are extremely shaped in the social sector by the idea that ‘the money is already there’, it comes from the government and no one really wants to know how it is spend at the end. We do not have a money problem. But we have an efficiency problem. Impact measurement is not rewarded with approval of funding.*

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FSE 05 O *Und was ich jetzt festgestellt habe, dass es Städte gibt, die eine super Infrastruktur haben, und ein super Ecosystem, und wo es wirklich auch ein Movement gibt, wo wirklich auch mit der Regierung, wo*

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*dieser größere Sinn von Social Enterprise in der Gesellschaft ist, und Citizenship, und ich finde in Deutschland hast du das nicht. Es gibt kein gutes Ökosystem in Berlin. Die zweite Sache, nehmen wir mal Migration, da gibt es so viele Initiativen in Deutschland, die sich damit beschäftigen, und die nicht mal voneinander wissen, obwohl sie mit demselben Thema arbeiten, wo ist da ein Movement. Du hast die absolute Konkurrenz auch in Deutschland, da ist nicht „Wir sind alle für denselben Call“, sondern „Wer kriegt jetzt welches Projekt“, „Wer reizt mehr als der andere“, da redet auch keiner mit dem anderen. Also, mich regt es auch so ein bisschen auf.*

FSE 05 T *What I have now realized is that there are cities that have a super infrastructure, and a super ecosystem, and where there really is a movement, really also with the government, where there is a greater sense of social enterprise in society, and citizenship, and I think in Germany you do not have that. There is no good ecosystem in Berlin. The second thing take for example migration, there are so many initiatives in Germany that deal with it, and that do not even know about each other, although they work on the same topic, where is there a movement. You have absolute competition in Germany, there is not 'all of us for the same call', but 'who gets which project now', 'who attracts more than the other', there is also no one talking to each other. So, I am a little upset about it.*

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MSE 04 O *Das ist so ein ganz, hm, verhurter, sorry für das Wort, aber es fällt mir kein besseres ein, ein ganz verhurter Inzest Kosmos, ist ganz krass. Ganz konkurrenzlästig, es geht viel halt über Connections, und es gibt so viel Missgunst. Kann man sich so eigentlich nicht vorstellen, weil, ich habe gedacht, im Prinzip haben wir alle dasselbe Ziel, wir wollen leben, und wir wollen diese Welt halt verbessern, und es war mir nicht klar, dass man dann aus einem Foto in der Presse aus dem Foto gedrängt wird, mit Ellbogen, das passiert auch in der Förderlandschaft auch. Und das ist ganz und gar nicht mein Fall.*

MSE 04 T *That is such a whole, hm, forsaken, sorry for the word, but I cannot think of a better one, a forsaken incest cosmos, it is crazy. It is a lot of competition, a lot works over connections, and there is so much resentment. You cannot really imagine, because I thought, in principle, we all have the same goal, we want to live, and we just want to improve this world, and it was not clear to me that you get pushed out of a photo for the press, with elbows, that also happens on the sponsoring/funding landscape. And that is not my case at all.*

For the experts challenging for the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany is on the one hand, compared to other cities, the lack of available funds and money to promote and support the sector. Another expert argued that the welfare system is an important challenge for innovative ideas, as it usually slows them down, which overlaps with another expert who mentioned that there is too much money flowing into the administrative infrastructure of these big welfare associations in Germany. And they are, with a few exceptions, a big innovation obstacle. Also, politics are outdated and conservative, and regarding the financing system, there is a lack of big investors and those that exist, are too risk averse. Another threat is the legal structure and the funding possibilities which make it already very hard for entrepreneurs, and for social entrepreneurs even more. It still has not been figured out how to represent social return on investment. The expert proposes a funding/ grant exemption or a tax exemption. Finally, in Germany, a lot of what happens through civic engagement is not economically visible. What an enterprise achieves through corporate social responsibility (CSR), has a little town already achieved through civic engagement. So, the idea is to revalue civic engagement or see it as a form of entrepreneurship. The reproductive/care-work segment, from which much could be covered through social entrepreneurship, is currently critically exploded (mainly women). Social entrepreneurship could be a way to reduce the discrimination and exploitation of women. It would be a regular field of activity, where also entrepreneurial thinking and doing would be possible, to revalue/appreciate more all these social, care sectors (education, health, etc.).

Regarding the social entrepreneurship context in Germany, some female social entrepreneurs and experts feel optimistic and sustain there are many strengths, like the strong social economy of the country, the creation of the social entrepreneurship network of Germany, and social entrepreneurship being a possibility to decrease the exploitation of the care sector. However, critiques to the context abound. Mostly underlined is the lack of funding and efficient legal structures, as well as the fact that it is still very conservative in terms of policies and innovation. Also, there is an unfair competition for funding and grants.

#### 5.4.2 *Ideas to Promote Social Entrepreneurship*

Part of the discussion around the ecosystem of Social Entrepreneurship in Germany was debating about ideas to promote and support the engagement of more people in the social entrepreneurship sector, as well as generally promoting the sector. For almost all interviewees and some experts (13) the most basic and effective way to promote this is through education. Some (5) argued that

mentoring, coaching and training regarding entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship would be necessary, in schools, in universities, and in general; others (3) mentioned education about gender, multiculturality and inclusion; whereas other ideas included educating in schools that entrepreneurship is also an alternative career as well as educating against prejudices towards social entrepreneurship, training girls to be more self-confident and learn to fail, to speak in public and look for more visibility, to develop the personality in general of youth, and to create spaces where young people can create and develop ideas for a better world.

FSE 13 O *Ich würde wirklich den Gender Ansatz anwenden, und der wäre ja eindeutig zu sagen, „Bei den Jungs muss ich nicht so sehr push machen, versucht mal euer Unternehmen zu gründen“, sondern würde ich halt sagen, na ja, „Braucht euer Produkt eigentlich jemand?“ . Also da würde ich halt eher die inhaltlichen Sachen fragen und diskutieren, also gerade im Zusammenhang mit Schule und Gründungsansätze. Ich würde beiden die Chance geben, und bei Mädchen würde ich sagen, „Ja warum machst du, dass es alles nett aussieht, du lässt Jungs es alles vortragen, warum machst du das nicht?“ . Sozusagen gendern, und sagen, die einen brauchen mehr den einen, die anderen brauchen mehr den anderen Impuls.*

FSE 13 T *I would really apply the gender approach, and that would be to say, I would not push the boys so much, 'Go and set-up a company', rather I would just say, well, 'Does anyone really need your product?', so I would rather ask and discuss the content, and especially in connection with school and entrepreneurship, I would give both the chance, and for girls I would say, 'Why do you make it all look nice, you let the boys present, why do not you do that?'. So, to speak to gender, and say, some need more the one impulse, others need more the other impulse.*

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FSE 10 O *Deswegen würde ich mir glaube ich gar nicht so sehr ein spezifisches, hm, Training für Frauen, wie können Frauen in den Social Bereich reinkommen, sondern ich würde mich eher wünschen, hm, also wie können Frauen, also einfach unternehmerisches Training bekommen, also das man auch Fokus reinsetzt, was braucht man, welche denke, wie macht man so, wie geht man da vor. Entrepreneurship muss in die Unis rein, und das man das, das man es von vornherein mitbekommt.*

FSE 10 T *That is why I do not think I would be so good a specific, hm, training for women, how women can get into the social sector, I would rather wish, hm, how women can get, just entrepreneurial training, you put the focus on, what you need, what way of thinking, how*

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*you do it, how you handle that. Entrepreneurship must get into universities, that you get it from the beginning.*

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MSE 02 O *Also das ist natürlich schon zum großen eine Gesellschaftliche Aufgabe. Frauen und Männerbilder hm, die da sind, herrschen, erzogen werden, hm, Kinder werden damit erzogen, wie man in der Schule damit umgeht, in was man Frauen bestärkt und in was man Männer bestärkt, das ist hm, also, erstmal natürlich so ist es ganz allgemein eine Rede von Empowerment. Hm, in so Gruppendynamiken, wie das bei uns ist, hilft unglaublich wirklich, es muss eine bestimmte Gesprächskultur herrschen, man muss Instrumente dazu setzen, dass jeder immer redet.*

MSE 02 T *So, of course to a great extent this is a societal task, the images of women and male hm, that rule, are educated, hm, children are educated, how one deals with it in school, in what women are strengthened and in what men are strengthened, that is hm, well, first of all of course it is generally a speech of empowerment. Hm, in such group dynamics as it is with us, it really helps a lot, there must be a certain culture of conversation, you must put instruments in place so that everyone is able to speak.*

In many cases (8) the respondents and experts mentioned the current lack of role models, in general about women in leading positions, but specifically of women entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs. One of the experts has started a Female Founders Event and is promoting the presence and participation of more female founders in the events of her and partner organizations. For her, this and avoiding all-male panels in conferences are good ways to promote more engagement of women in social entrepreneurship. This recommendation is also part of the propositions made by the Ashoka report (Taberna et al., 2019), proposing to recognize more female social entrepreneurs and celebrate their stories to serve as role models for young girls and women. In this study, many female social entrepreneurs mentioned the lack of recognition of women as entrepreneurial and innovative leaders. Media, educators, parents, donors, and other influencers could support changing the narrative by celebrating female social entrepreneurs' strength, creativity, empathy, and social impact. However, as the study by Achtenhagen & Welter (2011) confirm, the media representation of female entrepreneurs is still quite problematic in Germany. This will be discussed in more detail in the next section 5.5. The German Social Entrepreneur ecosystem.

FSE 08 O *Was gerade für Frauen total wichtig ist, das sind hm, sind Vorbilder, und zwar weibliche Vorbilder, hm, das ist halt, ein Problem, oder das ist deshalb so schwierig aus den klassischen Rollenbildern rauszukommen. Wir können unseren Kindern alles erzählen, sie*



*können alles. Wir sagen ihnen immer sie können werden was sie wollen, aber wenn sie sehen, sie sehen ja jeden Tag so in der Kita, sind es halt hauptsächlich die Mütter, die die Kinder abholen, und nicht die Väter, und in der Schule, sind die Lehrerinnen weiblich, und der Direktor ist männlich, und das sehen wir ja eigentlich jeden Tag, das ist das was viel nachhaltiger wirkt, als wenn wir hören das wir Astronauten werden können, aber wenn wir uns die Zahlen angucken, dann können wir es ja eigentlich nicht.*

FSE 08 T *What is totally important for women in particular, are hm, are role models, female role models, hm, that is just a problem, or that is why it is so difficult to get out of the stereotypes. In the end we can tell our children they can do everything, we always tell them they can do whatever they want, but when they see, they see every day in the day care centre, it is mainly the mothers who pick up the children, and not the fathers, and in school, the teachers are female, and the director is male, and that is what we see every day, that has a more long lasting effect than when we hear that we can become astronauts, but when we look at the numbers, we actually cannot.*

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FSE 09 O *Aber ich glaube was eine ganz tolle Idee wäre, was ich wirklich mal gerne machen würde, aber da hat mich noch keiner angefragt, Vorträge zu halten an, hm, Gymnasien, an Hochschulen. Das einfach mal social Business Ladies dahin kommen, und einfach mal erzählen, wie sie es gemacht haben. Und damit dann den Eindruck lassen sie sind eine ganz normale Frau und es ist alles nicht so kompliziert. Versprechen Sie mir, dass Sie allen jungen Frauen, die sie treffen, die vielleicht noch nicht angefangen haben, zu denen sagen, dass sie das einfach tun, und dass sie genug Frauen kennengelernt haben die hm, die es auch gemacht haben, und nie bereut haben.*

FSE 09 T *But I think a great idea would be, what I would really like to do, but nobody has asked me to, is to give lectures at, uh, high schools, colleges, that just a social business lady goes there, and just tell them how they did it. And so, then leave the impression they are a normal woman, and it does not look so complicated. Promise me that you will tell all the young women you meet, who perhaps have not started yet, that they simply do it and you have met enough women who hm, who have also done it, and have never regretted it.*

Also important was the discussion of some interviewees (4) about the need to change the social values of success and work, especially through media (3). This was underlined by the professor, who mentioned that stories are very powerful and proposed using good storytelling to convince people of a vision or

mission. Furthermore, questioning concepts, words, and relations that are made when discussing social entrepreneurship are needed. For her it is very important to raise awareness for entrepreneurship. And moreover, to create an interplay between economy and social, or economy, social and ecology, making clear what the social category can provide in that interplay. Likewise, if civic engagement would be revalued, then the market should pay for that ‘service’, but instead it just takes it, which is actually exploitation.

FSE 15 O *Zum Beispiel in Indien gibt es schon ein Schulfach, da geht es um das Thema Glück, und also, da müsste man, aus meiner Sicht schon in der Schule anfangen und diese Werte, das muss irgendwie, sollte über beispielsweise über die Medien übertragen werden, aber da sehe ich Schwierigkeiten, wenn man das von der Schule oder von dem Elternhaus aus, eine gewisse Wertvorstellung hat, ist es halt schwierig.*

FSE 15 T *In India, for example, there is already a school subject, about happiness, and so, from my point of view, one would have to start at school and these values, that must somehow, should be transmitted via media for example, but I see difficulties there, if you already bring certain values from school or from your parents, it is just difficult.*

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EXP 01 O *Weil allein, wenn wir diese Idee von Erfolg verändern, Erfolg wie ich denn immer höre, ist immer höher, schneller, weiter, ab dem Moment wird es ja eine Frage zum sozialen Unternehmertum, weil die Idee von „Wer arbeitet wie in welcher Form?“ sich auch verändert. Ist es wirklich Arbeitszeit, wenn man das überlegt, was ist soziale Arbeitszeit, und was ist marktbedingte Arbeitszeit?*

EXP 01 T *Because only if we change this idea of success, success, as I always hear, is always higher, faster, further, from that moment it becomes a question of social enterprise, because the idea of ‘Who works how in which form?’ also changes. Is it really working time when you consider what is social working time and what is market-related working time?*

For others (3) it was important to change some entry opportunities such as requisites and bureaucracy of applying for funding and other financing opportunities, increasing in general the financing opportunities, and creating more incubators. One expert proposed increasing the government funding and creating and introducing alternative selection processes to ‘pitches’, may be one where it is not always the most confident and best at pitching or sales, the one that gets the most funding. Also searching women directly, rather than relying

on applying processes, as women only apply if they meet all requirements, whereas men apply if they just meet some of the requirements.

FSE 11 O *Und dann halt die entsprechenden Einstiegsmöglichkeiten, so Inkubatoren, super, und also, dass da halt auch, dass die Mädels dann vielleicht auch Anschluss dort finden. Wir müssen Mitglied in der IHK sein, und dafür sehr viel Geld bezahlen, und hm, die Angebote sind halt für den klassischen Unternehmer, der seit 30 Jahren einen Betrieb führt.*

FSE 11 T *And then the appropriate entry possibilities, so incubators, super, and so that there, also that the girls then perhaps also find a connection there. We must be members of the IHK, and pay a lot of money for it, and hm, the offers are just for the classic entrepreneur, who has been running a business for 30 years.*

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FSE 07 O *Und du kriegst auch für vieles Gelder, also gerade was wir da machen, würden wir aus der Stadt, oder selbst der EU-Gelder bekommen, wenn du ein großes Projekt machst die skalierbar sind auf andere Städte. Aber, wenn man so einen Antrag geschrieben hat, weiß man es ist die Hölle. Man braucht den großen Schreiben, und dann brauchst du wieder 15.000 Euro Eigenanteil, und dies und das, und wow, einfachere Strukturen wären einfach schon viel besser.*

FSE 07 T *And you also get money for a lot of things, for what we do there, we would get money from the city, or even from the EU, if you make a big project that is scalable to other cities, and the amounts are insanely important, but if you have written such an application, you know it is hell. You need a long presentation letter, and then you need 15 thousand euros of your own, and this and that, and wow, simpler structures would be much better.*

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MSE 01 O *Hm, ja es gibt eine funding-gap, es steht nicht genug Geld zur Verfügung für Leute, die gründen wollen, hm, das ist hm, blöd, hm, andererseits, hm, wird es auch immer besser, und da arbeiten genug Leute dran.*

MSE 01 T *Hm, yes there is a funding-gap, there is not enough money available for people who want to start a business, hm, that is hm, stupid, hm, on the other hand, hm, it also gets better and better, and there are enough people working on it.*

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MSE 04 O *Das Einzige ist was mir immer wieder einfällt, so profan es auch ist, aber ist halt Kohle. Es muss halt Programme geben, oder Steuererleichterung, oder erweiterte Gründer Zuschüsse, oder was weiß ich, oder es kann auch Privatwirtschaft sein, aber es muss was geben was Menschen die nicht so risikofreudig sind, wie ich jetzt z.B., und solche Leute musst du halt absichern, und hm, muss*

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*halt das Gefühl geben dass es cool ist das du das machst, solche Sachen kann man ja auch ruhig prüfen, und begleiten staatlich oder so, aber trotzdem möglich machen wenn man eine coole Idee hat und die Gesellschaft voranbringen möchte. Das würde ich mir sehr wünschen, wünscht sich wirklich jeder Sozialunternehmer, den ich kenne, alle sagen genau dasselbe.*

- MSE 04 T *The only thing that comes to my mind again and again, as profane as it is, is just money, there must be programmes, or tax relief, or extended founder subsidies, or what do I know, or it can also be private investment, but there must be something that people who are as risk-averse as I am for example, and such people you just have to protect, and hm, just have to give the feeling that it is cool that you do that, you can also check such things, with counselling and supervision by the government or something, but still make it possible if you have a cool idea and want to advance society. I would very much like that, every social entrepreneur I know really wants that, everyone says exactly the same thing.*

Finally, two respondents discussed the importance of having international and intercultural experiences, to be conscious of diversity and other realities that are globally interrelated.

- FSE 14 O *En el caso de mi hija, que vienen de una familia bicultural, y ellos han visto, se han expuesto directamente a estas cosas, cuando vamos a esos pueblos, ellos ven cómo viven los indígenas de nuestro país. He visto que un niño de la prepa de mi hija estuvo todo un año viviendo en intercambio en México. Creo que son las formas mejores de mostrarles a las nuevas generaciones, que la vida en otros países, las diferencias.*

- FSE 14 T *In the case of my daughter, who comes from a bicultural family, and they have seen, they have been exposed directly to these things, when we go to these villages, they see how the indigenous people of our country live. I have seen a boy from my daughter's high school, spent a whole year living in Mexico. I think these are the best ways to show the new generations, life in other countries, the differences there are.*

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- FSE 01 O *Dann gibt es so Universitätsprogramme die heißen „en actus“ oder „Erasmus“ die da auch so viel Austausch Themen starten, und ich glaube wenn du dass nicht erst im Studium kennenlernst sondern auch im Schulkontext, oder es gibt ja auch Schulen wo man Partnerschulen hat, ich glaube je früher du dann auch Menschen die Möglichkeit gibst, kennenlernen wie es so anders ist, wo du dann einfach deine eigenen Gedanken machen kannst, dann wäre es*

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*dann schon eine Entwicklung für diejenigen die dann auch eine Veranlagung dafür haben. Trainingsprogramme aufzubauen, ich glaube es kommt wirklich durch diese „Aha-Erlebnisse“, über Erfahrung, über was anderes kennenlernen.*

FSE 01 T *Then there are university programmes called 'en actus' or 'Erasmus' which start exchange activities, and I think if you do not get to know that during your studies or in the school context, or there are schools where you have partner schools, I think the sooner you give people the opportunity to get to know how it is different, where you can simply create your own opinions, then it would be a development for those who have a predisposition for it. To build up training programmes, I think it really comes through these 'aha-experiences', through experience, through getting to know something different.*

Most of the male social entrepreneurs concentrated on improving or creating entry opportunities, especially financing and grant structures. Additionally, many respondents mentioned, like the female participants, education, to be more resilient, educate about gender roles, empowerment, discussion culture, speaking in public, making social topics interesting for young people. Finally, some interviewees underlined the creation of more gender quotes, more Impact Labs and of a specific legal structure for social entrepreneurship.

The main idea to promote social entrepreneurship is education, be it by training in entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, especially in schools and universities, by education about gender, multiculturalism, inclusion and other personal skills development. Role models were also underlined as well as the need to change the social values for success, especially through media. Some mentioned the improvement of entry opportunities such as facilitating the application for funding or increasing the funding structures for social entrepreneurship in general and changing some requirements, like for example pitching contests, or legal structures.

### 5.4.3 Potential of Social Entrepreneurship

The last section of the discussion about the ecosystem of social entrepreneurship involved the potential of social entrepreneurship as a catalyst for social change in general, and specifically for more equality, innovation, and inclusion. Here the understanding and definition of social entrepreneurship proposed by this study was underlined. In this way, most of the respondents (13) were optimistic about the potential of social entrepreneurship, mentioning that following a social mission and pursuing a social goal should be able to be

combined with making a profit and financial discussions. Also, social enterprises are providing examples and inspiring other organizations, persons, and businesses. Additionally, it was argued that the impact per se the enterprises are having are already generating social change, more equality, innovation, and inclusion. It was also discussed that the offer and demand, the relation between enterprises and consumers is changing. Consumers are demanding more sustainable and social services and products and have the power to ‘punish’ those who are not, and on the other hand, these social enterprises are having an impact on the values and demands of consumers. Underlined was also the possibility of innovation, outside rigid and established structures, and that it provides in general a learning experience for the founder and the employees. For the experts, social entrepreneurship should broaden the idea of what economic sectors are, and what economy is, to sensitize against intersectional inequalities, and to analyse what the economy is making possible and valuing. One expert argued that to achieve social change, many different dimensions of action are required and needed: non-profit organizations, as well as social enterprises and activism. In this way, economy can be transformed into doing business positively. The professor declared that social enterprises are transformative islands, which are making themselves visible through social media, inspiring others, and innovating.

