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## **Entrepreneurship and Diversity**

Deirdre Tedmanson and Caroline Essers

The Oxford Handbook of Diversity in Organizations

Edited by Regine Bendl, Inge Bleijenbergh, Elina Henttonen, and Albert J. Mills

Print Publication Date: Nov

Subject: Business and Management, Entrepreneurship, Human

2015 Resource Management

Online Publication Date: Jan DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199679805.013.14

2016

## **Abstract and Keywords**

This chapter extends on existing critical entrepreneurship contributions to illustrate and analyse how diversity entrepreneurship stemming from diverse contexts can enhance understandings of entrepreneurship as a socially and culturally constructed phenomenon. The chapter first explores the perspectives of Indigenous entrepreneurs in Australia, and second the diverse experience of female Turkish entrepreneurial 'others' in both the UK and the Netherlands. Exploring the different roles played by different national contexts in shaping entrepreneurial agency and resistance, rich case study material is used to illustrate how diversity can assist minority entrepreneurs while at the same time also constraining opportunity. The chapter reveals how new takes on entrepreneurship in different locations and settings can reveal not only new forms of entrepreneurial diversity, but also the increasing diversity of how (and what) entrepreneuring can mean.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, Indigenous, female, Turkish, diversity, intersectionality, ethnic, critical

### Introduction

psychological traits of entrepreneurs, such as being innovative and creative, possessing the urge for achievement and autonomy, exhibiting risk-taking behaviour and individualism (Thomas and Mueller 2000). The entrepreneurial archetype in this literature is often based on a 'rational' masculine stereotype, assumed to be risk-taking, and conquest, domination, and control focused. This hegemonic entrepreneurial discourse also reproduces the conventional female stereotype as subordinate, supportive, and dependent (Bruni et al. 2004: 186).

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Subscriber: Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen; date: 26 May 2016

Female entrepreneurs and ethnic minority entrepreneurs are, more often than not, either ignored in such normative mainstream entrepreneurship texts, or else depicted as the exotic 'other' entrepreneurs. Many studies develop typologies of female entrepreneurs, either implicitly or explicitly, and authors such as Ahl (2004) and Bruni et al. (2004) have criticized the gender subtext in this style of theorizing, which too often constructs females as the exception, or 'other' entrepreneurs. Research on ethnic minority entrepreneurs tends also to assert that minorities start businesses because they face discrimination in the labour market or because they hold specific values and have access to certain resources, such as close ties and family relations (Bonacich 1973; Portes, Guarnizo, and Haller 2002). This form of analysis focuses in on points of 'difference' and, in doing so, risks reproducing stereotypes rather than disrupting them. Representations of ethnic minority entrepreneurs based on comparisons with a presumed (normative) archetypical entrepreneur can simply perpetuate the relations of power which stem from a preoccupation with othering. The ethnic 'other' is too readily contrasted with other population groups which are alleged to be more culturally (p. 389) focused on performance and therefore presumed to be more 'inclined' to pursue entrepreneurship (McClelland 1987).

This dominant representation of entrepreneurship holds within it an ethnocentric subtext, which implicitly compels businesspeople from minorities to assimilate or Westernize in order to succeed in business (Ogbor 2000). However, Thomas and Mueller (2000) argue that successful entrepreneurs from diverse cultural backgrounds continue to score differently on scales of the more conventionally accepted (Western) entrepreneurial traits. Much of the mainstream entrepreneurship literature suggests that masculinity and Westernness are important to successful entrepreneurship—and this is starkly contrasted with other stereotypes of femininity and non-Westernness.

This chapter aims to extend on other critical entrepreneurship contributions (e.g. but not limited to: Armstrong 2005; Jones and Spicer 2009; Weiskopf and Steyaert 2009; Gross, Sheppes, and Urry 2011) to illustrate and analyse diverse entrepreneurs stemming from diverse contexts. In this chapter, we specifically reject binary and hierarchical ways of reifying and normalizing existing power positions (Wekker and Lutz 2001: 27). We consider that such essentialism creates problematic effects, which, in turn, may result in discriminatory practices by both practitioners and policymakers (Ogbor 2000; Bruni, Gherardi, and Poggio 2004; Essers and Benschop 2007). Instead, we build on more critical accounts of entrepreneurship, to question the often ethnocentrically biased and gendered foundations of entrepreneurial practices in Western society. We incorporate case study material drawn from both our joint and separate empirical fieldwork material, such as studies on Turkish female entrepreneurs in the Netherlands and the UK, and on Aboriginal entrepreneurs in urban and more remote country areas of Australia. We intend

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to not only demonstrate how 'Other' entrepreneurs have to deal with implicit and explicit prescriptions about what it is to be a successful entrepreneur and how they have to relate to the ethnocentrically and gendered (popular) discourse on entrepreneurship, but also to illustrate how these 'deviant' and less known entrepreneurs 'do entrepreneu*ring*' against the grain, by both implicitly and explicitly inventing and applying particular identity strategies. We reveal new takes on entrepreneurship in action to explore not only new forms of entrepreneurial diversity, but also the diversity of how (and what) entrepreneu*ring* can mean.

In this chapter, we first explore aspects of Indigenous entrepreneurship in Australia, and discuss how entrepreneurial activity in this context can have profound social and political meaning for people who are marginalized and stigmatized yet remain strong in the pursuit of their human right to self-determination on their own lands. We then move on to a comparison of the experiences of female Turkish entrepreneurs in the UK and the Netherlands, discussing the intersectionality of ethnicity, religion, and gender, as well as the different role of the national context in shaping minority entrepreneurial experiences. Both these exemplars deviate from a standard normative view of entrepreneurship as a purely economic activity, and one more often pursued by entrepreneurial Western males. We explore these examples to reveal instead some of the diverse and rich experiences of these entrepreneurial 'Others'.

## (p. 390) Indigenous Entrepreneurship

A little-understood phenomenon is the way in which 'entrepreneurs may be more likely to emerge from those groups in society which are deprived or marginal, i.e. groups which are discriminated against, persecuted, looked down upon or exceptionally exploited' (Scase and Goffee 1980: 29). While the study of ethnic minority entrepreneurs is concerned with the economic engagement of immigrant groups new to a particular area, and the diverse forms of social capital such groups may deploy to further their interests in such new contexts (Light 2004), a focus on Indigenous entrepreneurs explores how individuals with a deep and long-standing attachment to their ancestral lands engage in contemporary economic ventures. In this context, Indigenous enterprise development and entrepreneurship is part of a continuum of community-based development which aims to contribute to Indigenous political, social, and economic self-determination (Peredo et al. 2004; Dana and Anderson 2007; Tedmanson 2014).

Indigenous entrepreneurship has both local and global dimensions, and, since the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, it has become an area of increasing interest in the field of entrepreneurship studies. We consider it important to first understand the oppressed and often marginalized status of Indigenous populations

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worldwide, as this is a powerful contextual influence over Indigenous people's economic engagement. Shapero (1975) has explored the notion of the entrepreneur as a 'displaced' person, while others, such as Frederick and Foley (2006), argue that disadvantaged groups, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous, can improve their economic and social positioning through engagement in entrepreneurial activities (see also: Dana 1995, 2007; Foley 2000, 2006; Sullivan and Margaritis 2000; Anderson 2002; Nnadozie 2002; Dana and Anderson 2007; Lee-Ross and Mitchell 2007; Tedmanson 2014).