FSE 15 O *Deswegen, war ich sehr stark dafür, ein Geschäftsmodell zu finden, was ganz kommerziell ist, was aber natürlich von der Unternehmensphilosophie her, ein soziales Ziel verfolgt, und hm, ansonsten, weil, du bist ja da schon als Firma anders aufgestellt, wegen Spendengelder, weil das halt deine Kunden sind, schon anders agierst, du steckts Ressourcen, nicht in das Produkt, sondern in die Gewinnung von Spendengeldern rein, und dann bist du aus meiner Sicht schon benachteiligt, gegenüber Firmen die eben kommerziell agieren am Markt.*

FSE 15 T *That is why, as I said, I was very much in favour of finding a business model, which is commercial, but which of course pursues a social goal from the point of view of the corporate philosophy, and hm, as I said, otherwise, because you are already different as a company, because of donations, because they are your customers, you act differently, you put resources, not into the product, but into the acquisition of donations, and then you are already disadvantaged from my point of view, compared to companies that act commercially on the market.*

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FSE 04 O *Ja, und ich denke, dass einfach Sachen manchmal was kosten müssen. Wir haben Schulbildung, wir haben irgendwie auch sehr viel das wir einfach so bekommen und können es fast nicht richtig würdigen. Und von dem her, denke ich mal, dass eine Unternehmung*

	<i>die sich jetzt zum Beispiel im Umweltschutz engagiert, deutlich innovativer sein kann, als jetzt eine Behörde ist, aber Innovation, die muss dann auch irgendwie bezahlt werden und es geht im Zweifelsfall nicht über Spenden.</i>
FSE 04 T	<i>Yeah, and I just think things must cost sometimes. We have school education; we also have a lot of that we just receive for free and cannot really appreciate it. And from that point of view, I think that a company that is now committed to environmental protection, for example, can be more innovative than it is now a public agency, but innovation has to be paid for somehow and cannot be done through donations only.</i>
FSE 11 O	<i>Hm, ja gute Frage. Also, ich glaube, dass Sozialunternehmertum hm, immer so einen Denkanstoß gibt, und wenn es sich am Markt irgendwie beweist, dann ziehen auch andere danach.</i>
FSE 11 T	<i>Hm, yes, good question. Well, I believe that social entrepreneurship hm, always provides such a thought-provoking incentive, and if it proves itself in the market somehow, then others will follow.</i>
MSE 02 O	<i>Ich glaube es hat einen unglaublichen Einfluss, dass es überhaupt die Themen in die Köpfe bringt. Das Fairphone war nicht in dem Sinne von vorne bis hinten fair, aber sie haben darauf aufmerksam gemacht. Das ist die Lieferkette, das sind die Produkte, so sieht das aus und so weiter. Das ist sehr positiv.</i>
MSE 02 T	<i>I think it has an unbelievable influence that it brings the topics into people's minds. The Fairphone was not fair in that sense from start to finish, but they drew attention to it. That is the supply chain, that is the way it looks and so on. That is very positive.</i>
MSE 01 O	<i>Viele Investoren tatsächlich suchen, wie kann ich profitabel sein aber gleichzeitig grüner werden, hm, weil meine Shareholder danach fragen, noch ein Sustainability report, noch ein CR, CSR, ...</i>
MSE 01 T	<i>Many investors are actually already looking, how can I be profitable and greener at the same time, hm, because my shareholders are asking for it, another sustainability report, another CR, CSR, ...</i>
MSE 04 O	<i>Für mich bedeutet es also dieses Konstrukt mit sozialen Sachen halt Geld zu verdienen oder mit grünen oder was auch immer, dass man einfach nur, wenn man es geschickt anpackt, was den Wenigsten gelingt, aber halt ein systemischen Wandel hervorrufen kann anstatt ein neues Produkt oder so in den Markt zu schmeißen. Das man einfach einen politischen Mainstream Wandel erzeugt, und ich hm, sehe als großen Vorteil, wenn du mit etwas an das was du glaubst Geld verdienst, du einfach Zeit hast um dich darum zu kümmern. Du musst halt nicht gucken das du dich anderweitig</i>

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MSE 04 T

*finanzierst, du kannst so viel von deiner Lebenszeit in diesen Kurs reinpumpen wie du bock hast, weil du davon lebst, es ist dein Job. So for me this construct means to make money with social things or with green things or whatever, that you can, if you do it skilfully, make a systemic change, what only few manage to do, but instead of throwing a new product or something into the market, that you just make a political mainstream whatever change you create, that it concerns systems and not little pats, and I hm, see as a big advantage if you make money with something you believe in, you have time to take care of it, you just do not have to see that you finance yourself otherwise, you can pump as much of your lifetime into this course as you want because you live off it, it is your job.*

In some cases, the potential of social entrepreneurship was seen rather pessimistic, mentioning the problems that the non-profit sector has, like for example the image they present from people of the Global South. One male social entrepreneur highlighted that creating other consumer goods is not actually fighting against the real problem, which is capitalism, and that social entrepreneurship is too small and therefore cannot have a relevant impact in the large ecosystem. Another respondent proposed for social entrepreneurship that they should not copy everything from regular business, as they are the real origin of the existing problems, and social entrepreneurs should aim at changing systems and not just creating new products. For one expert, the trend is visible in the practice, in media, in consumption; however, it is still a niche, which will take longer to get to the broader public. In this sense, also for the professor, the challenge remains the fact that there is still a long way to go for social entrepreneurship to reach the public, mainstream, and politics.

FSE 06 O

*Hm, ich glaube schon, dass soziale Unternehmer hm, fast alle, mal irgendwann mit diesen Paradigmenwechsel gestartet sind. Dass auch die, meistens, dann in so eine Art, pragmatische Sichtweise reinverfallen. Also meine Horror-Zeile zu diesen Zeiten ist „Mir sind ja die Hände gebunden“. Und dann kommen die finanziellen Sorgen, und dann musste ich auch Kompromisse machen. Und am Anfang, hat man keine Kompromisse gemacht, hat man einfach durchgezogen. Und hm, Sie haben mich gefragt, ob Sozialunternehmen da Impulse geben können, hm, die meisten die ich kennengelernt habe, können das nicht, weil sie diesen Pfad schon lange verlassen haben. Die sind immer noch gut, aber wenn die mehr in diese, also nicht in die Analyse, sondern eben in die Synthese kommen würden, dann wären sie noch deutlich besser.*

FSE 06 T

*Hm, I think the social entrepreneurs hm, almost all, have started with this paradigm shift. That they too, mostly, then in a way, fall*

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*into a pragmatic view. So, my horror line at these times is 'My hands are tied'. And then the financial worries come, and then they had to make compromises. And in the beginning, you did not make any compromises, you just pulled through. And hm, you asked me whether social enterprises can give impulses there, hm, most of those I got to know cannot, because they have left this path a long time ago, they are still good, but if they got more into it, not into the analysis, but into the synthesis, then they would be even better.*

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FSE 11 O *Hm, aber, also, in der Frage war ja auch die Frage nach Gleichberechtigung und da muss man halt schon sagen, zumindest in dem Bereich wo wir unterwegs sind, also es gibt da so ein sozial-ökologisches Milieu, das wird davon sehr stark angesprochen. Das sind meistens recht wohlhabende, weiße, Intelligente Leute, kann man halt nicht anders sagen. Das sieht man auch an den Gründern selbst, und hm, da kann man glaube ich nicht den Sprung in ein anderes Milieu schaffen, solche Angebote auf anderen Ebenen, da sind wir keine Initiative, also (lacht), aber immerhin einen Anstoß gegeben in die Richtung. Und dadurch, dass es halt viele Leute gibt, die an diesem Thema arbeiten, vielleicht gemeinsame Lobby zum Thema machen, und vielleicht in Politik und Handel was anstoßen.*

FSE 11 T *Hm, but, well, in the question there was also the question of equality and there I just have to say, at least in the area where we are working in, there is a social-ecological milieu, that is very strongly addressed by it, they are mostly quite wealthy, white, intelligent people, you just cannot say it otherwise. You can see that in the founders themselves, and hm, I do not think you can make the leap into another milieu, such offers on other levels, there we are not an initiative, so (laughs), but at least to give an impulse in the direction and by the fact that there are many people working on this topic, perhaps a common lobby, and perhaps to initiate something in politics and trade.*

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MSE 02 O *Eventuell auch für Gleichberechtigung, wobei da bin ich mir nicht so sicher, hm, weil, die Unternehmenskultur in sich selbst, die kann wirklich, also was ganz tolles Soziales machen, und auch in sich sozial sein, aber ein Bewusstsein für hm, Gleichberechtigung oder Empowerment muss da nicht sein. Und für gesellschaftliche nachhaltige Lösung, weiß ich nicht mehr. Ich habe schon oft auch das Gefühl, dass Sozialunternehmen, hm, dieselben, also ein bisschen überspitzt gesagt, dieselben Konsumbedürfnisse befriedigen wie hier jedes andere Unternehmen, das nur versucht nachhaltiger zu gestalten. Das ist gut, das ist besser als das reguläre, aber hm, ob es dann wirklich eine Lösung sein kann, weiß ich nicht. Genau,*

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MSE 02 T	<p><i>deswegen sehe ich das vielleicht einfach nur, von wo da ich angefangen habe, sehr viel kritischer.</i></p> <p><i>Maybe also for equal rights, though I am not so sure about that, hm, because the corporate culture in itself, it can really do something great socially, and also be social in itself, but an awareness for hm, equal rights or empowerment does not have to be there. And for a socially sustainable solution, I do not know any more. I have often had the feeling that the social enterprise, hm, satisfies the same consumer needs as any other company, it only tries to make things more sustainable. That is good, that is better than hm, the regular one, but I do not know if it can really be a solution. Exactly, which is why I perhaps simply see it from where I started, much more critically now.</i></p>
MSE 04 O	<p><i>Glaube ich das ganz viele Ideen, uns zwar smarte Ideen einfach verpuffen, weil halt einfach keiner Bock hat sich sowas anzutun. Und ganz ehrlich, man sagt immer „Ja ich würde alles genau so tun“. Ich würde einfach nicht alles genau so machen, weil ich dafür einfach viel aufs Maul geflogen bin, ich würde einfach alles viel geschickter machen, hm, und vielleicht würde ich das auch gar nicht machen, keine Ahnung, ja weil es da so anstrengend war, und so wenig wertgeschätzt irgendwie auch, und die Leute, die das wertschätzen die können am wenigsten Geld geben, und man braucht einfach Kohle, das ist das allerwichtigste.</i></p>
MSE 04 T	<p><i>I think that a lot of ideas, smart ideas simply go up in smoke, because just nobody wants to endure that. And to be honest, you always say ‘Yes I would do everything exactly the same’, I just would not do everything exactly the same, because I fell a lot of times, I would just do everything much more skilfully, hm, and maybe I would not do it at all, I not know, yes, because it was so exhausting, and so little appreciated and valued, and the people who appreciate it they can give the least money, and you just need money, that is the most important thing.</i></p>

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However, what many (4) mentioned at the end is that they are working for, or the goal of social entrepreneurship should be that the concept will no longer be necessary, meaning that they hope that in the future, all enterprises will be social or sustainable, so that the specific concept of social entrepreneurship will no longer be needed. This idea resonates with the concept of mainstreaming, meaning to be part of the political agenda (laws, policy development, programmes, research projects, tools, performance measures, employee development, etc.) in a legitimate, credible and ongoing manner, and incorporated into daily activities in appropriate and relevant ways to (re)organize, improve, develop and evaluate policy processes, so that that which is being mainstreamed

(social and sustainable entrepreneurship in this case, or gender for example) is incorporated in all policies, at all levels and at all stages by the actors usually involved in policy making (Alt, Gedon, Hubert, Hüskens, & Lippert, 2018; I. E. Berger, Cunningham, & Drumwright, 2007; Spieker, 2017).

FSE 16 O	<i>Also ich finde social Entrepreneurship wäre dann am erfolgreichsten, wenn man gar nicht mehr über social hm, nachdenken müsste.</i>
FSE 16 T	<i>I think social entrepreneurship would be most successful if you did not even have to think about social anymore.</i>
FSE 10 O	<i>Also unbedingt! Also ich meine hm, also mein Wunsch wäre eigentlich, dass man das gar nicht dazu sagen muss, social Entrepreneurship. Also eigentlich, würde ich mir wünschen, dass alles was irgendwie, alles wofür Menschen arbeiten auch irgendwie, ja hm, was Positives zurückgibt. Ja, so dass es the new norm wäre. Ja, ich hoffe, dass es die neue Zukunft ist.</i>
FSE 10 T	<i>Absolutely! I mean hm, my wish would be that you do not have to say that at all, social entrepreneurship. Actually, I would wish that everything that people work for somehow, yes, hm, gives something positive back. Yes, so that it would be the new norm, I hope it is the new future.</i>
FSE 09 O	<i>Also ich glaube ganz fest, dass in hundert Jahren, vielleicht auch noch früher, es nur noch social Business geben wird. Es ist einfach das was kommt, und das ist, genauso wie es irgendwann keine Sklaven mehr gab, hm, so wie es irgendwann keine Tierquälerei mehr geben wird, so wird es dann irgendwann dann nur noch Unternehmen geben die social Business sind, also das ist so, ja. Und es ist auch notwendig, dass ein Unternehmen, das irgendwas in dieser Welt tut, gewisse soziale Richtlinien einhalten muss, weil wir sonst, hm, eine Welt haben, wo es nur noch Gier gibt und Ungerechtigkeiten, und das ist ein Prozess, und wir merken dieser Trend ist ganz stark, und das ist nicht so aufhaltbar.</i>
FSE 09 T	<i>I firmly believe that in a hundred years, perhaps even earlier, there will only be social business, that is quite, it is just what is coming, and that is, just like there were no slaves any more at some point, hm, just like there will be no more animal cruelty at some point, there will only be companies that are social business at some point, so that is how it is, yes. It is also necessary for companies that do something in this world to have to adhere to certain social guidelines, because, otherwise, hm, we have a world where there is only greed and injustice, and that is a process, and we notice this trend is quite strong, and it is unstoppable.</i>
MSE 03 O	<i>Also ich glaube im Endeffekt, wenn man es schafft, gehen wir mal davon aus, wir definieren social Entrepreneurship nicht nur</i>

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*einfach als ein gemeinnütziges Unternehmen, sondern als eins, das nachhaltig agiert, sollte eigentlich das Ziel sein, dass so gut wie jegliche Unternehmensbereiche nachhaltig und sozial verträglich, also zu social Entrepreneurship werden. Also es wäre schön, wenn es keine Differenzierung mehr geben würde, zwischen Entrepreneurship und social Entrepreneurship, sondern wir einfach sagen können, „Hey, wenn wir schon ein Unternehmen führen sich fragt, wie kann man das alles nachhaltig machen“, und den eigenen Egoismus zur Seite zu stellen und sagen „Das ist halt so“. Sie gesellschaftlich und nachhaltig zu schaffen, ich glaube dann hat viel Potential, aber da muss noch Verständnis geschafft werden, Interesse daran haben, Werte und so weiter.*

MSE 03 T *So, I think in the end, if you manage it, let us assume that we do not just define social entrepreneurship as a non-profit enterprise, but as one that acts sustainably, the goal should actually be to make almost every area of the company sustainable and hm, socially acceptable, that is, to become social entrepreneurship. So, it would be nice if there were no differentiation between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, but to simply say, ‘Hey, if we already run a company, to ask, how can you make all this sustainable?’, and to put your own selfishness aside and say, ‘That is just how it is’. To shape it socially and sustainably, I think then has a lot of potential, but still understanding for it must be created, values and so on.*

The potential of social entrepreneurship as a catalyst for social change is seen with optimism by most of the respondents. They believe that aiming at resolving social issues, linked with profit or value creation is changing the offer and demand as well as the relations between consumers and enterprises towards sustainability and fair conditions. Innovation was mentioned as well as one valuable potential. However, there are some critiques and concerns, as for example its real scope and impact in the public. At the end, many respondents hope that the specific concept of social entrepreneurship will no longer be necessary as all companies will be designed and developed following those social and sustainable guidelines.

Regarding the potential of social entrepreneurship combined with feminist approaches to transform the current entrepreneurship ecosystem, especially the experts, underlined the question, whether there is a need to transform social entrepreneurship with a feminist economical focus, or rather transform the classic entrepreneurship with a feminist economic focus so that social entrepreneurship as a specific category is no longer required. In this sense, social entrepreneurship combined with feminist economics should broaden the idea

of what economy is, analysing the interplay of the economy with other dimensions, like social or sustainability, to sensitize against intersectional inequalities, and to analyse what the economy is making possible and valuing, transforming the economy into doing business positively. For the expert, social entrepreneurship must provide the opening of the idea of economic areas, what is considered in it, how is it understood, to raise awareness for what feminist economics wants to solve, gender and intersectional inequalities, what is the economy making possible, and which values is it promoting. Currently there is a trend, in younger generations, of questioning, to question life and work, contextual conditions, the systems, relationship-models, what is entrepreneurship, and this trend has a lot of potential. In this way, to achieve social change many different dimensions of action are required and needed: non-profit organizations, social enterprises, and activism.

Feminist economics is a discipline that focuses on the deconstruction of the androcentric bias of many neoclassical approaches with a systemic commitment to gender analysis and its hierarchical implications, proposing an ethical-political framework for social transformation (Agenjo-Calderón & Gálvez-Muñoz, 2019). Within the multiplicity of feminist economics approaches, there are some commonalities. They share the concern of social reproduction as a relevant economic issue neglected by mainstream liberal economics (Bauhardt, 2014). It understands that the economy integrates multiple forms of work and economic agents, as well as multiple spheres of activity (markets, the state, households, social and community networks). Its goal is to create decent living standards for the population through the interrelation of processes that enable life to continue, in human, social and ecological terms (Agenjo-Calderón & Gálvez-Muñoz, 2019). It proposes to overcome certain binarism's, dominant in the economic analysis (work/ not work, autonomy/ dependence, productive/ reproductive, public/ private, reason/ emotion), constructing transversal axes of analysis that not only consider the complexity of socio-economic relations, but also make those spheres of the economy that have been historically invisible and undervalued, visible (Osorio-Cabrera, 2016). Gender is understood as a fundamental category and the necessity of implementing an intersectional analysis, underlining the need to value unpaid domestic and care work, and using human well-being as a measure of economic success. Fundamentally, they oppose inequalities and show these as generated by the global functioning of the economy. Finally, they favour a debate on the kind of life human beings want to live and the way to build and organize coexistence, seeking transformation and the development of new scenarios where people will have access to a dignified life in conditions of justice and equality (Agenjo-Calderón & Gálvez-Muñoz, 2019).

Thus, feminist economic concepts question dominant (economic) scientific and social paradigms, structures, and learning processes. They criticise the logic of self-interest, which is one main characteristic of the homo economicus,

and supposedly driving all economic forces, questioning that self-interest has been considered adequate for men, whereas for women, appropriate was altruistic behaviour. Feminist economics also criticise neoliberalism and specifically the dismantling of the welfare state and the privatization of education, health care, social protection, the elimination of spaces for collective deliberation and negotiation and the loss of social control over political decision-making. They attribute double gender blindness to neoclassicism. On the one hand, the realities of women's lives and activities are excluded from economic analyses and on the other hand, women are still underrepresented in economic science. Care work is thus regarded as a free and infinitely available resource that is socially appropriated and exploited, generating a double burden on women, reinforced by longer and more flexible working hours, increasing entitlements to benefits and limited state care services. In this way, capitalist growth creates a paradox: it ignores the productivity of care work and at the same time it destabilizes it (Weinhold, 2018). Hence, women's work in social and solidarity economy practices is frequently considered as a service and not work, which is carried out by women because of their female nature (Verschuur et al., 2018). Consequently, feminist economics question the assimilation of work with employment, an activity that is exchanged through a salary and that takes place in the market; proposing a reinterpretation of work, as all those activities necessary to sustain life, particularly care work (Osorio-Cabrera, 2016).

However, ways of reorganising and re-signifying social reproduction in sustainable ways are emerging (Verschuur et al., 2018). Within these, the solidarity economy represents a valuable alternative economic and social system and close to the realization of concrete utopias (Bauhardt, 2014). The solidarity economy seeks to transform the dominant capitalist system, as well as other authoritarian, state-dominated systems, into one that puts people and the planet at the centre. It is an evolving framework as well as a global movement and requires a shift in our economic paradigm from one that prioritizes profit and growth to one that prioritizes living in harmony with each other and nature. Equity is thus embedded in the solidarity economy, opposing all forms of oppression, and intertwined with social movements focusing on anti-racism, feminism, anti-imperialism, labour, poverty, the environment, and democracy. The aim is to resist and build, balancing the resistance of social movements, with the building of the solidarity economy. Solidarity economy embraces participatory democracy, making decision-making and action as local as possible (Kawano, 2018), empowering people to collectively find ways to provide for themselves and their communities, and including the state as a partner that delivers structures and support (Di Chiro, 2019).

In this way, the solidarity economy and feminist economics share many common standpoints. Recent works by feminist authors have brought new ideas and theoretical frameworks to this sector, taking either an institutionalist, ecofeminist or postcolonial (or related to epistemologies of the South)

approach (Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019). The solidarity economy and feminist economics criticise the dominant economic system and the ‘the homo economicus’, the individual who is always rational, selfish, independent, who neither feels nor suffers, is self-sufficient, healthy, neither too young nor too old, with white skin and always active in the market seeking personal well-being exclusively through economic profit. They recognize that in economic activities are other motivations and purposes that go beyond self-interest. Both approaches bring people and the ecosystem into the centre, breaking down the false borders of classic economy, overcoming the dichotomies (e.g., solidarity economy activities as non-market and non-monetary, opposed to the profit and growth maximizing market economy) (Jubeto Ruiz & Larraniaga Sarreigi, 2014). The two approaches are based on the centrality that human needs occupy in their proposals, the overcoming of hierarchies, the development of human capacities and the centrality of the community and the environment (Osorio-Cabrera, 2016). In sum, both defend economic relations based on interdependency, reciprocity, democracy, transparency, and equity (Jubeto Ruiz & Larraniaga Sarreigi, 2014). Such congruencies are not random, rather a consequence of the influence of the feminist movement, especially in Latin America, proposing that instead of continuing to build dichotomous categories, the idea is a tool that addresses the interrelationships as a form of multidimensional understanding (Osorio-Cabrera, 2016). However, often, there is a lack of an explicit gender/intersectional perspective in solidarity economy propositions (Jubeto Ruiz & Larraniaga Sarreigi, 2014), overlooking the prevailing female responsibility for care work, and the reflection of the distribution of unpaid domestic work. Moreover, the ethnicized reorganization of the care sector (e.g., the outsourcing of household and cleaning work to underpaid migrant women), is another blind spot in this model (Bauhardt, 2014). In order to be transformative, the solidary economy needs to introduce a feminist perspective questioning the way in which social reproduction is organized, emphasizing the need of redistributing care work (Verschuur et al., 2018).

In general, economic growth often determines the entrepreneurship, sustainability, and social entrepreneurship discourse. However, neither the contradictions nor the conflicting goals that exist between ecologic or social behaviour and economic growth are addressed. Moreover, it has always been difficult to implement critical feminist perspectives in mainstream debates because of its high degree of abstraction (Mölders, 2019). And, although there is a trend to adopt feminist approaches in solidarity economy, the same does not apply to social enterprises, even though social justice is the main goal of social entrepreneurship, requiring to be more sensitive to intersectional asymmetries. The dominant approaches in social entrepreneurship propose to add social and environmental goals to enterprises’ market-oriented activities. However, persisting on a market-oriented perspective ignores economic plurality and inhibits the adoption of a common definition of the economy and, hence, a broader

scope of action for social enterprises. Thus, the tendency to associate the economy with the market, the social area with protection and politics with public authorities should be questioned. Therefore, the economic domain should be extended to market and non-market practices, the political domain to public spaces and the social space to the interaction between social protection and emancipation, understanding these sectors as interrelated. Within social entrepreneurship, gender is usually discussed regarding pay-gaps, reasons for women's preference of the third and fourth sector and the need to promote more women in leading positions. These discussions can be broadened by including the ways women have developed to reframe the economy, going beyond the Western dichotomy of market-household, and contributing to economic principles of reciprocity and redistribution. Feminist theories contribute to social entrepreneurship as they understand that care work (social work, domestic chores and even market-oriented wage labour) is located in the supposed border between market and non-market spaces, reconsidering the supposed places of domination and emancipation (Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019). Moreover, a gender-lens in social entrepreneurship would contribute to the reflection of

'the male-centric misuse of a women-based welfare society, the need for a progressive women-friendly social economy, the recognition of the political role that women have had in re-embedding the economy and the need for a thought-provoking theoretical debate that goes beyond the idea of women empowerment through market-oriented entrepreneurship. A postcolonial feminist perspective can provide us with a necessary critical reading on hasty, ready-made economic solutions that are often uncoupled from a situated analysis' (Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019, p. 13).

The long-term vision of the solidarity economy remains committed to economic democracy, but transitional processes will need to build coalitions while working to move allies in the direction of solidarity economy principles. Social enterprises and social investment are partially aligned and can be seen as potential strategic allies. The solidarity economy movement works to break down the silos that separate social economy practices and encourages allies to fully align with all of the social economy values and goals (Kawano, 2018).

Social entrepreneurship combined with feminist approaches has the potential to broaden and reframe the economy, questioning the way social reproduction is organized and addressing the conflicting goals between economic/social behaviour and economic growth. Specifically, it can favour a debate on alternative social and economic models and act as an ally in the direction of solidarity economy principles.



## 5.5 German Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

The following chapter concentrates on the description of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany. This description is based on the secondary analysis made for this dissertation, considering the ‘Integral Frame for Social Entrepreneurship’ developed in the theoretical chapter. According to this integral frame, the portrayal of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem will be organized in macro, meso and micro levels, and will describe only some few dimensions, regarded as priorities by the researcher, of this frame. These dimensions will comprise basic information about, first, at the macro level the female business owner’s involvement, the European and national policies and strategies, and some relevant social stratification issues relating gender, entrepreneurship, and social entrepreneurship. Second, at the meso level it will include media and the regional support and services for social entrepreneurship in Germany, and finally at the micro level a short and by no means complete quantitative portrayal of female social entrepreneurship in Germany. These areas are highlighted in yellow in the following Figure 9.

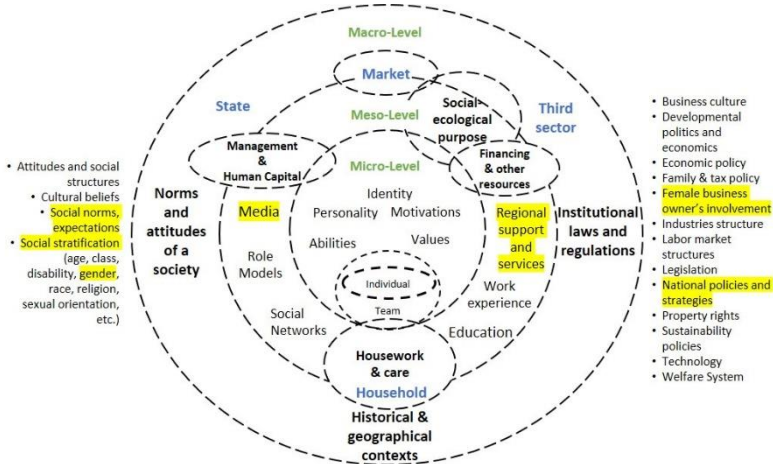


Figure 9: Analysed Dimensions of the Integral Frame for Social Entrepreneurship Through the Secondary Analysis (Source: own elaboration)

Social enterprises are shaped by the institutional and cultural contexts in which they are created. Therefore, the barriers that they face and the opportunities that arise are specific to those contexts. Social enterprises are also impacted by the economic crisis which Europe confronts and policymakers must know that

social enterprise cannot fill all the gaps in service provision which austerity has brought or create all the jobs needed to overcome the jobs crisis. However, social enterprise is an important contributor to meeting those challenges. Their contribution can be increased by policies that favour growth in their scale and efficiency. The focus of these policies should be on providing enabling environments in which social enterprises can thrive, including actions to promote social entrepreneurship and improve legal and regulatory frameworks, financing, access to markets, business development services and support structures, and training and research. What is important is that governments work across policy boundaries and adopt a systemic approach to increase the capacity of social enterprises to contribute more effectively to social inclusion and inclusive growth (Noya & Clarence, 2013).

A country report (Ravensburg, Krlev, & Mildenerger, 2018), part of the study 'Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe', provides an overview of the social enterprise landscape in Germany based on available information as of May 2018. It describes the roots and drivers of social enterprises in the country as well as their conceptual, fiscal, and legal framework. It includes an estimate of the number of organizations and outlines the ecosystem as well as some perspectives for the future of social enterprises in the country. For a further overview of the social entrepreneurship landscape in Germany, the report by the EFSEIIS (Zimmer & Bräuer, 2014) assessed the main features and developments of emerging social entrepreneurs in Germany and included the policy environment for social entrepreneurs divided into EU, national and Laender support, also the financial and educational sector and the support these actors provide for social enterprises in Germany over time. Moreover, how social enterprises influence these. Lastly, they describe the changing German welfare state and its relation to social enterprises.

One of the main characteristics of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany is the highly developed and regulated welfare state. However, political, and financial support and the assistance of foundations, as key stakeholders for third sector development are also pivotal factors (Zimmer & Bräuer, 2014). In general, both the main opportunities and challenges for social entrepreneurship in Germany lie in the areas of a concerted policy development effort, including public-benefit legislation and procurement, more access to financing forms that encourage innovation, and data availability. In German debates, social entrepreneurship remains rather tacit and is often seen as a trend to commercialise social services, while others distinguish between traditional and innovative organizations. In this way, blurred concepts and vague borderlines will likely persist for the next years. Moreover, there is an unwillingness of public-sector actors to innovate and partner with social enterprises, weak management skills and lack of access to affordable support services, problems with sustainable business models, with scaling-up and a relatively small scale of social-impact financing and lack of private funding for innovative

approaches. Social enterprises are seen as too commercial for the third sector and yet not commercial enough to attract investments and public economic promotion. However, recently there has been a growing cooperation, support, and mutual learning between established and new social enterprises. Likewise, the growing demand for social services and other goods like renewable energy, affordable housing and fair and ecological goods offer potential opportunities. Moreover, significant available private funds for health and social care stand ready in Germany, even though they are often conservatively managed and not necessarily accessible for innovative social start-ups. Also, there is an increasing tendency for civic engagement and volunteering. Likewise, initial indifference has transformed into a more targeted image of and support for social entrepreneurship around 2010, which has then broadened to a more comprehensive understanding of it. The authors forecast this trend to continue, also in view of the increasing interest in CSR or the sharing economy (Ravensburg et al., 2018).

### *5.5.1 Macro-Level*

The macro level at the integral frame for social entrepreneurship comprises mainly institutional laws and regulations, related to the economy, government and third sector, as well as social norms and attitudes, especially towards entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, and social and environmental services, as well as intricate social stratification structures and finally, the geographical and historical context. Of all these complex and broad dimensions, this research will focus on macro-level variables that are significantly relevant for this study's objective. In this way, I will discuss next the female business owner's involvement, as well as the most important European and national strategies and policies regarding social entrepreneurship and some specific social stratification issues.

#### *5.5.1.1 Female Entrepreneurship in Germany*

Statistics about female entrepreneurship, as well as on entrepreneurship in general, are for Germany available through several sources. Some of them are the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, the KfW Entrepreneurship report on Germany, European Commission reports, a Female Founders Monitor of Germany and the OECD reports and some state reports as well. Since each organization, with its own methodology and sample, reports data in different forms and from different perspectives, this section will describe mainly the findings from the German country profile of the OECD and the European Union (2018) as part of the report 'The Missing Entrepreneurs 2017: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship' (OECD, 2017).

In general, the self-employment rate<sup>14</sup> was lower in Germany than the European Union average in 2016 (9.3% vs. 14.0% for the EU). The proportion of people involved in setting up or managing a new business (Total early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity rate, or TEA rate) was also slightly below the EU average over the 2012-16 period (5.8% vs. 6.7% for the EU). Women are 6.7% self-employed, compared to 11.6% men (OECD, 2017) (Figure 10).

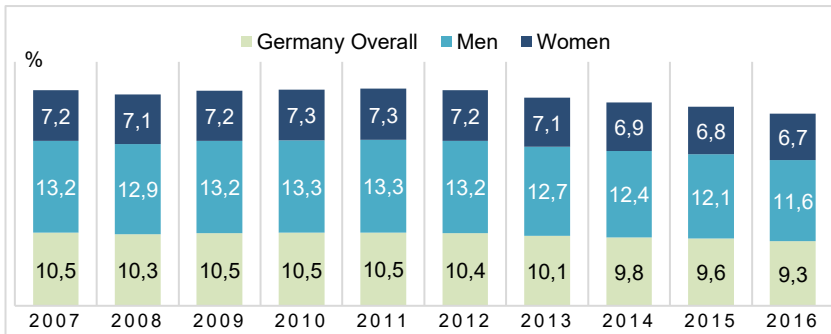


Figure 10: Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment Data for Germany for 2007-16 (OECD, 2017, p. 197)

Women are still an under-represented part of the German population in terms of entrepreneurship. Compared with men women less frequently start a firm, are less often convinced of their own entrepreneurial skills and the fear of failure more often than men, prevent them from starting a firm. Also, women were much more likely to be self-employed in human health and social work than men (20.6% vs. 5.9%), as well as in other service activities (13.7% vs. 2.4%) and education (8.4% vs. 2.6%). They were much less likely to be self-employed in construction (1.7% vs. 17.4%) (OECD & European Union, 2018).

Specifically, for Germany, as a low-growth oriented country, the gender gap is extraordinary wide, with employment growth expectations related to the new business less than 30% of the male level. This suggests factors that affect women differently from men. Also, export orientation of female entrepreneurs in Germany is only 68% of the male level. However, in terms of innovativeness of the new businesses' products and services, in Germany female entrepreneurs perform slightly better than men. While in all GEM countries innovation represents the indicator with the greatest female-to-male gender ratio (across all 74 economies considered in the recent GEM Women's Entrepreneurship Report women entrepreneurs have a 5% greater likelihood of innovativeness than

14 The self-employment rate is defined as the number of self-employed people (15-64 years old) divided by the number of people in employment.

men), this likelihood is 10% higher in Germany (OECD & European Union, 2018).

One reason for the relatively large and persistent gender gap in Germany may be the difference in opportunity perception between women and men. As GEM data show in 2017 only 35.2% of the 18-64-year-old women see good conditions to start a business during the next six months in the area they live, whereas 48.3% of men do. Additionally, in Germany women less often know someone who started a business in past two years (21.9%) than men (26.3%). Of course, there are many other possible explanations for this gender gap. Some women may realise that their income effects, when to decide between wage employment and self-employment, are less positive and strong than for men. Also, financing requirements differs between genders in Germany, too. In this way, men stated that they needed on average approximately €24,700 to start a business whereas women indicated approximately €9,900, a difference of 250%. While lower required finance does not directly explain why women less often try to start a firm, it reflects the difference in the types of ventures that women and men tend to start. More than two-thirds of early-stage entrepreneurship activity by women is in the consumer services sector, where financial investment is low, but growth opportunities are low as well, due to strong, price-driven competition. Consequently, female entrepreneurs leading a fast growing and very successful new business are an extremely rare role model. Furthermore, gender specific barriers are obvious when it comes to the financing of female-owned businesses (OECD & European Union, 2018).

Specifically, about female start-ups in Germany, the Female Founders Monitor of 2018 (Kollmann, Stöckmann, Cruppe, Hensellek, & Kleine-Stegemann, 2018) affirms that German women are more likely to start up alone and for the first time. They are more likely to have a background in social and creative subjects, but less often in MINT subjects. They prioritize profitability, while male founders prioritize growth. Female entrepreneurs plan business growth less often with external capital and are less likely to receive finance through business angels or venture capital. Also, they are more likely to start up in the e-commerce or education sector, men more likely in the IT or software sector. Additionally, women founders are more reluctant than male entrepreneurs to assess positively the innovativeness of their start-ups. In the event of failure, women would be less likely than men to establish another start-up. Female entrepreneurs are more likely to focus on coordination in their work, male founders on specialization.

<p>The statistics on female entrepreneurship in Germany show that there is still a significant gender gap regarding the self-employment rate and the TEA rate. Women found less frequently than men, in different industry sectors and show different attitudes and priorities towards their businesses. Moreover, women present a higher likelihood of innovativeness than men.</p>
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Therefore, institutional, and social structures are still influencing men and women differently when starting-up a business.

Next, I describe the European and National strategies and policies for social entrepreneurship in Germany.

#### 5.5.1.2 European Policies and Strategies for Social Entrepreneurship

As Germany's policies and institutional structures are often framed by European policies and strategies, I describe these next, regarding the social economy and social entrepreneurship specifically.

In 2011 the European Union adopted the umbrella concept of the Social Market Act, and within it the Social Business Initiative (SBI). The SBI aims at contributing to the aims of the EU 2020 strategy and thus the development target of an inclusive Union, introducing a short-term action plan to support the development of social enterprises, key stakeholders in the social economy and social innovation. Additionally, it seeks to prompt a debate on the issues to be explored in the medium and long term (COMM/DG/UNIT, 2019b; Zimmer & Bräuer, 2014). Social enterprises in Germany participate in different activities funded by EU funds, but no funding streams operate exclusively for social enterprises alone. A programme of the European Social Fund (ESF) called 'Rückenwind' for public-benefit organizations, provides projects funding that aims for organizational and human resources development (Ravensburg et al., 2018).

Regarding female entrepreneurship, the European Commission promotes and supports female entrepreneurship through the Small Business Act and the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan. One of the Commission's main initiatives is to support networking among female entrepreneurs, potential female entrepreneurs, and support organizations. Therefore, one initiative is the EU Prize for Women Innovators, which is awarded to women who have received EU research and innovation funding at some point in their careers, and recently founded or co-founded a successful company based on their innovative ideas. The Commission supports several tools such as networks and an e-platform helping women become entrepreneurs and run successful businesses, including the WEGate-platform, which is a one-stop-shop for women entrepreneurship, the European Community of Women Business Angels and women entrepreneurs, the European network to promote women's entrepreneurship (WES), the European network of female entrepreneurship ambassadors and the European Network of Mentors for Women Entrepreneurs (COMM/DG/UNIT, 2019a).

### 5.5.1.3 National Policies and Strategies for the Promotion of Female Social Entrepreneurship

There are several national policies, strategies, and programmes for the promotion of social entrepreneurship and female entrepreneurship. In this regard, I describe next some of the most significant policies and programmes.

#### 5.5.1.3.1 National Policies and Programmes Promoting Female Entrepreneurship

In general, in Germany, the promotion of female entrepreneurship has reached a high priority within the different ministries. Some initiatives and activities developed and executed by these and other organizations described in several reports (European Commission, 2013; OECD, 2017; OECD & European Union, 2018) I outline next.

- The bundesweite gründerinnenagentur (bga - National Agency for Women Start-ups Activities and Services), launched by the Federal Government in 2004 and since commended by the EU as a European model of success, operates nationally. As an umbrella organization bringing together the available support, it offers cross-sectoral information, advice, training and networking opportunities, and functions as the contact point for industry, research, politics, the media, and the public. It is also active in promoting an entrepreneurial culture for women and building networks through an online portal showcasing successful women entrepreneurs (Gründerinnen-Galerie).
- Since 2012 the new internet portal Existenzgründerinnen has brought together the whole range of activities offered by the agency on the website of the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Technology (BMWi).
- The results of 40 subprojects supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) as part of the ‘Power für Gründerinnen’ scheme illustrate women’s reasons and talent for self-employment and structural differences in the business start-up process between men and women.
- The ‘Supporting Women Entrepreneurs’ ambassadors’ network, supported by the BMBF and the EU, has identified 64 ambassadors who, together with 80 women business starters, entrepreneurs and successors showcased by the bga, act as role models to raise awareness of the opportunities to run one’s own business.
- As part of the BMBF programme ‘Frauen an die Spitze’, almost 100 research and development projects are looking at the unsatisfactory level of participation of women in science and in top positions in industry and eight of the supported projects are looking specifically at women’s entrepreneurship.

- Within the step-by-step plan of the Federal Ministry for the Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) entitled ‘Mehr Frauen in Führungspositionen’, the interactive road show ‘Meine Zukunft: Chefin im Handwerk’ showcases career prospects for women entrepreneurs in the craft/trade sector. This ministry also executed an action programme ‘Perspektive Wiedereinstieg’ since March 2008, providing information and support for women wanting to get back to work after a long career break for family reasons, also as self-employed.
- In 2012, the BMWi commissioned the bga to target women with expert and leadership experience with the project ‘Die eigene Chefin sein’, to encourage them to start their own business. This project is part of the BMWi’s ‘Gründerland Deutschland’ initiative, the aim of which is to increase entrepreneurship and contribute to creating a dynamic environment for start-ups in the country.
- Besides the regional networks, there are five competence centres dedicated to migrant-specific concerns at the federal level. They provide expert advice and assistance to the regional networks. These centres develop training schemes, instruments, and policy recommendations for integrating migrants into the labour market. In addition, the project ‘Migrantinnengründen Existenzgründung von Migrantinnen’ started in January 2015, funded by the BMFSFJ. It supports women from all ethnic backgrounds with mentoring and accompanying entrepreneurship activities consisting of individual consultations, workshops, and networking activities.
- There is one programme that supports female entrepreneurs not only with information and training but also financial support. The Goldrausch Frauennetzwerk is a small non-governmental association that started providing micro loans to women entrepreneurs in Berlin. In recent years, preference has been given to women over 45 years and with a migrant background. More recently, it has started a partnership with the Grenke Bank AG to administer loans partially funded by the ESF as part of the national Mikrofinanzfonds Deutschland scheme.
- The landscape also includes women-only business incubators (Unternehmerinnen- und Gründerzentren). At the local level, many public initiatives have developed locally based support schemes for female entrepreneurs. A good practice example is also the programme ‘Frauen in Arbeit und Wirtschaft e.V. B.EG.IN’ in Bremen which offers coaching and consulting for women in several languages. There are a growing number of initiatives and public and non-profit mentoring programmes which offer access to one-to-one group coaching or mentoring across Germany, for example, Two Women Win (TWIN), which is a successful mentoring initiative that has supported more than 400 start-ups.



- The Association of German Female Businesses (Verbanddeutscher Unternehmerinnen e.V. VdU) is a network of female entrepreneurs with 22 regional offices in all 16 Länder.
- The National Council of German Women's Organizations (Deutscher Frauenrat) is another supportive national association of 56 female associations and networks.

The promotion of female entrepreneurship in Germany has received over the last years great attention. There are several national and regional initiatives and programmes started by the different ministries and organizations, underlining networking, counselling, and competency development. However, no specific mention of support for female social entrepreneurs is found.

#### 5.5.1.3.2 National Policies and Programmes Promoting Social Entrepreneurship

Social enterprise development and the establishment of an adequate ecosystem seem to remain of lower priority on the national and Länder policy level. The Federal Government began to recognize the topic in the 2000s and has remained relatively passive. Still no definition, no concerted strategy or any general action plan stand clear in dedication to social enterprises. However, the different Ministries have been initiating different programmes and activities to promote and support social enterprises (Ravensburg et al., 2018; Zimmer & Bräuer, 2014). In this way there are many programmes to support entrepreneurship activities in general, but these are not targeting social entrepreneurs specifically. The very first steps which signified the direction towards support of social entrepreneurship were reflected in the Agenda of 2010 (Usher Shrair, 2015). Social enterprises are implicitly addressed in many of the federal government's promotional and advisory services. These include, for example, loan, investment, and mezzanine subsidies (e.g., StartGeld, EXIST), the KfW programme 'IKU - Investitionskredit Kommunale und Soziale Unternehmen' as well as the 'Generationsbrücke Deutschland' project (2014 to 2019). Furthermore, the Federal Government is currently implementing a variety of measures to promote social innovations, like the High-Tech Strategy 2025 which also includes strategic goals for the development of social innovations and the 'Innovative Hochschule' funding initiative which also promotes the research-based transfers of ideas, knowledge, and technology to social innovations, giving universities the opportunity to involve social enterprises as partners. For the Federal Government, social entrepreneurs, by combining entrepreneurial thinking with social added value, have an important bridging function for the integration of civil society, business, and politics (SEND, 2019). Additionally, as previously mentioned, several programmes have been

developed and initiated by different German Ministries and other important organizations. These I describe next.

1. The Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy (BMWi) provides a whole range of different financing and promotion instruments available for social entrepreneurs. In November 2018, in their latest coalition treaty, social entrepreneurship was anchored as an independent field of action in their start-up offensive. Additionally, in 2017 the ministry published a practitioners' guide to social enterprise in a newsletter 'GründerZeiten'. The document gives an overview of some of the most important players on the field and practical advice about social enterprise at its different phases of organizational development, and it includes short portraits of well-known social enterprises (Ravensburg et al., 2018). Planned is to further develop the online portals for this specific target groups. In addition, the information, consulting, and support services are being reviewed with a view to their use by social entrepreneurs, further developed and communicated more visibly. The visibility of individual support measures, such as the ERP loan programmes<sup>15</sup>, has already been increased. In addition, in the first quarter of 2019 the RKW Competence Centre will launch a series of videos aimed at raising public awareness of social entrepreneurship and funding opportunities among interested prospective founders. Their new EXIST programme will enable universities with a humanities-scientific, social, and creative profile to achieve EXIST potential, for which funding programmes with a sector- and technology-specific orientation have not been considered for a long time. Scientific spin-offs, for example, are supported in the 'EXIST Existenzgründungen aus der Wissenschaft' programme. As of the 2019 financial year, the Federal Government has increased the funds for this programme by 40 million euros and thus more than doubled them. Social entrepreneurship accounts for almost 12% of all projects funded by the EXIST programme. Also, it has established a central centre for the economy of arts and culture (SEND, 2019).
2. The Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) focuses on improving the supply of local welfare services (Ravensburg et al., 2018) and has included social entrepreneurship into their National Engagement Strategy (Usher Shrair, 2015). This Ministry also promotes the project 'Soziale Innovationen in der Wohlfahrtspflege' (2018 to 2020), with which the exchange between social enterprises and the umbrella organizations of free welfare care are to be initiated, as well as the project 'Selbst ist die Frau' (2019 to 2020), with which volunteer contact persons for women willing to start-up are to be trained and

15 ERP-Gründerkredit - Start-Geld', 'ERP-Gründerkredit – Universal' and 'ERP-Kapital für Gründung'

networks for founders in rural areas are to be established (SEND, 2019). This ministry has supported the development of Social Impact Labs since 2011 (Ravensburg et al., 2018).

3. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) addresses social innovations in various specialist programmes, for example the funding measure ‘Validation of the technological and social innovation potential of scientific research - VIP+’, the guideline for the funding of research at universities of applied sciences to improve the quality of life in urban and rural areas through social innovations (FH-Sozial), within the framework of the programme ‘Research at universities of applied sciences’ or the federal-state initiative ‘Innovative Hochschule’. Moreover, the ‘Young Entrepreneurs in Science’ project, launched in 2018, is a three-year pilot project intended to sensitize researchers and students from all fields to setting up a company as an option for the exploitation of scientific results (SEND, 2019). And the Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung) informs shortly about Social Entrepreneurship in Germany (Ravensburg et al., 2018).
4. The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) emphasizes the organizational and enterprising elements of social enterprise and their innovative potential (Ravensburg et al., 2018).
5. The KfW Bank Group (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, a promotional Bank) included in 2015 social entrepreneurs in its start-up coaching, and several pilot projects have been financed using funds from the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (Ravensburg et al., 2018). Since the end of 2018, KfW has explicitly drawn attention in the relevant fact sheets to the possible utilisation by commercial social enterprises (SEND, 2019).
6. Lower levels of government support social entrepreneurs, namely Länder and municipalities. Cities such as Berlin, Munich or Cologne have adopted specific policies toward promoting social entrepreneurship, organising networking events, and supplying initiatives with financial and non-financial support (Ravensburg et al., 2018).

Related to the concept, legal evolution and fiscal framework, no specific legislation on social enterprise exists in Germany. Consequently, neither does any legal delimitation of the phenomenon, and public agencies still diverge in their understanding of the concept. Academic views and the public discourse among stakeholders appear equally diverse. Applying the operational definition of social entrepreneurship published by the European Commission, seven types of formal German organizations can be considered social enterprises: Civic associations, socially aimed foundations, socially aimed cooperatives, work

integration and work inclusion, new-style social businesses<sup>16</sup> and welfare organizations. Additionally, there are many available legal company forms, and many of these forms can combine with the public-benefit status. In this way, social enterprises have a relatively wide choice of legal forms under which to operate. A major reform of the public-benefit legislation in 2013 has given more flexibility to as to when to spend their revenues and a legal procedure now applies when organizations aspire to acquire public-benefit status. Also, the procurement law has been updated regarding social, ecological and innovation aspects and competence centres have been established to provide counselling on alternative procurement implementation (Ravensburg et al., 2018).

Different studies, research projects and organizations (the Mercator research association, a BMWi -commissioned report, the Federal Association of German Start-ups, Ashoka and McKinsey, the Social Entrepreneurship Network, WEstart, European Commission, EFESEIIS), as well as a common political position paper between the biggest German welfare organizations<sup>17</sup>, the German Social Entrepreneurship Network and the German Start-ups association, have proposed several recommendations for the promotion and support of social entrepreneurship in Germany (Ravensburg et al., 2018; Ashoka & McKinsey, 2019; AWO et al., 2019; SEND, 2019; European Commission, 2015; Cordobés, 2016; Jansen, Heinze, & Beckmann, 2013; Scheuerle et al., 2013; Temple, 2017; Terjesen, 2017; Usher Shrair, 2015; Zimmer & Bräuer, 2014). The most important regard the educational and cultural dimensions, financing, policy, cooperation, and infrastructure.

#### Education, research, and culture:

- strengthen the civic-engagement culture in society in combination with entrepreneurial thinking, including new approaches in education;
- expansion of coaching offers for social entrepreneurs (e.g., problem-oriented coaching) and classical innovation programmes for the social sector;
- a joint and broad understanding of social enterprise and cooperation between the ministries, identifying success factors and frame conditions as research fields, mirroring the main perspective from social entrepreneurial activities on the grassroots level;
- creation, consolidation and increment of visibility of certification systems for social enterprises, such as the B Corp certification or an EU label for social enterprises;
- improvement and integration of data of social entrepreneurship and social innovation into existing monitoring systems, developing and tracking

<sup>16</sup> New-style social businesses strive to solve social problems through commercial activities.

<sup>17</sup> The Arbeiterwohlfahrt (AWO), the German Caritas Association (DCV), the German Red Cross (DRK), the Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der Juden in Deutschland (ZWST) and the Diakonie Deutschland (DD).

statistics and policy as this data can be used to evaluate the success or failure of certain policies;

- improvement of the measurement of social impact and innovation, supporting the development, testing, dissemination and adoption of standardised social impact measurement systems;
- recruitment and attraction of talents for careers in social entrepreneurship and social innovation;
- organization of national and regional conferences on social innovation;
- promotion of media and political attention for social innovations;
- establishment of further chairs on social entrepreneurship, governance of social enterprises and social innovation at universities and colleges (alternatively co-financing of endowed chairs) and a connection of these teaching programmes to course on the innovation of the German welfare state;
- promotion of initiatives that bring social entrepreneurship to schools and target promotion of student initiatives such as Infinity Deutschland or En-actus;
- regularly commission surveys to measure visibility and attitudes towards social enterprise;
- social entrepreneurs should assess their impact potential, estimating what each approach can do to society when scaled. A systematization of the growth and scaling plans and of impact measurement and reporting is recommended. With this information, they can then present themselves to decision-makers in politics, administration, and welfare much more clearly and confidently. In addition, they must communicate the desired change as concretely as possible, strengthen their own management skills and initiate and shape political processes themselves.

#### Policy:

- develop a concerted strategy and continuity within the policies and programmes;
- develop a social entrepreneurship code (with standards of human resources management, subsidiary management, etc.);
- re-assess the operational detail of the subsidiary delivery, procurement policies and funding logic of the German welfare system, as the current funding logic does not promote social businesses. Since only effectively performed services receive funding, resources run scarce to support improvements, experimentation, research and development;
- legal reconciliation of the public-benefit status and enterprising, as well as an impact orientation in public tendering;
- shape the legal framework more consciously and actively seeking exchange with social innovators, adapting the legal structures (taxes, procurement and Gemeinnützigkeitsrechts);

- institutionally, cross-country research indicates that nations with better economic institutions and populations who perceive entrepreneurship as a good career choice, see opportunities to start a business, and know an entrepreneur, tend to have more social entrepreneurs, and specially a higher share of female social entrepreneurs. Therefore, governments should seek to protect institutions such as economic freedom, and the support of cultural institutions.

#### Financing:

- set-up of fund or funding programmes for social innovation, their development, realization and scaling, considering their special needs, with an impact-based state allocation of funds;
- adjust tax, public-procurement and public-benefit regulations to better cater for hybrid financing and for the lifecycle of enterprises, introducing criteria that consider social aspects in public procurement and not only those based on cost;
- foundations' funds or new financing models such as social-impact bonds or venture-philanthropy-investments might provide a vehicle towards more innovation, however increasing financial volumes;
- simplify bureaucracy around donations and project grants;
- set-up of more transparent and impact-based financial support, including complementary, specialized and risk funding strategies;
- foster investment readiness on the side of social entrepreneurship and an increase in social enterprise orientation in state funding and social investment markets;
- sponsors should be more flexible in the allocation of funds and the framework conditions, (e.g., tying their funding to reaching certain milestones of systemic change, transferring existing solutions to other actors in the systems or conclusion of concrete agreements on cooperation with such actors);
- developing and implementing a nationwide funding strategy for social innovation centres which, for example, create space for encounters and networks, facilitate the transfer of ideas into practice and promote inter- and transdisciplinary approaches.

#### Cooperation and infrastructure:

- establish reference persons in the various federal ministries for social innovations and their networking;
- facilitate sharing of good practice in supporting social enterprise amongst all stakeholders (e.g., sponsors, intermediates);
- create more social business incubators and social innovation centres, underlining the development of a programme line for the establishment of regional centres;

- improve cooperation and regular exchange of all stakeholders: Ministries and local administrations, welfare and business associations, health insurance funds, youth welfare offices, schools, universities, and others. In addition, they could work together to test the systemic change potential of ideas;
- welfare organizations can create innovation interfaces, to act as social investors (corporate social venturing) and strengthen internal innovation culture (intrapreneurship).

Regarding national policies and programmes for promoting social entrepreneurship in Germany, politics show relative passiveness and an unwillingness to establish a common definition of social entrepreneurship. However, there is the recognition of the contribution and function of social enterprises, so that two ministries (BMWi and BMFSFJ) have included social entrepreneurship into their National Engagement Strategies. Several other ministries and government organizations have been initiating projects for its promotion and support as well. Regarding the legal and fiscal framework, in Germany there is no specific legislation for social enterprises, so that many different legal forms and their combinations are available. Several recommendations from different research studies and organizations have been made to improve the conditions under which social enterprises work in Germany, mainly regarding education, research and culture, policy, financing and cooperation and infrastructure.

#### 5.5.1.4 Social Stratification

Social stratification by gender, sexuality, race, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, and other dimensions, refers to a ranking, through a complex system, of people or groups of people within a society and the unequal distribution of valued goods, services, and prestige (Kerbo, 2018). This section focuses on gender and (social) entrepreneurship only, acknowledging that other dimensions of social stratification might be as relevant, however, the focus of this study is on gender.

Gender ideologies are an important aspect of social structure that impact individual behaviours and shape collective and individual experience. A large body of research establishes that gender ideologies impact individual economic behaviour, noting that ideologies can both hinder and facilitate the expression of certain business values by both male and female entrepreneurs (Hechavarria & Ingram, 2016). In this regard, as formerly described, when analysing the impact of culture and gender on entrepreneurship goals, it was found that female entrepreneurs tend to emphasize social value, while male entrepreneurs tend to emphasize economic value. Moreover, in societies with stronger post-materialistic values it is more likely to find entrepreneurs who focus on social and environmental values rather than on economic values. Lastly, the goals of

female entrepreneurs' value creation are more greatly influenced by post-materialistic cultural values than are those of male entrepreneurs (Hechavarría et al., 2017).

Another study examined the interplay among forms of entrepreneurship and the gendered entrepreneurial divide, using data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) and the World Values Survey (WVS). The study goal was to investigate the likelihood that females will venture in the commercial entrepreneurial ventures versus social entrepreneurial ventures. The results show that there is a divide in entrepreneurial activity, as women entrepreneurs are more likely to start social ventures than commercial ventures. Moreover, in societies with a strong view on hegemonic masculinity the incidence of social entrepreneurship decreases, whereas in societies with emphasized femininity it increases. This is because these particular gender ideologies can discourage in entrepreneurs some courses of action and make some alternatives and choices preferable (Hechavarría & Ingram, 2016). The conceptualization of the commercial entrepreneur has been linked with the exploitation of profitable opportunities, innovation, and economic value. On the other hand, social entrepreneurship is usually described as facilitating social transformation through innovative solutions, and in general, it focuses on and embraces feminine attributes (Brush et al., 2009), embodying attributes of emphasized femininity like caring, communal, and relational values. In this way, social entrepreneurship generally appeals to female entrepreneurs more readily than to male entrepreneurs. To date, no theoretical explanation has been available to explain why this occurs, however, the authors provide a first theoretical frame, explaining that gender differences in venturing are perpetuated by the ideologies of emphasized femininity and hegemonic masculinity represented in the broader institutional context. Socialization and other forces sustain attitudes on gender stereotypes and roles, and the outcome are these ideologies (Hechavarría & Ingram, 2016).

When analysing the European context, a recent study focussed on investigating the consequences of 'othering' and 'second sexing' women entrepreneurs by European policies, focusing on European agendas and initiatives, such as the Strategy Europe 2020, European Network of Mentors for Women Entrepreneurs, Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors, and the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan. The author explores three different sub-levels (legal, political, and empirical), researching at each level gender relations, gender regimes and the division between private and public sphere, with the attempt of understanding if the EU entrepreneurial discourse depicts women entrepreneurs as Other than men entrepreneurs. The results conclude that the EU gender spheres division approach is based upon women's othering and it is characterized by the recognition of gender inequalities in quantitative terms, without any exploration of gender relations at stake; ad hoc policies for compensating women's deficient otherness; gender bias and assumptions, which



influence policy making. The EU legal framework for gender equality does not question the male breadwinner model, reinstating patriarchal divisions between public and private sphere. Women entrepreneurs must cope with their multiple roles in both spheres, where their gender difference is defined in opposing terms to the male norm. In the public sphere they have to deal with strong male bias, because of the androcentricity of the entrepreneurial sector, while in the private sphere they have to perform their gender role of unpaid caregivers in accordance with patriarchal stereotypes, which are difficult to eliminate (Sando, 2013).

For promoting female entrepreneurship, the EU developed different instruments, which focus mainly on soft and economic obstacles encountered by women in accessing the entrepreneurial sector. Although this focus is a first step, in order to succeed it must challenge also contextual obstacles, such as horizontal and vertical segregation, gender relations and stereotypes in private and public spheres. If the EU does not intervene in these obstacles, the current female entrepreneurship risks to become a political ghetto, reinforcing the definition of women as Other. Women entrepreneurs have less access to credit and more responsibility in the household compared to men entrepreneurs, as their roles as entrepreneurs and women challenge patriarchal gender relations at two levels: the political and the imaginary. Among the proposals for reducing those obstacles are gender quotas, reconciliation of family and work, the need for a concrete cultural change, which must involve the imaginary level as well (Sando, 2013).

Related with gender stereotypes structurally influencing the entrepreneurship ecosystem, evidence shows that female-led ventures, compared to male-led ventures, are punished because of role incongruity or a perceived 'lack of fit' between female stereotypes and expected personal qualities of commercial entrepreneurs. Therefore, a study examined whether social impact framing that underlines a venture's social-environmental welfare benefits, which research has shown to generate stereotypically feminine attributions of warmth, diminishes these disadvantages. Initially evaluations of early-stage ventures were analysed, resulting in findings of evidence of less gender disadvantages for female-led ventures that are presented using a social impact frame. After, the authors experimentally validated this effect and showed that it is mediated by social impact framing on perceptions of the entrepreneur's warmth. This effect of social impact framing on venture evaluations did not apply to men, moreover it was not a result of perceptions of increased competence and was not conditional on the gender of evaluators. In conclusion, these findings demonstrate that social impact framing increases attributions of warmth for all entrepreneurs. However, it entails positive consequences on business evaluation only for female-led ventures, for which increased perceptions of warmth diminish female entrepreneurs' gender role incongruity (Lee & Huang, 2018).

In Germany, an article that examined, through a social constructionism feminist lens, how German women construct accounts of entrepreneurship as a gendered career, affirms that while becoming an entrepreneur was preferred instead of not having a career, the interpretative repertoires emerging around entrepreneurial careers mainly referred to structural barriers. These included 'anti-child anti-woman' attitudes within German society or acceptance of the 'male game' due to gendered role expectations embedded within social institutions. The findings show that entrepreneurial careers do not meet women's expectations as they are subject to the same gendered constraints as those faced in waged employment. The authors state that even within a country of high employment rates and talent shortage, Germany's status as a conservative welfare state builds gender inequality into entrepreneurial women's lives to constrain career choices. This study illustrates the importance of recognizing gender as a boundary to women's careers, and how the boundary of gender takes on a particular form according to the specificities of the socio-legal and economic context. The appeal of entrepreneurship as a career that facilitates women's movement between home and work, even within an economy experiencing a talent shortage, is not the case in the German context (Braches & Elliott, 2017).

Furthermore, the social and legal context for female entrepreneurs in Germany shows that although gender equality is codified in the German Constitution, open as well as subtle discrimination against women still exists, so that the country is still characterised by a rather traditional labour distribution where men contribute with income and women are mainly responsible for childcare. The German tax system acts in a gender-restrictive way by favouring male participation in the formal labour market and informal, unpaid work of women through discriminating against married women (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2011; Welter, 2004). Women's entrepreneurship is influenced by the value that society attaches to female employment, and child-care facilities play a role in supporting or obstructing women's entrepreneurship. This can be noted by the desired full-day care for children under the age of three, whereas only 29% of parents in West Germany wish to have a full-day care spot, 62% of them do so in East Germany and additionally, there are unmet needs regarding childcare facilities up to 20% in western German states (Alt et al., 2018). Moreover, women entrepreneurship is also influenced by the value society attributes to women employment. Although there has been progress, still many factors related to policy might restrict women's motivation to become entrepreneurs. Additionally, German society still defines women mainly through stereotypical roles associated to family and household responsibilities, and in this way, evaluates implicitly female entrepreneurship as less desirable. The reinforcement of a cautious attitude of women towards entrepreneurship through the ambivalent and male image of the entrepreneur might explain in some way the lower rates of female entrepreneurship (Welter, 2004). Related to this, a

discussion emerged among German policy makers whether a potential lack of a ‘culture of failure’ prevented founders from raising start-up capital. Academic studies based upon GEM data for German regions show that role models, family connections and entrepreneurial networks can reduce a fear of failure in local environments where approval of entrepreneurship is high, while this effect is significantly weaker in low approval environments. Women were most likely to report fear of failure as a barrier, close to the EU average, over the period 2012-17 (51.5% vs. 50.5%) (OECD & European Union, 2018).

However, there is a subtle shift in federal support policies. The basic paradigm of the support programmes and policies is currently organization-based, which is aimed at integrating gender-specific support issues into mainstream organizations such as chambers and business associations, although these support policies are slow(er) to adapt. Most of financial support programmes in Germany target all start-ups or existing enterprises. In some of the federal states, programmes that are exclusively for female entrepreneurs, usually include microcredits and support a small number of female entrepreneurs. However, some initiatives are changing and adapting to be more inclusive. An integral strategy for promoting female entrepreneurship in Germany needs to consider that there are barriers in the institutional, political, and social context, which might be limiting women’s interest in and entry into entrepreneurship (Welter, 2004).

This shift towards considering the institutional and social context can also be noted in the focus of women’s entrepreneurship research from micro-level and individual factors to a greater focus on how meso- and macro- contextual levels impact the decisions of individuals, meaning from ‘gender as a variable’ to research based more on feminist perspectives and the formal and informal institutional factors, acknowledging the social embeddedness of the process of entrepreneurship (Hechavarria et al., 2017).

Gender ideologies impact individual behaviour and the creation of business. Studies show that female entrepreneurs, compared to men, tend to emphasize social values, rather than economic ones. Also, a society with post-materialistic values, as well as with an emphasized femininity increases the creation of social entrepreneurship. In Europe it has been shown that the EU gender spheres division is based upon women’s othering, strengthening patriarchal divisions between public and private spheres. Policies should challenge the contextual obstacles (e.g., horizontal, and vertical segregation) through for example gender quotas or reconciling work and family. In Germany specifically there are structural barriers related to gender and entrepreneurship, like an anti-child and anti-women attitude, the acceptance of the male game, the traditional division of labour, the gender-restrictive role of the German tax system, the stereotypical gender role valorisation of women and a lack of culture of failure.

### 5.5.2 *Meso-Level*

The meso-level of the integrative framework for social entrepreneurship considers dimensions that occur between the macro and micro levels. In that way it includes media representations and role models of entrepreneurship, regional support, services, organizations, and initiatives (Brush et al., 2009), such as networks, accelerators, incubators, co-working spaces, vendors, business partners, suppliers, contractors, and financing organizations. These organizations might be gendered within entrepreneurship through the construction of divisions along gender, whether through symbols and images, or through hierarchies and decision-making (Brush et al., 2018). Next, I describe regional support and services for social entrepreneurship in Germany, as well as give a short insight on the way media influences this ecosystem.

#### 5.5.2.1 Regional Support and Services for Social Entrepreneurship in Germany

Within the regional support and service providers regarding social entrepreneurship in Germany, the welfare system, state, and semi-public actors play an important role. However, many private agents support social enterprises especially in their early phase, with consulting, advocacy, financial support, teaching and research. There is a large and active community of networks and organizations of various sizes that support, advise, organise, advocate and lobby for their members. Research, education, and skills development is provided by public or private universities. Certain non-university training centres provide knowledge, education and support to social enterprises and their number continues to grow. The support landscape also includes counselling offices for senior citizens, self-help support offices, local engagement offices, financial consultancies, rating agencies, and organizations undertaking social-impact analysis and developing social reporting's standards. Additionally, attention is drawn towards social entrepreneurship in start-up conferences as well as several university chairs and prizes and competitions. However, no official marks, labels, or certification systems for social entrepreneurship in Germany have taken hold, nor do corresponding initiatives seem to be in the making. Nevertheless, different initiatives emerged to develop instruments like the award 'Wirk't', a stamp to viable and effective initiatives deserving the attention of social-impact investors, Benefit corporations, transparent civil society, or the Social Reporting Standard (Ravensburg et al., 2018; Usher Shrair, 2015).

Regarding financing, the more traditional welfare organizations and cooperatives have access to an established system of finance organizations, whereas recent new-style social enterprises find it harder to get access to finance. These organizations usually support themselves with their own capital, by private foundations and donations, occasionally public budgets and they usually offer their services free of charge or at a reduced price. The financial needs of new

public-benefit social enterprises remain poorly met because they can only turn to philanthropic sources, which is a complicated and time-consuming process. Smaller new-style social enterprises, small cooperatives and civic engagement organizations rely on hybrid financing, mixing public grants, subsidies, and private donations (including voluntary work) with their own revenue. Social enterprises value their autonomy and flexibility, which might be endangered when allowing an investor to participate in the enterprise. Consequently, many may not seek external finance other than donations, grants, and in-kind support. They are usually located closely to where they operate, relying on a highly motivated local staff and on discretionary management techniques. Germany can provide examples of all possible sources of finance for social enterprises, such as public foundations, public grants and subsidies, private donors, such as large foundations and family trusts, social venture funds and other equity financing, business angels and loan capital (Ravensburg et al., 2018).

The compilation of organizations and initiatives related to social entrepreneurship in Germany for this study was created based on the review of literature and online sources. This compilation was grounded as well as on the infoposter ‘Social Business in Germany 2017/2018’ (Hilfswerft, 2018), which provides a comprehensive overview of companies, actors and supporters of social entrepreneurship in Germany, and additionally on the country report by the European Commission about social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe, which provides a table with a snapshot of the main actors (Ravensburg et al., 2018). In total the compilation in September 2019, includes 180 organizations. This list is by no means an exhaustive compilation of all support organizations in Germany. Following, the most important findings will be described supported by graphics. The data was organized under the following categories:

- Legal Form: AG - gAG, Bank, Benefit Corporation, e.V., European Commission, Foundation, GbR, gGmbH, GmbH, gUG-UG, sole proprietorship, Government, Universities, Institutes and Professorships and welfare organizations.
- Activity: Crowdfunding, Education/ Research, Ethic Financial Services, Financing, Incubators/ Hubs/ support/ counselling, Network/ Platform/ Information, Welfare Organization and Pledge.
- Area: CSR, Economy and Social Responsibility, Education, Science and Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship and sustainability/ethics, Female Entrepreneurship, Female Social Entrepreneurship, Impact investment, Governance, Social Change and Innovation, Sustainability, Women and Work.
- Name of the organization.
- Goal and main activity.

Regarding the legal form (Figure 11), the collection shows that there are mainly universities, institutes and professorships related to social entrepreneurship, registered associations (e.V.) and limited liability companies (GmbH). Other common types of organizations are foundations, state or governmental initiatives, banks, and non-profit limited companies (gGmbH). Also, initiatives from the European Commission, welfare organizations and entrepreneurial and non-profit entrepreneurial companies (UG-gUG) are found.

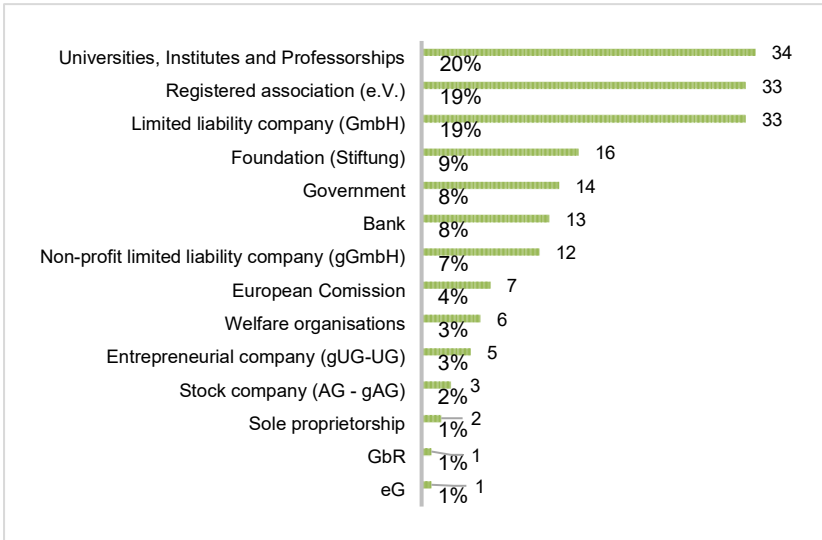


Figure 11: Legal Form of Initiatives Supporting Social Entrepreneurship in Germany (N=180) (Source: own elaboration)

With respect to the main activity of the organizations (Figure 12), the majority are involved in social entrepreneurship as incubators, hubs, support, and counselling. These are followed by activities within education and research. Also, representative are activities providing ethical financial services or crowdfunding, as well as implementing networks, platforms, or information. Providing platforms and encouraging networks for social entrepreneurs has the potential to positively influence female social entrepreneurship. A recent study has shown that female nodes in particular had a significant influence on social entrepreneurial opportunity recognition, pointing to an untapped potential for institutions to provide (future) female social entrepreneurs with an infrastructure that allows them to come up with an original idea for a social venture. Further, there is also potential in intrapreneurship, generating ideas in existing social enterprises (Spiegler & Halberstadt, 2018).

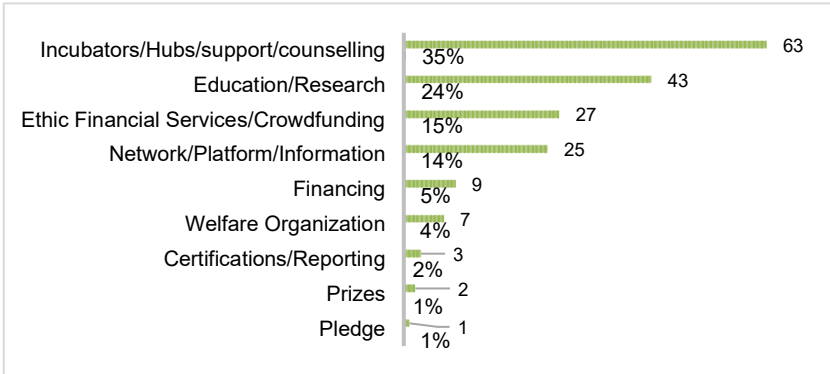


Figure 12: Main Activity of Initiatives Supporting Social Entrepreneurship in Germany (N=180) (Source: own elaboration)

Concerning the main area of focus (Figure 13), the organizations concentrate mainly on social entrepreneurship, followed by social change and innovation. Also important are organizations that focus on female entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in general. Other relevant topics are impact investment, sustainable or ethical entrepreneurship, sustainability in general, women and employment and social economy.

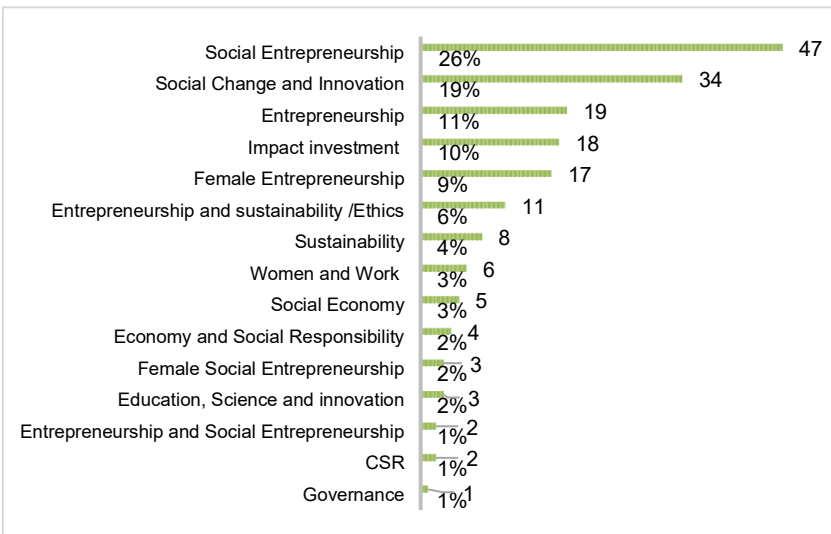
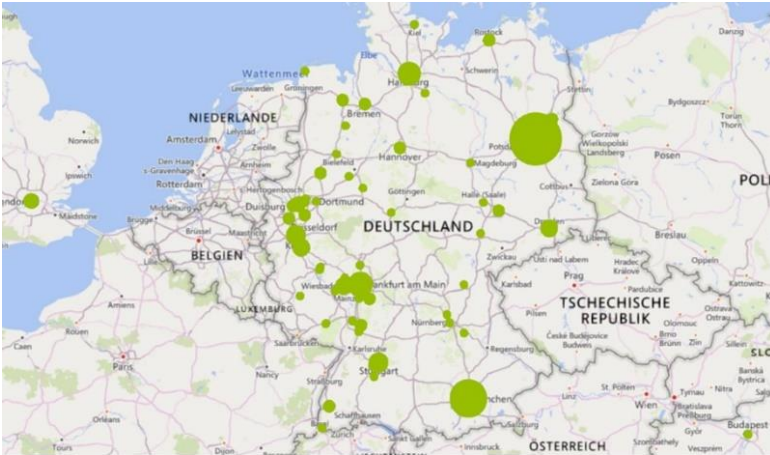


Figure 13: Area of Focus of Initiatives Supporting Social Entrepreneurship in Germany (N = 180) (Source: own elaboration)

Finally, most of the initiatives are located in Berlin (35), Munich (18), Frankfurt (8) and Hamburg (7). Also frequent are cities like Cologne (5), Stuttgart (5), Wiesbaden (4), Dresden (4) and Bonn (4). Many initiatives are present in all Germany (11), some Europe-wide (8) and some on a global scale (7). However, most organizations (39) are located in smaller German cities<sup>18</sup>, and some have work in more than one city across Germany (Figure 14).



City	#	City	#	City	#	City	#
Other German cities	39	Köln	5	Rostock	2	USA	2
Berlin	35	Stuttgart	5	Potsdam	2	Wuppertal	2
München	18	Wiesbaden	4	Mulheim an der Ruhr	2	Eberswalde	2
Germany	11	Dresden	4	Düsseldorf	2	Leipzig	2
Europe	8	Bonn	4	Bremen	2	Freiburg	2
Frankfurt am Main	8	London/UK	3	Oldenburg	2	Münster	2
Hamburg	7	Essen	3	Hannover	2		
Global	7	Groß-Umstadt	2	Heidelberg	2		

Figure 14: Map of German Initiatives Supporting Social Entrepreneurship (N = 180) (Source: own elaboration)

18 Darmstadt, Offenbach, Hanau, Gütersloh, Ruhr, Butzbach, Oestrich-Winkel, Tübingen, Magdeburg, Halle (Saale), Erlangen, Kaiserslautern, Herne, Kiel, Vechta, Bernkastel-Kues, Lüneburg, Sindelfingen, Bochum, Norden, Kulmbach, Osnabrück, Walldorf, Lörrach, Koblenz, Ketzin, Mannheim, Freiburg im Breisgau, Kassel, Kirchheim-Heimstetten, Neumarkt, Vallendar, Gelsenkirchen, Eisenberg, Nürnberg, Sankt Augustin, Idstein, Paderborn



With regards to the regional support and services for social entrepreneurship in Germany, there is a large and active community of heterogeneous organizations providing consultancy, network platforms, advocacy, financial support, education, research, initiating competitions and giving prizes. However, the financial needs of many social enterprises remain poorly met, having either to rely on philanthropic sources or on a hybrid financial structure. Nevertheless, there are different kinds of sources of finance (e.g., public foundations, grants and subsidies, private donors, venture funds, business angels, loan capital and crowdfunding platforms). In this way, the compilation made for this study through the secondary analysis shows that of 180 organizations, 20% each are associations, foundations, and limited liability companies. Regarding their main activity, 35% are incubators, hubs, providing counselling and support, 24% focus on education and research, 15% have to do with ethical financial services or crowdfunding and 14% provide a network, platform for information and exchange. Finally, their main area of focus is for 26% social entrepreneurship, 19% specifically focus on social change and innovation, 11% on entrepreneurship and 10% on impact investment. No initiative supports specifically female social entrepreneurship in Germany and only three identified initiatives focus on this specific field Europe-wide.

#### 5.5.2.2 Media

Achtenhagen & Welter (2011) studied the media representation of female entrepreneurs in Germany. The authors underline that since the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, entrepreneurs in Germany had been identified as 'heroic lone fighters'. Thus, societal values implicitly understand women's entrepreneurship as less desirable and as an exception to the predominant male norm, which influences the identities and individual attitudes of potential female entrepreneurs. Regarding the contribution of media to the social construction of female entrepreneurship, society in Germany continues to be sceptical of female entrepreneurs. A clear gap exists between the desired culture change that would increase the level of entrepreneurship, and the portrayal of women's entrepreneurship in German newspapers. These overall still create a picture of women's entrepreneurship that is old-fashioned and builds on traditional gender stereotypes and role models. In this way, although growth firms are considered good for economic development, business growth achieved by female entrepreneurs is belittled through the articles' focus on the women and their femininity. However, the authors see potential in the fact that some articles indicate the variety of women's entrepreneurship by showing examples of social and cultural entrepreneurial activities and the fact that women's entrepreneurship is discussed in the economic, political as well as cultural sections of these newspapers. In this sense, the authors recommend that the focus should be the entrepreneurial activities of female entrepreneurs, their learning

experiences and personal development gained from establishing and running an enterprise. Also, researchers and practitioners should review performance models through a gender lens, acknowledging a gendered perspective on survival, success, growth, and personal satisfaction of business founders, recognizing the heterogeneity of women's entrepreneurship.

Regarding female social entrepreneurs, the WEstart project discusses shortly that newspaper articles and blog pieces on women social enterprises often indicate that social entrepreneurship is particularly well suited to women. This assertion is linked to the notion that women are more caring or generally have more experience in social, education and health sectors. However, neither the history of the gender labour divide, nor the reasons for which women prefer social fields, which is explicit exclusion from public and thus 'powerful' sectors, is ever discussed (Usher Shrair, 2015).

### 5.5.3 *Micro-Level*

The micro level of the integral framework for social entrepreneurship entails those dimensions that are related to the individual or the team of entrepreneurs, such as their personality, personal values, motivations, and competencies. The next sections will describe the current situation of female social entrepreneurs in Germany, including some relevant statistics on number, legal status, social aims and activities, earnings, etc. Previously, the section about the personal paths towards social entrepreneurship provided information regarding personal values, motivations, education, and work experience. Next, I describe the secondary analysis I made for this study, as well as some country reports on social entrepreneurship and one country report on female social entrepreneurship.

#### 5.5.3.1 Female Social Entrepreneurs in Germany

As previously mentioned, I made a compilation of female social enterprises in Germany based on literature and online sources, especially those organizations listed as supporting/promoting social entrepreneurship in Germany. This compilation includes 346 female social entrepreneurships. The list contains the enterprise names, the legal form, their main social mission, the year of set-up, their central activity, the target group, the industry, social area, and location. This list is by no means a complete compilation of all female social enterprises in Germany, it contains a sample assembled by me to contact possible interviewees and have an overview of the general quantitative characteristics of these social enterprises.

The main legal form used by female social enterprises in Germany (Figure 15) are the limited liability company (GmbH), followed by associations and solo enterprises (sole proprietorship). Less common are entrepreneurial companies (UG) and civil law partnerships (GbR). Similar results appear in the

German WEstart report<sup>19</sup>, adding that most of social enterprises are hybrid (Racheeva, 2015). The German Social Entrepreneurship Monitor (Olenga Tete et al., 2018) found that 22.3% are limited liability companies (GmbH), 12.8% sole proprietorship, 12.8% associations (e.V.), and 11.7% non-profit limited liability companies (gGmbH), whereas the SELUSI report (Huysentruyt, Le Coq, Mair, Rimac, & Stephan, 2016) confirms that the majority are associations (45%), followed by non-profit limited liability companies (17%) and limited liability companies (15%).

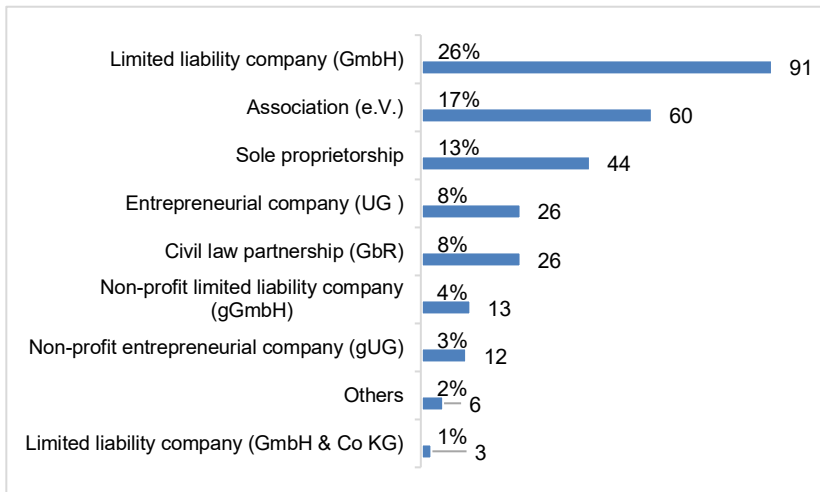


Figure 15: Legal Form of German Female Social Enterprises (N=346)  
(Source: own elaboration)

German female social enterprises are mainly working in the industries of education, human health and social work and information and communication, as well as in professional, scientific, and technical activities, manufacturing and fashion and accommodation and food services (Figure 16). Relatively common are those working in wholesale and retail trade, as well as arts, entertainment, and recreation. For the country report of the WEstart project, the sectors female social entrepreneurs are mostly active in are education, information and communication, accommodation and catering, health, and social work (Racheeva, 2015), also matching the results of this study. In general, social enterprises are

19 Data from the mini report based on primary empirical data gathered by Val Racheeva from February to May 2015 in Germany, on behalf of European Women’s Lobby as part of the WEstart project.

found in all fields of activity (housing, work, financial services, insurances, infrastructure, energy, etc.) (Ravensburg et al., 2018).

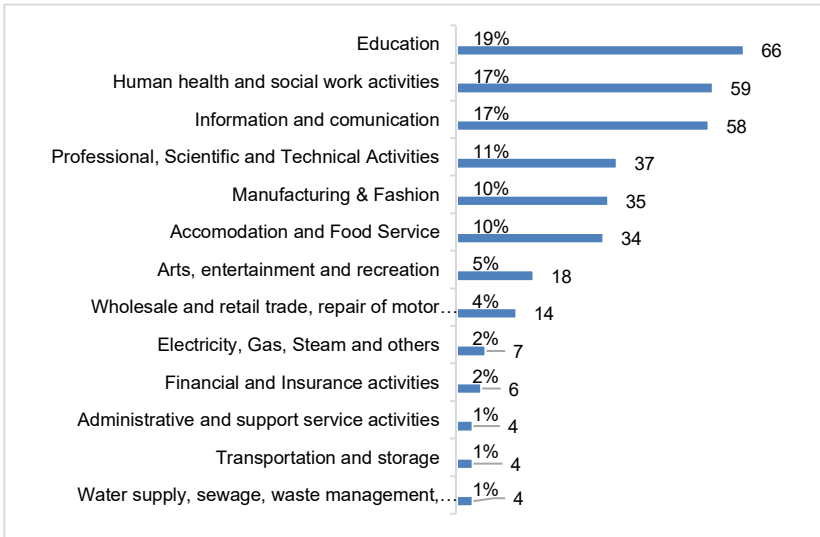


Figure 16: Type of Industry of Female Social Enterprises in Germany (N=346) (Source: own elaboration)

Regarding the social area they are targeting (Figure 17), female social enterprises in Germany mainly serve members of the community by improving their welfare, health, and well-being, protect the environment and reconfigure products, resources and managements or policies to improve a social area. Less targeted areas are giving a voice to marginalized people and promoting civic engagement. For the WEstart country report their missions include education, environment and sustainability, diversity and inclusion, inclusion of socially marginalised groups, women’s empowerment, and aid to developing countries (Racheeva, 2015).

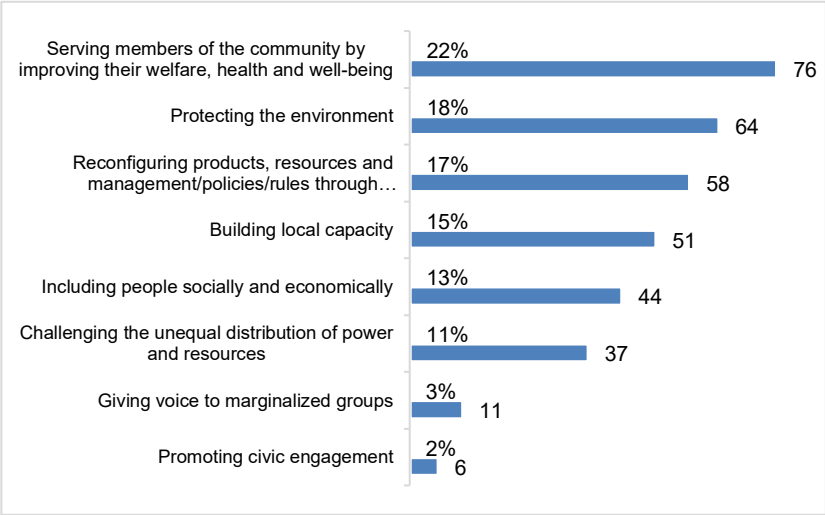


Figure 17: Social Area Targeted by Female Social Enterprises in Germany (N=346) (Source: own elaboration)

Additionally, most of the enterprises are located in Berlin and Hamburg. Other relevant cities were Munich, Frankfurt, Cologne, Duisburg, Stuttgart, and Leipzig. However, more than 50 (15%) of the enterprises are located in diverse cities all over the country (Figure 18).

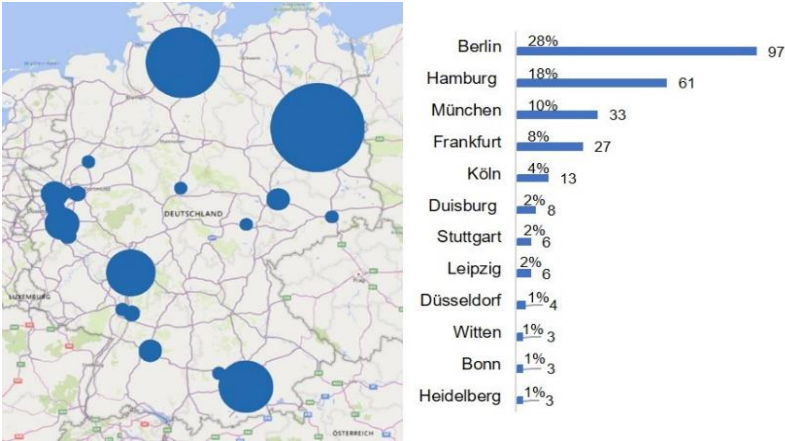


Figure 18: Location of Female Social Enterprises in Germany (N=346) (Source: own elaboration)

Due to the ambiguity of the definition of social entrepreneurship, calculating an exact number of social entrepreneurs in Germany is a difficult task. However, some reports have tried to calculate approximate number and percentages of social entrepreneurs as well as the percentage of female social entrepreneurs. The German Social Entrepreneurship Monitor (Olenga Tete et al., 2018) affirms that according to the German Start-up Monitor 2018 of the Federal Association German Start-ups e.V., 38.1% of the respondents would align within having a social, ecological, and entrepreneurial aspect in their business. Also, when looking at the non-profit sector in Germany, 16% of all organizations describe themselves as social enterprises. For enterprises, when asked how they would categorize their social engagement, approx. 9% would define their social engagement as social entrepreneurship. In this way, the authors calculate that it comes to a total number of 79,599 non-profit organizations. Similarly, using different sources of data and some inclusion/exclusion criteria, the authors of the country report from the OECD and EU, come to a total number of 77,459 social enterprises: 67,746 e.V.sm 2620 foundations, 6584 gGmbHs, 501 cooperatives and seven other organizations (Ravensburg et al., 2018). For the country report of the WEstart project, social entrepreneurship activities represent only 12% of all entrepreneurial activities in Germany (Racheeva, 2015). The KfW report<sup>20</sup> defines young social entrepreneurs as those who are still active founders of a new business and who see their business purpose ‘entirely’ in social or ecological concerns and value this more highly than income generation. In this way, the share of social entrepreneurs in 2017, in all young entrepreneurs is 9%.

An Ashoka report states that 38% of Ashoka Fellows<sup>21</sup>, worldwide, are women (Taberna et al., 2019). For the German Social Entrepreneurship Monitor, female social entrepreneurs are 49.3% of all social entrepreneurs in Germany, so that from 79,599 social enterprises, 39,242 would be female led (Olenga Tete et al., 2018). The KfW, similarly, affirm that women and older people more often prioritize social or ecological concerns, and the proportion of social entrepreneurs is therefore above average. More than half of them are women (53%), while the proportion of women among other young entrepreneurs is 40%. Moreover, the share of social enterprises in the up to 5-year-old start-ups by women is above average at 12%, while men are at 7% (Metzger, 2019). This matches the affirmation of the OECD and EU country report that, when compared to the total German workforce, the percentage of female employees boasts relatively high in the social sector as a whole (Ravensburg et al., 2018) and that of the SELUSI report, which states that 45% are female and 55% are male social entrepreneurs (Huysentruyt, Le Coq et al., 2016).

20 The KfW Start-up Monitor is a representative survey focusing on start-ups who have become self-employed in the previous 5 years. It contains the data of about 50,000 newly randomly selected persons resident in Germany each year (Metzger, 2019).

21 Over 3,500 people in 92 countries

Regarding innovation, the German Social Entrepreneurship Monitor (Olenga Tete et al., 2018) affirms that three out of four social enterprises are highly innovative. Also, one in three describe their impact, products, and services as a worldwide or EU-wide market innovation. The KfW report confirms that around one in three young social entrepreneurs has an offer that did not previously exist on their target market (32%) and about one in four develops their own technological innovations to market maturity (24%) (Metzger, 2019). The SELUSI report affirms that 88% of their sample provided a new product or service, from which 56% was a completely innovation for the market (Huysentruyt, Le Coq et al., 2016). Specifically, for innovation in female social entrepreneurs, there is no data for Germany, however, a report based on data of five European countries<sup>22</sup>, shows that on average 88% of social ventures had introduced at least one new or significantly improved process, service, and product in the past 12 months (N=546), which is the case for both female (87%) and male (88%) run ventures. When it comes to new market creation, entering/pioneering new markets, women seem to be taking the lead over male social entrepreneurs, with 62% of social ventures run by women were the first to provide this kind of service or product in their region, country or worldwide, compared to 54% for those ventures run by men (Huysentruyt, 2014).

For social entrepreneurs in Germany the main perceived barriers are for 62% of the respondent start-up financing and for 65% follow-up financing. Another obstacle is considered by 55% to be a lack of support services (Olenga Tete et al., 2018). Young social entrepreneurs feel most affected by bureaucracy and the burden on the family. In comparison to other young entrepreneurs, however, they rarely see customer acquisition as problematic, which could indicate that social entrepreneurs respond more frequently to the needs of customer groups who are not (sufficiently) served by regular entrepreneurs. Instead, young social entrepreneurs are much more concerned about deficits in their commercial knowledge. They also experience more problems in recruiting and financing employees. Fundraising is also more intricate for young social entrepreneurs because they have to look more frequently for alternative sources of capital (Metzger, 2019). German female social entrepreneurs perceive barriers in the lack of funding and family responsibilities (Racheeva, 2015). For all female Ashoka fellows, the most frequently-cited barriers are funding opportunities for women-led initiatives, as it is more difficult to directly engage potential funders and acquire the same level of visibility as their male peers, a lack of discourse and recognition of women innovators, as they are associated more frequently with social work or community organizing than innovation, which they are initiating in almost every area of social and environmental challenges (Taberna et al., 2019).

22 The LSE-SELUSI database captures detailed market- and organization level information on over 550 social enterprises in Hungary, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

In relation to revenues as well as employees, in general, German social enterprises tend to be rather small. Since 2012 about 53% of organizations have indicated an increase of earnings, these remained constant for about 16%, and about 10% decreased. When compared to the total German workforce, the percentage of part-time and limited contracts are relatively high in the social sector as a whole (Ravensburg et al., 2018). This is confirmed by the SELUSI report, which states that 50% of their sample had less than 10 employees and 34% between 10 and 49 (Huysentruyt, Le Coq et al., 2016). Also, social entrepreneurs are more often team players compared to other young entrepreneurs, so that one in four works in an entrepreneurial team (26%) and a third has employees (32%). Other young entrepreneurs work more frequently solo and less frequently with employees (19% and 25%) (Metzger, 2019). Moreover, in 56% of the social enterprises, employees directly influence decisions and 87% of social enterprises strive for scaling (Olenga Tete et al., 2018). The WEstart report indicates that the annual revenue for female social entrepreneurs in Germany is for 52.2% less than €50,000, and for 11.1% more than €500,000. 90% of the profits are reinvested back into the organization's social mission by the majority of surveyed. Less than one third sustain their household entirely with the income from their social enterprise. Furthermore, on average, three jobs are generated by women-led social enterprises. The regular length of operation is less than two years. Just as for all social entrepreneurs, female social enterprises in Germany are very small and have fewer employees than commercial companies and the number of full-time employees is twice as low as the number of volunteers and part-time employed (Racheeva, 2015).

With respect to the motivations, only 17% of young social entrepreneurs cite a necessity-motive as their main reason for becoming self-employed, compared with one third of other young entrepreneurs. The majority of young social entrepreneurs set up to exploit a particular business idea (60%), one in four for other reasons such as self-realization (Metzger, 2019). Female social entrepreneurs are motivated by personal experiences with a social issue and passion for social change (Racheeva, 2015), which resembles the previously discussed qualitative results of the conducted interviews for this study.

Other relevant information about social entrepreneurs in Germany is that public grants, subsidies, and donations still function as important financing sources, although their share has generally fallen in the last years. The level of professionalisation reaches relatively high in socially active third sector organizations, including most social enterprises (Ravensburg et al., 2018). 60% of social entrepreneurs hold a master's degree, 18% a PhD and 8% other type of educational degree (Huysentruyt, Le Coq et al., 2016). Moreover, politicians only receive a rating of 4.6<sup>23</sup> for supporting social entrepreneurship. 73% of social enterprises want stronger representation (Olenga Tete et al., 2018).

23 Were 1 is the highest grade and 6 is the lowest



Finally, female social entrepreneurs contribute to women's empowerment as role models, and being an entrepreneur also helps women in their personal development, especially improving their skills and confidence. Furthermore, 70% of women did not have any care responsibilities when starting their social enterprise (Racheeva, 2015).

In general, social enterprises are very heterogeneous in their business and impact models, their legal forms and financing. They are rather small and have usually many part-time employees. Also, they are highly innovative and perceive the main barriers in financing and bureaucracy, lack of support services, recruiting and lack of commercial knowledge. There are approx. 78,000 social enterprises in Germany, from which half of them are women-led. These are usually limited liability companies or sole proprietorships, act mainly in the information and communication and education sector, and serve mostly the social mission of educating, improving the well-being of communities, protecting the environment and inclusion.

## 6 Conclusions

The latest report on social entrepreneurship in Germany (Olenga Tete et al., 2018) shows that 49.3% of social entrepreneurs in Germany are female. In comparison, the Female Founders Monitor (Kollmann et al., 2018) states that women are represented as (co)founders in 28% and in 8% of female-only teams of all surveyed commercial start-ups. Previous studies (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Brush et al., 2018; Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015; Minniti, 2009) have shown that entrepreneurship is not gender-neutral. Entrepreneurship has a male label, it is a tool for economic growth, for individuals who assume risk, are innovative, strong-willed, and courageous. In the evaluation of male and female entrepreneurs, women seem to be on the losing side. Their businesses are generally smaller, grow more slowly and are less profitable. But if controlled according to different variables (industry, size, age), the differences disappear (Huysentruyt, 2014). Research is needed on the role of gender in entrepreneurship and in the economy, in order to empirically demonstrate structural differences, such as for example the fact that in the non-profit sector, despite a very high proportion of women employees (75%), the majority of the leadership positions are taken over by men (Zimmer et al., 2017). Specific studies and research are needed with a focus on gender, because women and other non-norm-conforming are either not shown at all in supposedly neutral studies and analyses, and if they are, then they are often portrayed as inadequate in comparison to the male role model.

Some studies have already analysed gender and social entrepreneurship (Cordobés, 2016; Gawell & Sundin, 2014; Humbert, 2012; Huysentruyt, 2014; Teasdale et al., 2011; Terjesen, 2017; Urbano et al., 2014; Usher Shrair, 2015), and many of these studies prove that women feel comfortable in the social entrepreneurship sector, that they can develop and apply a different form of entrepreneurship and management and thus not only secure their financial independence but can do a meaningful job. However, there are still many challenges. In the social entrepreneurship field, men are portrayed more as social super-heroes, whereas women are merely assumed to be active as social entrepreneurs because it is inherent to them (McAdam, 2013). Moreover, the social entrepreneurship sector remains undervalued and underpaid, and by assuming that women remain legitimate social entrepreneurs, there is a risk that the existing inequality will continue to grow (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016), and biological reduction (essentialism) entails the danger of feminising environmental and social responsibility (Mölders, 2019). Furthermore, it remains legitimate to claim that women do not need financial or social recognition because they feel more comfortable and happier in this sector.

Based on this, the most important aspects of the epistemological approach of this dissertation are first, that it is framed in social constructionism, meaning

that it understands individuals and societies as socially constructed, where subjects have a dialectical relation with social structures and where gender is therefore also, socially constructed (Ahl, 2002; P. Berger & Luckmann, 1991). Second, the feminist approach is supported by the feminist post-structuralist theory, where the focus is set on the specific processes whereby individuals are made into gendered subjects, which are influenced not only by the subjective experience, but also by society, culture, language and context in general (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Butler, 2004; Frost & Elichaoﬀ, 2014). In this way, it underlines a contextualized view on entrepreneurship, and especially within female social entrepreneurship, it emphasises the avoidance of looking for an essential relationship between the female and the social, moreover, focusing on the analysis of the form and intent of female social entrepreneurship, examining how gender is constructed within the social entrepreneurial ecosystem (Bruni et al., 2004; Brush et al., 2018; Welter, 2011). The resulting integrative frame for the analysis of social entrepreneurship<sup>24</sup> allows a holistic analysis of the ecosystem, including inequality structures and power of dominant groups as well as agency of the individuals.

In this way, regarding the research goals and justification of this study, it aimed at filling the gap of studies on social entrepreneurship and gender, as well as telling stories about women’s business practices, challenging the taken-for-granted assumptions of gender neutrality, and offering explanations and analysis to social entrepreneurship that are wanted and needed, connecting research to social transformation, offering applicable data to the world women live in (Harding, 1987). With regards to the main research question, female social entrepreneurship and their political, social, and economic context has been portrayed and I summarize the most important results next, answering the proposed secondary research questions.

## **6.1 Personal Path Towards Social Entrepreneurship**

**What are the main personal motivations of female social entrepreneurs? What was their educational path and what working experience do they have?**

All interviewed social entrepreneurs have a higher educational degree and working experience. Female social entrepreneurs have international experience, while only some male social entrepreneurs received formal education in

<sup>24</sup> This frame has transformed throughout the research process until this last version, supported by theoretical as well as empirical inputs from the interviews and secondary analysis, and proposes an open, still evolving format. Here the embeddedness of the integral frame within globalized structures and relations (North/South) is important to mention.

entrepreneurship. Caring responsibilities for female social entrepreneurs are varied. Among the interviewed male social entrepreneurs only one was a recent father, whereas between the female respondents almost half had caring responsibilities for children.

The main personal motivations to start a social enterprise was a personal call, dream or passion and the identification of a market gap, whether through a personal or professional experience. Also important were aiming at having more flexibility and freedom concerning working hours, schedules, and decision-making. Also, the desire to change or save the world. Specially for female social entrepreneurs, experiences abroad were in many cases triggers for the foundation. In general, reports show that regarding motivations, very few young social entrepreneurs (17%) are necessity-driven founders, compared with one third of other young entrepreneurs. Their main motivation is to exploit a particular business idea (60%), and one in four for other reasons, such as self-realization (Metzger, 2019). Female social entrepreneurs are motivated by personal experiences with a social issue and passion for social change (Racheeva, 2015), which resembles the results of the interviews conducted for this study.

For most of the interviewees establishing the social enterprise, has allowed them to self-actualize through the realization of their vision and mission, has provided them with self-determination and freedom, as well as an opportunity to learn and grow. However, many also acknowledged the danger of burn-out as well as their social enterprises representing only one dimension of their self-actualisation.

## **6.2 Social Entrepreneurship**

### **What are the contributions and impact they are pursuing through their enterprises? How are they managing their enterprises?**

The social missions they pursuit can be organised in different social areas: protecting the environment, building local capacity, and serving members of the community by improving their welfare, health, and well-being. Less common are those social enterprises aiming at challenging the unequal distribution of power and resources and including people socially and economically.

The conceptualization of social entrepreneurship is understood for most of the respondents and experts, as executing ideas to improve society, combining the use of the most efficient business model with achieving the major impact. In this way, the service or product is the most relevant, and money or profit is just a resource to be able to have the wanted impact, independently and within the functioning economic system. However, for many, there are still several misunderstandings and unclarities surrounding the concept. The experts provided the concept of sustainable entrepreneurship, which expands or

transforms the notion of social entrepreneurship towards sustainable entrepreneurship, under which one can find social and ecological entrepreneurship.

In this way, the final definition, supported by the theoretical frame, as well as by the empirical results, states: ‘Sustainable/social entrepreneurship is an undertaking, embedded in a social, cultural, economic and political context, where individual(s) discover and evaluate opportunities or their own visions and ideas and bring them into reality by providing goods and services, applying entrepreneurial and innovative processes based on collective and participatory decision-making, with the main purpose to generate social value and well-being and resolve social, economic or ecological problems through the creation of systemic change, using profit/revenues as a resource to be able to achieve as much impact as possible. It can be realized through a wide spectrum of organizational forms’.

All interviewed are satisfied with their success, growth, and development, although all agree that there is still space to grow and improve. Female social entrepreneurs have rather small organizations, with a max. of 15 employees, many in part-time contracts, whereas the interviewed male social entrepreneurs tend to have rather medium-sized organizations and more employees. For many interviewees, the main management practices they are applying are non-hierarchical, flexible, and adaptable working structures, as well as pursuing efficient communication processes and cooperative decision-making. Specially for female social founders, the important decisions are made very mindfully, taking enough time and energy to consider all aspects. These results are consistent with findings by Huysentruyt (2014) and Huysentruyt et. al (2015) who state that compared to male social entrepreneurs, and controlling for age, sector, operational model and country location, female social entrepreneurs are significantly more likely to engage in participatory management practices; also, participatory leadership has been positively associated with radical innovation in social enterprises. These results also match the findings by the report from Ashoka (Taberna et al., 2019) and Usher Shrair (2015) who encountered that most female social entrepreneurs manage and lead their enterprises in a participatory, inclusive, and collaborative way.

All respondent’s social enterprises are innovations in their sectors, which was also acknowledged by the diverse reports on social entrepreneurship, showing rates from 56% (Huysentruyt, Le Coq et al., 2016) and 60.5% (Olenga Tete et al., 2018) of completely new market innovations. Their working routines involve flexibility and efficient time management. For the majority, the financing of the enterprises was realized through some sort of support either by the state, foundations, or organizations, as well as using a financing hybrid model. However, some have financed their enterprises with their own capital, pro bono work, as well as parallel half-time jobs. While female social entrepreneurs are more likely to use their private savings or loans from relatives,

male social entrepreneurs are more likely to receive venture funds and private investments. All participants have future goals to grow and expand.

The current paradigm regarding entrepreneurship or start-up endorses growth and scale at all costs and evaluates slow and steady growth as missing enthusiasm or ambition. However, a change of this paradigm is necessary, and to achieve this the system and its structures need to be addressed. Regarding female entrepreneurship, the solution of the problem will not be attained if female entrepreneurs are integrated into a broken system but rather to support those who are trying to re-form it, transforming business for the better. This transformation is motivated by the need for sustainable, fair and purpose-driven practices that are essential for the well-being and future survival of society (Ryland & Jaspers, 2019). Social and sustainable entrepreneurship is thus a valuable alternative and initiative towards this transformation.

### **6.3 Doing Gender in Social Entrepreneurship**

**How is gender ‘being done’ in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem? What role is gender playing for female social entrepreneurs? What discourses are used?**

The symbolic gender order is dynamic and varies across time and space. Gender identity construction is enabled by gendered structures, which are embedded in jobs and organizations. To be able to work efficiently in a job position, the individual often must enact a certain gender identity according to these structures. Individuals ‘do’ gender when doing the job and the gender of both the individual and the job are constructed while doing the job (Nentwich & Kelan, 2014). In this way, entrepreneurship is historically located in the symbolic universe of the male, assigning the sphere of activity and proactivity to the male, while it associates passivity, adaptation, and flexibility with the female. The interpreted archetypal figures, the ‘entrepreneur’ (he who discovers new worlds), the ‘leader’ (he who controls) and the ‘manager’ (he who enforces rational management) serve as symbolic expressions of performance, especially in the business world. Moreover, female enterprise needs to be justified because it is not a shared and self-evident social value (Bruni et al., 2004). Overall accepted role stereotypes regulate the nature of women’s entrepreneurship and the extent to which female entrepreneurs are a tolerated, accepted or encouraged, as they inform about ‘normal’ and ‘desired’ behaviour of a woman as well as of entrepreneurs. Society, thus, legitimizes or restricts entrepreneurial actions, because culturally accepted role models have an influence on the recognition of entrepreneurship as a viable career option, as well as on the types of entrepreneurship (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2011).

If research on entrepreneurship makes masculinity invisible, the male entrepreneurial model is universalized and stripped of gender, thus prescribed independently of a person's gender. Therefore, if a woman wants to become an entrepreneur, they are required to comply with an apparent neutral set of values, while men are required to comply with those of 'entrepreneurial' masculinity. Consequently, gender and entrepreneurship are a theoretical dichotomy whose dividing line is constantly blurred, crossed, and denied, but then reconstructed *a posteriori* (Bruni et al., 2004). This reconstruction is possible because what is defined as 'masculine' and 'feminine' might be different and might also shift between contexts, so that gender might be relevant in one situation, but insignificant or done differently in another. Furthermore, normative assumptions on how gender should be done in a certain situation are flexible too. The subversion of stereotypical understandings of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' can be accomplished when men do 'femininity' and women 'masculinity' (Nentwich & Kelan, 2014). In this way, evidence shows that doing entrepreneurship and doing gender involve moving between different symbolic spaces, such as the domestic and the business realm (Stead, 2017).

The results of this study show that the interviewed female and male social founders also move between different symbolic spaces, offering a diverse spectrum of gendered discourses. The same person might provide discourses from different ends of the spectrum. At one end of the spectrum, discourses creating gender differences are found. These are followed by those discourses exhibiting gender discrimination. Subsequently, discourses endorsing intersectionality emerge, and at the end of the spectrum discourses minimizing gender influences appear. Finally, a different kind of discourse emerges, namely those of re-doing gender, especially in relation to social entrepreneurship.

Within those discourses creating gender differences, the affirmations include that women and men are different, mainly in the way they work and their values and priorities. Mostly, those differences are explained because of caring responsibilities (motherhood) or socialization based on gender. Many respondents also mentioned traits and competencies women are missing or should develop. In some cases, interviewees differentiated themselves from typical women. In this way, regarding social entrepreneurship and gender, the sector has benefits for many respondents: the number of women is higher in this area compared to others, women feel more comfortable in this sector and as mentioned by few respondents, 'women are genetically more social' (FSE 09 T).

This type of discourse is expected, as research has showed that women embody maternal and carer identities to afford them legitimacy as entrepreneurs in traditionally female-oriented businesses (Stead, 2017). Moreover, evidence has established that at the business level, women are aware of the norm within the business world, but whereas for some of them the norm is neutral and believe that they fit in, others recognize that it is male-gendered and try to adapt within limits, defining themselves as 'other' in comparison with the traditional

entrepreneur and accepted business norms. Furthermore, they appear to be uncomfortable in taking too many risks and incurring financial debts, placing emphasis on non-profit goals and recounting that maximizing profit is not a priority. This is particularly evident within the care/educational sector, where 'morality talk' emerges (García & Welter, 2013). In this study, the respondents underlined gender differences, and while in some cases this gender difference was seen as a benefit for women in the social sector, in other cases, they defined themselves as the 'other', but not compared to men, but rather compared to 'regular women', creating in the same way, an identity that 'fits' better in this business world. Also, like the term 'modelling the norm' by Stead (2017, p. 70), which describes women performing belonging by replicating or reproducing prevailing norms of what constitutes an entrepreneur, it can be seen that respondents proposed a 'fix the woman' approach to belonging, a means to fit, which addresses the deficit and provides some degree of acceptance and legitimization. In general, just as in the case of the WEstart report findings, there is a common belief among the interviewed female social entrepreneurs that the way they have been born or socialised as women, to be caring and cooperative, and the executed tasks related to the social and household domain are relevant and useful to their social entrepreneurship careers. Also, as in this report, only some of the respondents questioned or problematised the fact that these kinds of characteristics and tasks are gendered as feminine (Usher Shrair, 2015).

Furthermore, discourses exhibiting gender discrimination provide examples of their own or observed experiences of gender discrimination, underlining discrimination against Trans, Intersex and Nonbinary People, as well as specific numbers or statistics illustrating these. Many interviewees also emphasized that social entrepreneurship has still many needs, as it should and must be related with profit and value and there is still discrimination against women. It is important to note, that even though many women recounted and defined their experiences as discrimination, for many, these experiences were not defined as such. These findings also match those of other studies of gender and social entrepreneurship (Braches & Elliott, 2017; Cordobés, 2016; Usher Shrair, 2015), where all describe the same difficulty for some interviewees to name and describe experiences of gender discrimination as such, claiming that social attitudes more than discrimination are barriers and refusing the fact that being a woman compared to being a man has made it more difficult to establish a business. Thus, the findings can mirror the post-feminism process described by McRobbie (2004), underlining the ambivalence to support feminism by some women who believe that equality is already achieved, considering that women are now able to choose the lives they want.

Concerning discourses endorsing intersectionality the main idea is that gender is not the only dimension that played a role in their paths, as well as acknowledging that there are many other dimensions that intersect with gender regarding discrimination. As resource accumulation and utilisation are central



to entrepreneurial activity and new business creation, this has obvious consequences for how opportunities are recognised and enacted also by female social entrepreneurs (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). The recognition of this concept, aware or unaware of its theoretical background, demonstrates insight and keen awareness of the complexity of discrimination and social stratification by the interviewees that endorsed it.

Regarding discourses minimizing gender influence, these were mostly based on the idea that gender did not play any role throughout their paths, so that the respondents did not feel that their gender has been a problem or a burden. It includes also narratives downplaying gender discrimination experiences, those that warn of the problematic of generalizing, those hesitant and doubtful about their answer about the role of gender in their lives and finally, those trying to figure out this role by comparing themselves to men. In this way, for many, social entrepreneurship is independent from gender, so that the traits and competencies needed are not related to gender. For Stead (2017), concealment, which describes how women perform belonging by concealing their femininity or concealing their identity as an entrepreneur, could be one strategy that female social entrepreneurs are using in order to belong - concealing or downplaying the meaning of their gender in their professional paths. Achtegahen & Welter (2011) on the other hand describe this type of discourse as triggered by the construction of female entrepreneurship as a deviation from the male norm, so that women overcome this deviation by either adhering to the 'male' stereotype or by distancing themselves from the predominant norm, especially if they perceive the image as negative for themselves and their self-identity, for example in the care sector, or in this case, the social sector. They portray themselves as being like the male norm of entrepreneurship, refusing to accept the prevailing image of female entrepreneurship and therefore acting 'gender blind'.

Finally, to 'do' gender is not always complying to normative conceptions of femininity or masculinity; it has more to do with engaging in behaviours which are subject to gender assessment. Therefore, it is argued that 'gender is not undone so much as redone', referring to 'a change in the normative conceptions to which members of particular sex categories are held accountable' (West & Zimmerman, 2009, p. 118). In this way, discourses of re-doing gender underline gender differences, mainly values and priorities related to social entrepreneurship, as well as highlighting the different relation women have with money or profit. In this way, they draw attention to the attributes and traits women bring to the business arena, emphasizing the benefits for social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in general. This matches the findings from García & Welter (2013) who encountered that women referred to 'finding things that women bring to the business realm' such as developing a family-friendly workplace, and 'finding things in the business realm that empower women' such as participation in business networks; which they categorized as

re-doing gender as well. For the authors, women add value to their femininity within the business context where traditionally, womanhood has been seen as ‘the other’ gender that has to be fixed and adapted to a male norm. Other studies have also shown that female entrepreneurs, compared to male entrepreneurs, tend to invest more of their income back into their families and communities, investing more in food and children’s education, also they create greater heterogeneity in business ownership, shifting power over resources, and social relations and networks. Moreover, female social entrepreneurs apply four distinctive practices, such as inclusive and collective leadership, creating new roles for girls and women to accelerate social impact and leverage gender-specific identities; they assert motherhood and daily, gender-based struggles as an asset for leadership and entrepreneurship, and they include men in solutions to problems viewed as only affecting women, entrusting men as allies in a context-specific way (Brush et al., 2018; Taberna et al., 2019). Furthermore, within the discourses of re-doing gender, the interviewees provided discourses challenging gender discrimination and stereotypical gender roles. In social entrepreneurship specifically, it has been underlined that changing systems is usually done by women, also that social entrepreneurship, as a new type of business, needs a new type of leadership, less egocentric, more focused on relations and identity; traits that are usually female connoted. Highlighted was the potential to transform entrepreneurship and the success-concept through a feminist focus towards a more egalitarian and sustainable economy, so that specifying sectors like female entrepreneurship or social entrepreneurship will no longer be needed. I will discuss this potential further in more detail.

Some studies have underlined strategies through which men are able to construct masculine identities despite ‘doing femininity’ while at work, called ‘boundary work’ and distance themselves from the ways that women do the job. This similar strategy is being used by female social entrepreneurs, distancing themselves from the male norm, but in the same way, from the regular business world. Since this context is strongly gender-segregating, with discourses that describe women as lacking the traits they need to be entrepreneurs, it becomes difficult for women to construct a professional identity. It is required to ‘do masculinity’ by being aggressive, growth- and profit-oriented, and performance motivated. Constructing oneself as an entrepreneur and as a woman appears to be a contradiction. However, gender identities can be constructed through stressing or downplaying specific aspects of the job, and in this case, distancing themselves from this male norm and finding ways to construct their gender and entrepreneur identity in new ways, challenging the predominant norms. These re-doings of gender by some female and male<sup>25</sup> social

25 For some male social entrepreneurs to talk about their masculine gender identify as such was difficult and compared to women who could see (dis-)advantages in being a woman, some men only minimized the influence of gender, and presented themselves as businessmen with a social mission, without really challenging gender norms. However, a kind of re-doing

entrepreneurs, underlines the fact that gender identity is neither made relevant in each and every situation and can be enacted as challenging and hence subvert the gender binary (Nentwich & Kelan, 2014).

However, this challenge of the norm, could also be interpreted just as a 'tempered disruption', which denotes how female entrepreneurs disrupt traditional and normative gendered expectations of what is an 'entrepreneur', but also how they temper this disruption in order to belong. This term builds on 'footing' and 'gender commodification' proposed by Bruni et al. (2004, p. 424), but it extends these ideas by recognising the risk of disruption and emphasising a tempered approach that considers risk, making a strategic use of gendered assumptions (Stead, 2017, p. 71). Therefore, especially in social entrepreneurship, although women are disrupting traditional and normative gendered expectations of what it is an 'entrepreneur' (for example by saying that money and un-reflected growth is not their aim), in many cases it could remain a tempered disruption as it makes strategic use of gendered assumptions, such as that women are 'genetically more social' (FSE 09 T), or 'women have the caring and communicational skills that are needed in social areas' (FSE 10 T).

One important conclusion is that this study provides further evidence, matching other studies (Bruni et al., 2004; García & Welter, 2013; Nentwich & Kelan, 2014; Stead, 2017) that female social entrepreneurs rely on and perform multiple and often hybrid gender identities, shifting their positioning and identification as social entrepreneurs. The agency of women is emphasized here, as they challenge norms, reposition themselves, and actively open up spaces that disrupt and resist gendered norms (Stead, 2017). In this way, the construction of gender is an ongoing process. Social entrepreneurship is a context in which this construction is made complying with the available norms, but also challenging these, and re-doing gender in relation to doing business as well as doing (re)productive/care work (West & Zimmerman, 2009).

gender could be interpreted from discourses showing vulnerability and a desire to learn and taking responsibility about gender issues.

## 6.4 Future of Social Entrepreneurship

**What structures, programmes and policies should be implemented to support the involvement of women, girls, and youth in social Entrepreneurship? What is the potential of social entrepreneurship to facilitate social change and more equal, innovative, and inclusive ways to tackle social issues? What is the potential of social entrepreneurship combined with feminist approaches to transform the entrepreneurship ecosystem?**

Regarding the social entrepreneurship context in Germany, some social entrepreneurs and experts feel optimistic and sustain that there are many strengths, like the strong social economy of the country, the creation of the German social entrepreneurship network, and social entrepreneurship being a possibility to decrease the exploitation of the reproductive sector. However, critiques to the context abound. Mostly underlined is the lack of funding and efficient legal structures, as well as the fact that the sector is still very conservative in terms of policies and innovation; also, there is a biased and unfair competition for funding and grants.

The main idea to promote social entrepreneurship is education, be it by training in entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, especially in schools and universities, by education about gender, multiculturality, inclusion and other personal skills development. Role models were also underlined. Theory has shown that women become more contextually adept in identity work overtime, so that at more advanced stages of their career, women could be valuable mentors in terms of developing socio-cultural and political competencies for those with less experience (Stead, 2017). Also mentioned was the need to change the social values of success, especially through media. Some few mentioned the improvement of entry opportunities such as facilitating the application for funding or increasing the funding structures for social entrepreneurship in general and adapting some requirements, like for example pitching contests.

The potential of social entrepreneurship as a catalyst for social change is seen with optimism by most of the respondents. They believe that aiming at resolving social issues, linked with profit or value creation is changing the offer and demand as well as the relations between consumers and enterprises towards sustainability and fair conditions. Innovation was mentioned as well as one valuable potential of social enterprises. However, there are some critiques and concerns about the sector, for example its real scope and impact in the public. At the end, many respondents wish that the specific concept of social enterprises will no longer be necessary as all companies will be designed and developed following those social and sustainable guidelines, a kind of 'social and sustainable mainstreaming' for enterprises, businesses, and organizations.

Lastly, there is great potential of social entrepreneurship combined with feminist approaches to transform the current entrepreneurship ecosystem. This

potential is sustained in the empirical results of this study: some experts confirmed the potential of feminist economics to transform the system, and some interviewed female social entrepreneurs are using their agency to re-do gender within social entrepreneurship, while also being aware of the potential of feminist theories within their work or their ideas to promote social change ('I use decolonization theories' (FSE 10 T) – 'We should apply a gender perspective in education' (FSE 13 T)). Overall, social entrepreneurship entails two contrasting sides. Entrepreneurship denotes a heroic, courageous, strong, in general, a distinctively masculine description. The social, on the other hand, denotes reproductive, caring, and emphatic activities, which are distinctively connoted as feminine. In this way, the term 'social entrepreneur' appears to have complex gender connotations rather than gender-neutrality associated with it (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016). Within the economic realm it is clear that slowly, women are about to conquer the world of work, but are paying the price of embracing the male rules of the game (Kelber, 2019). Social entrepreneurship is providing an opportunity to change those rules. However, this must be taken with caution. Insisting on a market-oriented perspective limits the scope of action of social entrepreneurship while also concealing economic plurality (Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019). Moreover, ignoring to address the prevailing female responsibility for care, as well as not reflecting about the distribution of unpaid domestic work (Bauhardt, 2014) can lead to the replication of current inequality structures. In other words, including an explicit intersectional perspective into social entrepreneurship is necessary, and therefore the combination with feminist economics, can support the understanding of care work as located in the border between market and non-market spaces (Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019). Social entrepreneurship can act as an ally for transitional processes towards a full alignment with for example social economy values (Kawano, 2018) or other alternative more equal and sustainable economic and social systems. Lastly, social entrepreneurship can provide room to continue to deliberate, initiate and further develop such alternative social and economic models (Agenjo-Calderón & Gálvez-Muñoz, 2019).

## **6.5 German Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem**

### **What are the political, economic, and social structures involved in (limiting or supporting) female social entrepreneurship?**

The statistics on female entrepreneurship in Germany show that there is still a significant gender gap regarding the self-employment rate and the total early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity rate. Women also establish businesses in different industry sectors and show different attitudes and priorities than men

towards their businesses. Moreover, women present a higher likelihood of innovativeness than men (Huysentruyt, 2014). Therefore, institutional and social structures are still influencing men and women differently when developing a business (Kollmann et al., 2018; OECD, 2017; OECD & European Union, 2018). Nonetheless, the promotion of female entrepreneurship in Germany has received great attention over the last years. There are several national and regional initiatives and programmes started by different ministries and organizations, underlining networking, counselling, and competency development. However, no specific mention of support for female social entrepreneurs is found (COMM/DG/UNIT, 2019a, 2019b; European Commission, 2013; OECD & European Union, 2018; Ravensburg et al., 2018).

Regarding national policies and programmes for promoting social entrepreneurship in Germany, there is a relative passiveness and an unwillingness to establish a common definition of social entrepreneurship from politics. However, there is the recognition of the contribution and function of social enterprises, so that two ministries (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth) have included social entrepreneurship into their National Engagement Strategies. Several other ministries and government organizations have initiated projects for its promotion and support as well. Regarding the legal and fiscal framework, in Germany there is no specific legislation for social enterprises, so that many legal forms and their combinations are available (Ravensburg et al., 2018; SEND, 2019). Several recommendations from different research studies and relevant organizations have been made in order to improve the conditions under which social enterprises work in Germany. Most important is to develop and apply a continuity and concerted strategy for the promotion of social entrepreneurship in the federal state. In general, these proposals can be organized into those regarding education and culture (e.g. improving data, impact measurement and school and university initiatives); those with regard to policy (e.g. re-assessment of funding logic and legal forms), those about financing (e.g. improvement of a nationwide funding strategy, acknowledging hybrid models and the adjustment of bureaucracy and regulations towards more impact-oriented financial support), and finally those proposing cooperation and infrastructure (e.g. improving the cooperation and exchange between all stakeholders, as well as establishing a reference person in each ministry) (Ravensburg et al., 2018; Ashoka & McKinsey, 2019; AWO et al., 2019; SEND, 2019).

With regards to the social stratification, focussing on gender, it is clear that gender ideologies impact individual behaviour and the creation of business. Studies show that female entrepreneurs, compared with men, tend to emphasize social values, rather than economic ones. Also, a society with post-materialistic values, as well as with an emphasized femininity increases the creation of social entrepreneurship (Hechavarría et al., 2017; Hechavarría & Ingram,

2016). In Europe it has been revealed that the EU gender spheres division is based upon women's othering, strengthening patriarchal divisions between public and private spheres. Policies should challenge the contextual obstacles (e.g., horizontal, and vertical segregation) through for example gender quotas or reconciling work and family (Sando, 2013). In Germany there are structural barriers related to gender and entrepreneurship, like an anti-child and anti-women attitude, the acceptance of the male game, the traditional division of labour, the gender-restrictive role of the German tax system, the stereotypical gender role valorisation of women and a lack of culture of failure (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2011; Braches & Elliott, 2017; OECD & European Union, 2018; Welter, 2004). A study analysing the media representation of female entrepreneurs in Germany concludes that there is still an old-fashion picture of women's entrepreneurship that builds on traditional gender stereotypes and role models. Nevertheless, showing its heterogeneity, focusing on their entrepreneurial activities, learning experiences and personal development, as well as using a gender lens when writing the articles, have the potential to change the media representation of female entrepreneurs towards a more authentic and less discriminatory way (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2011).

In relation to the regional support and services for social entrepreneurship in Germany, there is a large and active community of heterogenous organizations providing consultancy, networking platforms, advocacy, financial support, education, research, initiating competitions and giving prizes. However, the financial needs of many social enterprises remain poorly met, having either to rely on philanthropic sources or on a hybrid financial structure. Nevertheless, there are different kinds of sources of finance, like public foundations, grants and subsidies, private donors, venture funds, business angels, loan capital and crowdfunding platforms (Racheeva, 2015; Ravensburg et al., 2018). In this way, the compilation made for this study through the secondary analysis shows that of 180 organizations, 20% each are associations, foundations, and limited liability companies. Regarding their main activity, 35% are incubators, hubs, providing counselling and support, 24% focus on education and research, 15% have to do with ethic financial services or crowdfunding and 14% provide a network, platform for information and exchange. Finally, their main area of focus is for 26% social entrepreneurship, 19% specifically focus on social change and innovation, 11% in entrepreneurship and 10% in impact investment. They are mainly located in smaller cities all over Germany (39) as well as in Berlin (35) and Munich (18). Again, only three European-wide initiatives specifically supporting female social entrepreneurship were found, so that no local German initiative for supporting female social entrepreneurship was identified during this secondary analysis.

In general, female social enterprises in Germany are very heterogeneous in their business and impact models, their legal forms and financing. They are rather small and have usually many part-time employees. Also, they are highly

innovative and perceive the main barriers in financing and bureaucracy, lack of support services, recruiting and lack of commercial knowledge. There are approx. 78,000 social enterprises in Germany, from which half of them are women-led. Matched with the results of the secondary analysis of this study, female social entrepreneurs in Germany are usually limited liability companies or sole proprietorships, act mainly in the information and communication and education sector, and serve mostly the social mission of educating, improving the well-being of communities, protecting the environment and inclusion (Huysentruyt, 2014; Metzger, 2019; Olenga Tete et al., 2018; Racheeva, 2015; Ravensburg et al., 2018).

*Table 11: Summary of Challenges and Potentials of the Female Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Germany (Source: own elaboration)*

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Potentials</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No entrepreneurial education in interviewed FSE, and more caring responsibilities compared to the MSE</li> <li>▪ Danger of burn-out</li> <li>▪ Less external financing for FSE compared to MSE</li> <li>▪ Discourses on gender: Fix the woman approach, unawareness of gender discrimination, concealment of femininity and a gender-blind attitude</li> <li>▪ Social Entrepreneurship ecosystem in GE: conservative, competitive, not for all the public, sometimes not changing the system, there is no specific support for FSE, no common definition of Social Entrepreneurship, no specific legislation, no holistic strategy</li> <li>▪ European and German policies: Othering of women, in Germany anti-child, anti-woman, accept the male game, traditional gender labour division (tax system, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal motivations and self-actualization</li> <li>▪ Social goals of Social Enterprises</li> <li>▪ Management practices</li> <li>▪ Agency and shifting identities</li> <li>▪ Discourses on gender: Searching for legitimacy, insight on intersectionality, re-doing gender</li> <li>▪ Potential of changing systems, innovation</li> <li>▪ Social Entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany: more attention to the promotion of female entrepreneurship, regional support is varied and growing</li> <li>▪ The potentials of using a gender lens/feminist perspective in changing existing structures</li> </ul>



## 7 Recommendations

One important aspect to note about gender is that its oppressive character rests not just on difference but the inferences from and the consequences of those differences, which are linked to and supported by historical and structural circumstances. If those circumstances change, transformations can be facilitated regarding gender accountability and weaken its value for patriarchy (West & Zimmerman, 2009). These circumstances, as already discussed, involve political, economic, and social structures that as a whole are referred to as the context in which the process of female social entrepreneurship is embedded in. Therefore, in this section I include some specific proposals for policy as well as some final recommendations for future research.

### 7.1 Gender-Aware Policy Proposals

The emancipatory and empowering potential of entrepreneurship is not a magical solution against the rooted patriarchal structures that generate inequality. Changes at the individual level are insufficient for achieving a culturally aware and recognized gender equality, so that additionally collective action is needed, challenging the existing subordination within patriarchal societies. In this way, policy intervention and development, from the bottom-up, should be a recurrent process, guided by the insight of experts as well as by local needs (McAdam, 2013). This is confirmed by a study that explores the policy implications of research on women's entrepreneurship, showing that policy is the most powerful and the most important ecosystem component. This is because its sub-policies and scope of influence overlap with other components. Moreover, changes to policy will not be effective without decisions being made in relation to other ecosystem components. This supports the view that the entrepreneurial ecosystem is made up of a series of interconnecting components. When policymakers review their particular entrepreneurial ecosystem, they need to adopt a holistic approach and develop an all-embracing strategy that acknowledges the interdependency between the different actors in all dimensions of the ecosystem (Foss, Henry, Ahl, & Mikalsen, 2018). Therefore, to be able to promote such changes, it is necessary to understand the role of support organizations in addressing gender equality. Moreover, decision-making and power structures should be based in democracy and equality. If women are underrepresented or not represented in these structures, decisions about what is valuable are likely to remain highly gendered and in favour of men (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015; Cordobés, 2016). Following I present some

of the most important gender-aware policy proposals from different reports and studies of the sector.

### *7.1.1 Rethinking Care-Giving Labour Structures*

Women's unpaid labour has been ignored as a critical resource to entrepreneurial success, while at the same time constituting a form of subordination of women as business owners (Ahl, 2002). Moreover, reconciliation of motherhood and work continues to be a fundamental challenge for women. In this sense, it is important to emphasize that it is not only a question of adopting measures so that women can combine professional and family life, but, above all, of rethinking gender roles in the household and family (Cordobés, 2016). In a neoliberal and capitalist frame, the opportunity cost of caregiving in relation to business creation and growth and its collective economic costs should motivate policy makers to invest in high-quality, full-day public educational programs and childcare facilities, while also socializing domestic work and levelling the time men spent on household and care (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015, 2016). Specifically, institutions should encourage and provide tangible incentives for governments to invest in affordable childcare as well as care services, as an essential condition for women entrepreneurs to run their businesses and to have a family. Also, provide financial support programmes for businesswomen with children or a significant tax deduction programme for families with entrepreneurial mothers (Racheeva, 2015), or to offer flexible investments that reduce the financial burden of caregiving. This can help social entrepreneurs focus fully on their social impact. 92% of Ashoka Fellows reported that the unrestricted personal stipend Ashoka provides was key to allowing them to focus full-time on their idea (Taberna et al., 2019). This support would serve to enable men and women to participate in entrepreneurial activities 'on equal terms' (Ahl, 2002, p. 8). Just as important is equal education of boys and girls in entrepreneurial activities, caregiving, and household activities (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2015). Finally, research should focus on gender disaggregated data on care responsibilities of mainstream and social entrepreneurs (Usher Shrair, 2015).

### *7.1.2 Shape Gender Perceptions, Attitudes and Role-Models*

Achieving real change requires starting in the political, economic, and institutional systems that shape perceptions and stereotypical expectations, organizational roles and the amount and form of entrepreneurial efforts. Perceptions of women's competency as founders and managers of higher-growth, larger-scale businesses, both among women and among gatekeepers and resource providers in the entrepreneurial ecosystem should be addressed (Clark Muntean &

Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016). Further, it is necessary to give more visibility to reference models that are more diverse and that move away from the masculine stereotypes of successful entrepreneurship, beyond efficiency or performance and that involve more women and minorities. The creation of female networks of social entrepreneurs can be a good initiative not only to achieve media repercussion, but also to create spaces for exchange and collaboration between women entrepreneurs. In short, it is a question of recognising that women entrepreneurs set themselves diverse goals when enterprising; goals that go beyond economic ones (personal, family, relational, social) and that, therefore, the success for them will depend on the degree to which these goals are achieved. It is therefore relevant to understand that there are different ways of entrepreneurship, models of entrepreneurship, managerial and leadership styles and routes to growth or 'success'. To promote this change, it is essential to fully integrate the gender perspective into business practice in order to recognize the value of skills such as empathy, solidarity, cooperation, or teamwork. It is also fundamental to break stereotypes and make other type of success stories visible. Social entrepreneurs play a fundamental role in modifying traditional notions about entrepreneurship and the world of business, which contributes to the achievement of more inclusive and sustainable societies (Cordobés, 2016).

### *7.1.3 Institutionalization of Gender Equality and Approach*

A study using qualitative comparative analysis to explore the combinations of ecosystem characteristics explaining a high proportion of female founders in the 20 most successful start-up ecosystems worldwide, showed that the most influential parameters are at the local level, rather than at the national level. Local public policies should address the female labour participation rate, especially in start-ups and thereby increase the pool of entrepreneurial talent. However, the analysis also suggests that greater gender equality in combination with a favourable micro-environment fosters female entrepreneurship. Gender-aware policies would help to move on from the goal of gender equality, which implies having the same opportunities, enabling individuals to benefit from opportunities equally and might require equal or different treatment and measure (E. Berger & Kuckertz, 2016).

Therefore, focusing purely on self-employment does not change the structural position of women in the labour market or household. Prescriptive measures of institutionalizing gender equality to improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem for all, through public, private and collaborative cross-sector efforts that challenge social, structural, and institutional sexism should be underlined. Policies should focus on how women can participate equally in social, political, and economic dimensions of society, having less women going into feminized

forms of self-employment. Scholars and policy makers should examine ‘how the masculine advantage takes place in the global entrepreneurial ecosystem and consider social, cultural, political and economic reforms for gender equality’ (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016, p. 26). It is essential to adopt a gender approach when designing any type of support service aimed at social entrepreneurs, adapting these to facilitate the participation of women, to modify some established notions about the entrepreneurial process, for example, understanding that the greater aversion to risk of women can also be a positive aspect or respecting the pace and routes for growth preferred by women, or as mentioned during the interviews changing structures like ‘pitching’ for support. All institutions and structures in the entrepreneurship ecosystem should include indicators to evaluate gender inequalities and the level of empowerment of women. Some specific proposals are for example improving women’s financial skills and fostering a healthy relationship with money, supporting women to make more accurate assessments of their own capabilities and their enterprises, supporting the creation of communities and meeting spaces that offer a network of support throughout the life cycle of the company (Cordobés, 2016), as well as encouraging networks that promote women’s leadership and gender equity, as most female social entrepreneurs identified supportive peer communities as a key to their personal and professional success, where they can discuss gender-specific challenges in the sector, learn from each other and share resources. Moreover, there is a lack of skills in building movements and catalysing collaboration’s in the social sector, so that specific support to increase collaboration can help accelerate the impact of female and male social entrepreneurs (Taberna et al., 2019).

Nowadays, female entrepreneurship is promoted through programmes that support financial and human capital yet neglect the transformation of the legal and institutional structures. This is problematic since a barrier-focused approach shifts the attention away from contextual limitations towards the individual women entrepreneur who, through individual action, has to be better educated, widen networks and re-assign care and housework (Welter, 2004). In this way, at the European Union level, revisions of or additions to the Social Business Initiative and all future policy generated by the European institutions should make explicit mention of women and gender issues. The different policy officers working on social economy and women’s entrepreneurship should collaborate within an explicit goal. Strengthening current legislation in areas of gender equality should be promoted, including more transparency, accountability, and due diligence; thereby analysing the allocation of resources and funds by gender. European institution departments and departments for gender equality should coordinate with relevant policy makers in member states to emphasise the relationship between women-led social enterprise and women’s economic and personal empowerment (Usher Shrair, 2015). For Germany specifically, the WEstart country report (Racheeva, 2015) proposes to organise

national conferences to enable stronger interconnection between female social entrepreneurs, main stakeholders and investors and develop workshops at universities and schools to raise awareness amongst women of social entrepreneurship as an alternative career path. In Berlin, both the level of start-up experience of employees and the proportion of female employees are high. This finding supports the idea that having access to many female employees familiar with start-ups increases the pool of women, which might perceive less risk and hence assume entrepreneurial activity. The best way to tap the full potential of an ecosystem is to develop policies that make the job market in general accessible to women. Such an approach might affect the proportion of female founders because a higher female participation in the labour force increases gender equality, which, in combination with other aspects, is a catalyst for female entrepreneurship (E. Berger & Kuckertz, 2016).

#### *7.1.4 Increase Availability and Access to Funding*

In the field of impact investment and financial services aimed at social enterprises, the same gender inequalities, and discriminations that we find in the field of entrepreneurship in general seem to persist. In this way, access to financial services is the greatest challenge faced by female entrepreneurs and most of them rely fundamentally on their own resources. Therefore, improving access to these services, as well as the perception that women entrepreneurs have of the possibilities of accessing them, are crucial issues for promoting female entrepreneurship. A change of perceptions and attitudes in the impact investors is also necessary. To achieve these structural changes, it is essential to apply a gender approach in the financial offer such as gender budgeting, using the tools, techniques, and procedures of the budget cycle in a systematic way to promote equality, examining every budget-related decision-making process regarding the extent to which it contributes to gender equality (Downes, Trapp, & Nicol, 2017; Stiegler & Klatzer, 2011). This can imply adapting criteria when selecting which social entrepreneurship projects to support, using language in communications aimed at entrepreneurs that does not discourage or alienate women, or involving more women as business angels. Finally, the simplification of administrative processes to apply for loans and other financial assistance, shortening procedures and offering support to social entrepreneurs in the processes of seeking financing should be facilitated (Cordobés, 2016). Initiatives such as the development of a multilingual online platform aggregating and publicising public and private funding opportunities for women social entrepreneurs can be helpful. Moreover, funding for women social entrepreneurs should be allocated by European Institutions and it should include grants for promising projects, start-up loans with business training and social innovation prizes. Also, EU-level funding for social economy

organizations should have a 50% female-led social enterprise quota. Funding applications should include questions about care responsibilities and include stipends, vouchers, or additional funding to help all entrepreneurs manage unpaid care responsibilities. Banks need to be encouraged to lend money to female-led businesses, social businesses and specifically to female social businesses. Finally, European institutions should develop communication campaigns aimed at publicising the social impact and return-on-investment of women-led social enterprise. Also, social impact tools should be developed in collaboration with female social entrepreneurs, and these tools should have a section which measures gender equality and women's empowerment as elements of social impact, encouraging all social entrepreneurs to consider their impacts from a gender perspective (Usher Shrair, 2015). Specifically for Germany, Racheeva (2015) recommends creating accelerator programmes for female social entrepreneurs with a strong focus on business model development and fundraising, developing funding programmes, mobilizing private investors to form investment companies which target social female entrepreneurs and offering such companies tax benefits and providing stronger financial support of existing female social networks and communities, as well as different private grassroots initiatives which directly work with female social entrepreneurs.

## **7.2 Continue the Development of Models for Equal and Sustainable Life Conditions**

Social entrepreneurship, social economy and solidarity economy have been questioned by feminist theories because they tend to reproduce androcentric biases and ignore and undervalue care work. However, there is a recognition of the potential for creating dialogues to establish transformative social relations (Osorio-Cabrera, 2016). Moreover, solidarity economy practices may result in a paradox, as on the one hand they are meant to free women, but entrench them in poor paying work, so that profit seeking economies benefit from their work. Nonetheless, it has been shown that female social and solidarity economic practices and organizations have a great political relevance as they can provide a space for the construction of new political emancipatory narratives, creating places of resistance and defence of life in opposition to the destruction through the marketization of nature and social relations. Their practices advance towards a renewed political decolonial assimilation (Verschuur et al., 2018), refining, epistemologically, the concept of economy and social enterprise, challenging the principles of economic integration and the feminist economics' assumptions of what should be considered economic (Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019). Therefore, the call is to continue favouring a debate on

ways of living, questioning dominant economic and social paradigms and structures, and aiming at transforming and developing new scenarios based on equality, sustainability, and justice (Agenjo-Calderón & Gálvez-Muñoz, 2019).

### **7.3 Limitations and Future Research**

The present dissertation has contributed to the research field by filling the gap of studies on social entrepreneurship and gender. I presented findings on the portrayal of German social entrepreneurs, giving a voice, and describing the perspectives of female social entrepreneurs. Moreover, I describe some dimensions of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany. Some of these conclusions confirm other studies' results (e.g., motivations and management practices), yet, among others, new findings on discourses on gender in social entrepreneurship have been identified. These underline ways women have developed to reframe the economy, blurring lines between market and household, care, and productive work, the economic and reciprocity/redistribution (Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019). This dissertation proposes a frame for the analysis of (social) entrepreneurship, based on a detailed review of challenges and potentials of the intersection of gender, entrepreneurship, and the social domain, as well as on a social constructionist and feminist post-structuralist epistemological approach. Further, I propose a definition/understanding of social entrepreneurship grounded on a literature review as well as on the empirical findings. I suggest ideas to promote social entrepreneurship and recommendations for the field and future research. Finally, I underline the potential of social entrepreneurship as an ally for transitional processes towards a full alignment with social economic values; providing room to deliberate and develop alternative models (Kawano, 2018), questioning the euro-centred norm, analysing the gendered profile of German social entrepreneurs as distinctive and contextually influenced, showing how gender positions, benefits and disadvantages female social entrepreneurship (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018) and pursuing an amongst-us (Alvarado, 2016) between all (social) entrepreneurs.

In this way, based on the findings of this study, future research can concentrate on deeper analysis, for example through ethnographic methods, to investigate in more detail the performance of gendered subjects as well as the contextual structures in Germany, and in other systems and contexts, like for example in flourishing social entrepreneurship ecosystems in the Global South.

Although it was reflected upon when starting this research, the white Western/Global North and heterosexual bias is still a boundary. While the sampling process tried to remain diverse, many of the theoretical and empirical sources used for this research have been limited to this bias, as well as the own

academic and personal embedded norms. Thus, in future research there is a need to incorporate more critical feminist theories like intersectionality, decolonial and queer theory, reflecting upon how this contextual bias intertwines with gendered analyses on women's entrepreneurship. This bias contains also the embedded neoliberal version of feminism, 'in which individual women are encouraged to 'lean in', strictly manage their time and regulate family life in order to succeed as high-achieving working mothers' (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018, p. 10). The combination of neoliberal and postfeminist approaches leads to the expectation that women make use of entrepreneurial opportunities, while ignoring that their agency is limited by gendered contextual and structural barriers. Consequently, women are perceived as deficient compared to White, Western, middle-class, patriarchal standards, which is then adopted by policymakers and scholars. There is a lack, in mainstream entrepreneurship literature, of analysis on how, from colonisation until the present, the Western male heroic capitalist entrepreneur has produced the social conditions of current limited agency for subordinated men and women (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). Therefore, the call is here to acknowledge this subordination and incorporate it into research and policymaking, especially with regards to contextual and structural conditions in social entrepreneurship ecosystems.

Like Spiegler & Halberstadt (2018) there is no intention to portray women as more caring and thus promote stereotypes that have been used to confine them to particular reproductive roles. As mentioned, biological essentialism entails the danger of feminising environmental and social responsibility (Möllders, 2019). Consequently, the aim of this study was to portray female social entrepreneurs as they present themselves and analyse their performative 'doing gender' through their discourses, as well as understanding and describing some of the contextual and structural circumstances of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Germany, avoiding essentialism and focussing on the construction, performance, and discourses. Yet, by focusing on 'female' social entrepreneurs, this study does not seem to challenge the binary heteronormativity. However, such a focus seemed necessary, as the mainstream research on (social) entrepreneurship is still male-gendered, and for this the perspective from and with female and femininity must take space in the present academic field. Further and future research, when possible, could eliminate the female-male binary and focus only on the performativity of individuals, regardless of their 'gender', underlining the intention of 'de-dramatizing gender' (*Entdramatisierung von Geschlecht*). This approach of gender-reflected pedagogy emphasizes that gender is neither the only nor the most important category of individual and social difference. De-dramatizing approaches follow dramatizing situations, reacting to a situation in which gender has been placed at the centre of attention in order to relativize this focus on gender. What is needed is a balance between dramatization and de-dramatization of gender, aspiring towards non-dramatization, where the start is in a space in which gender is not



(yet or currently) set as central, so that thematization of gender remains a possibility in the background (Debus, 2012; Faulstich-Wieland, 2005).

Further research should concentrate as well on studying policies for social entrepreneurship, focusing on the consequences for the social entrepreneurship ecosystem and gender equality. It might be valuable to underline best practices in dimensions such as education, role models, challenging traditional gender labour division, social norms, and attitudes. Moreover, research should pay attention to the danger of burn-out and taking financial risk in relation to the financial support provided in social entrepreneurship analysed through a gender perspective. Furthermore, future studies should underline the potential of performativities and discourses of re-doing gender (related to participatory decision-making practices, personal motivations, self-actualization, and agency in general) in combination with structural changes to transform the current economic and social systems. Also, research questions should ask how to transform the current dominant systems in relation to feminist economic theories and social, sustainable and solidarity economy propositions as well as on how to promote and support these transformations. Additionally, in Germany, research should support the development and application of a holistic sustainable strategy with an intersectional lens, providing theoretical and empirical framing, for the promotion and development of social entrepreneurship and solidarity economy. Finally, combining different research methods, such as qualitative (ethnographic, discourse analysis, grounded theory, etc.) and quantitative (statistical analysis, comparative studies, etc.), as well as using post-colonial approaches (action research, reflexivity, and others) would certainly further enrich this research sector.

Concluding, there are many practical and empirical examples that go beyond the eco-neoliberal limitations, such as indigenous entrepreneurship which per definition merges economic and non-economic goals, with community and cultural foundations (Lindsay, 2005). Within the discourse of feminist (economic) theories, solidarity and social economy and social entrepreneurship, many other alternatives emerge. These build fair and sustainable futures by participating in a range of solidarity economy institutions and practices such as food production and urban agriculture, co-housing, producer–consumer co-operatives, healthcare, eldercare and childcare cooperatives, open software, and decentralized systems of renewable energy production and distribution (Kawano, 2018). However, responding to the need to imagine and build a new paradigm of care (Di Chiro, 2019), many theorists and scholars have proposed alternative paradigms and theories. Some of these are:

- the (re)productive economy involves the critique of the separation and hierarchisation of production and reproduction, criticizing the capitalist economy of industrial modernity. It proposes a new economic rationality and is concerned with social-ecological conditions that are not monetised

and capitalistically oriented. Thus, productivity and reproductivity are integrated and become the new concept of (re)productivity. With the help of the category (re)productivity it is possible to focus on the unity of all productive processes in their diversity and to integrate their preservation and renewal into the economic design processes (Biesecker & Hofmeister, 2010; Mölders, 2019);

- eco-feminism proposes respect for the natural cycles of the ecosystems and concern for the general well-being of fairer and more democratic societies. The goal is a system of resource production, consumption, and redistribution that operates within ecological boundaries and a change in people's value systems that develop sustainable life patterns (Agenjo-Calderón & Gálvez-Muñoz, 2019). This approach sees a parallel between the exploitation of women's work and the exploitation of natural resources. Both are prerequisites for capitalism but remain costless because they are considered natural, however, as they have a finite nature, their exploitation has led to a crisis of capitalism. 'Constructivist' ecofeminists reject the naturalisation of women and analyse women's and men's relationship to their environment in political terms (Bauhardt, 2014; Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019);
- in general, as already mentioned, the social and solidarity economy develops markets that are not profit-driven, but are based instead on the principles of solidarity, common good, reproduction, self-management, the priority of collective well-being, and reorganizing work according to its social content. However, a specific effort is required to reduce the gendered division of labour and to socialize and revalue care (Agenjo-Calderón & Gálvez-Muñoz, 2019);
- the caring or subsistence economy framework is guided by the principles of cooperation, sharing, reciprocity, and intersectional environmental justice, seeing care work as environmental change work and vice versa. Care or the work of everyday subsistence, will always need to be accomplished and it cannot remain invisible, privatised, and done for free by women, people of colour, immigrants, or other marginalised groups. Hence, caring for climate, for earth, and for people should be at the centre of economic value, not at the margins. Subsistence is therefore thought and valued as a way of living that supports a more just sustainability for all, promoting a new definition of a subsistence way of living, one that embodies interdependent, socially just, and earth-caring and climate-caring human-nature relationships. The path towards a new solidarity economy should be based on community self-determination, self-reliance, self-provisioning, food self-sufficiency, regionality, participatory democracy, social equity, and cooperation (Di Chiro, 2019);
- postcolonial feminist theories propose a shift from the Western model of the enterprise towards a new focus on the practices and worldviews of

women in the Global South or subaltern women. This focus overcomes the common idea of subaltern women being the beneficiaries of a social mission of market-oriented enterprises, philanthropy, or development agendas, and proposes a vision that sees them as entrepreneurs in charge of their own lives. Thus, social entrepreneurship integrates the way women secure their livelihoods based on reciprocity, redistribution, householding and market exchange and the way they express their visions of the world. The conceptual and political approach consists of restoring the spaces and dimensions that are ignored in formal conceptions of the economy and the social enterprise (e.g., the domestic domain, the non-market sphere, the subaltern political arenas, and emancipation), without losing sight of critical analyses of these spaces and dimensions. Postcolonial feminism questions the supposed universality of theoretical concepts, and women from the Global South contribute with the establishment of non-state forms of redistribution and social regulation, reshaping economic exchanges through domestic logic and concerns. They make householding political by linking it with decolonial and anti-capitalist struggles against transnational corporations and projects. Feminist or postcolonial perspectives constitute lenses for not only thinking of persistent power imbalances as well as challenging mainstream understandings of plurality and economic democracy (Hillenkamp & dos Santos, 2019);

- the degrowth approach is composed of different contributions that address the finite character of natural resources. These contributions regard the growth orientation of market economies critically and suggest that continuous growth does not lead to more prosperity for all, but rather to more social injustice and an increase in individual dissatisfaction, psychological dysfunctions, health problems, social tensions, and structural violence. It strives for independence from economic growth. Combined with gender awareness and understanding that individual and social well-being depends heavily on care work, it has great potential to solve current economic and social crisis (Bauhardt, 2014);
- academics at the intersection of feminist (economic) theories and solidarity economy and social entrepreneurship propose a great amount of concrete alternative theories, frameworks, and models. Lewis & Conaty (2012) propose the resilience imperative, a model for cooperative transitions to a steady-state economy. Ruggieri (2018) also proposes concepts like sustainable livelihood (DAWN, 2020; Serrat, 2017), the queer ecologies raising questions from the intersections between sexuality and environmental studies (Erickson & Mortimer-Sandilands, 2010), or the model of the doughnut economy by Raworth (2017). Moreover, Weinholt (2018) suggests the commons approach by Ostrom et al (1990), the 'Care-Revolution' movement started by Eisler (2008) or the 4-in-1

perspective by Haug (2011). Other renowned alternative theories and frameworks are the care revolution by Winker (2015) and caring democracy by Tronto (2013). Finally, Stenn (2017) suggests a sustainability lens (SL) tool and theory for achieving sustainability, which includes four quadrants (resources, health, policy and exchange) and is based on the Andean 'Buen Vivir' model of sustainability and the UN project of Circles of Sustainability;

- lastly, Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan (2015) suggest a holistic understanding of entrepreneurship that recognizes the interdependence of the public and private spheres, within a gender integrative entrepreneurship model. This model includes value-maximizing to multiple stakeholders, increasing happiness and well-being, collaboration, paid and unpaid labour that supports the enterprise, social and community groups, and collectively supported in a just and fair way, such as recognizing and demanding collective support for caregiving responsibilities that is gender equitable, state-supported full-day childcare operated by well-qualified, well-compensated male and female professional educators. This challenges the assumptions that the main driver of entrepreneurship is wealth creation and accumulation, suggesting that the public and private spheres are connected, just as profit-seeking and social aims are.

Social or sustainable entrepreneurship could be an alternative that stabilises the production-reproduction dichotomy, in favour of a (re)productive understanding, towards a transformation of male-biased economic concepts, of gendered means of knowledge production, and consequently of gendered power relations. This can only be attained when linked to gender and intersectional equality (Bauhardt, 2014). Further research could analyse the possibilities of this capability for social entrepreneurship as an alternative (re)productive economy, as this study has shown that the sector entails potential to re-do gender, reframing the economy, challenging the norms, with a possible re-doing of reproductive and productive work. Naturally, there is the danger that this becomes a commodification of social and ecological reproductive work. However, it could be that it is a first step, working as allies of the solidarity economy, towards a real systemic change into a (re)productive economy.

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The confluence of entrepreneurship, gender, sustainability and especially the social dimension is intricate and underestimated. This book analyses social entrepreneurship through a gender lens by portraying German female social entrepreneurs and their political, social and economic contexts. Within a descriptive qualitative research design, a secondary analysis of different dimensions of the social entrepreneurship system and twenty-five in-depth interviews with social entrepreneurs and experts were conducted. The author shows that this sector entails potential to re-do gender and reframe the economy, challenging norms and borders towards systemic change.

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