Indigenous communities worldwide continue to survive against the harsh and often near genocidal legacies of past (and in some cases continuing) colonial oppressions. Australia's Indigenous peoples fit this worldwide pattern and continue to be the nation's most disadvantaged people, living in the poorest conditions in the poorest urban areas—or, for those in the 'remote' communities in the desert regions of central, northern, and Western Australia, in what are effectively 'Third World' conditions, encircled by the colonizing culture of a globalizing First World nation, 'another country hidden within our borders' (Macklin 2008: 1). Indigenous Australians are overrepresented in the prison system, face high levels of unemployment, have the lowest educational attainment, the highest incidence of chronic disease, the highest rates of infant mortality, a life expectancy some twenty years less than non-Indigenous 'white' Australians, and continue to endure the cumulative, intergenerational effects of invasion, exploitation, (p. 391) dispossession, and entrenched racism: 'that such conditions should exist among a group of people defined by race in the 21st century in a developed nation like Australia is a disgrace and should shame us all' (Chivell 2002: 9).

Like those in Latin America, Africa, Canada, New Zealand, and other areas of the South Pacific region, Australia's Indigenous peoples face not only the continuing impact of the colonial past in the neocolonial present, but globalization has also brought greater inequalities in wealth distribution, increased surveillance by governments, the threat of police/military and corporate incursions into Indigenous lands,<sup>2</sup> and either the denigration or appropriation of Indigenous knowledge—ways of being, seeing, doing, organizing. Despite the depravations caused by poverty, poor nutrition, inadequate access to services, alcohol and other substance misuse, and limited access to political power, however, the resilience of Australia's Indigenous cultures continues to defy the political economy of cultural 'genocide' by the dominant state.<sup>3</sup> In such conditions, it can be hard to perceive how entrepreneurship can flourish, yet, following Scase and Goffee (1980), Indigenous entrepreneurship is growing as a field of interest, not only in Australia but also worldwide.

Peredo and Chrisman (2006: 11), for example, suggest that the more 'community-oriented' a population, the more 'they will feel their status and well-being is a function of

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the reciprocated contributions they make to their community'. Peredo and Chrisman also maintain that this 'community orientation' is a key feature of Indigenous community life worldwide. Similarly, Dana and Anderson (2007: 6) suggest that, 'social organisation among Indigenous people is often based on kinship ties' rather than in response to market needs. This depiction of the communal and socially oriented nature of Indigenous entrepreneurship is a common theme which occurs across the literature in this emerging field of research. Lindsay (2005) argues that Indigenous entrepreneurship is undertaken for the direct benefit of the Indigenous peoples involved in the venture—as a form of Indigenous community economic development that has social as well as economic goals. He connects this 'holistic' view of Indigenous social entrepreneurship with an expression of 'self-determination'. In this way, Lindsay argues (2005: 1) that Indigenous ventures are fundamentally 'entrepreneurial strategies originating in and controlled by the community, and the sanction of Indigenous culture'.

(p. 392) There is growing support amongst Indigenous leaders in Australia arguing for an acceleration of Indigenous entrepreneurial effort to help overcome what have been historically (post-European invasion of the continent) intractable levels of Indigenous disadvantage. Prominent Indigenous political spokesperson Noel Pearson (2000), for example, suggests that, in considering problems confronting Indigenous Australians, there has been too much separation of social and economic domains which are, in fact, inextricably related. The disembedding of economic activity from social life creates an artificial notion that the pursuit of economic activity can occur in isolation from considerations of social context. For people living in remote Indigenous communities which are small and often highly dependent on a state-provided service economy—the opportunities for economic development can be limited. Factors such as historical exclusion from competitive market forces, absence of an economic base, lack of access to skills and training, and tensions between social, cultural, and economic aims are often cited as reasons for the poor prospects of remote Indigenous communities seeking greater market engagement (Tedmanson and Guerin 2011). Altman (2001) suggests, however, that market, state, and customary economies can coexist in many of Australia's remote Indigenous communities, creating a hybrid economy where productive cultural and customary activity intersects with spheres of broader state and market influences. This hybridity enables a diversity of enterprising effort to emerge.

In summarizing the major research themes in Indigenous entrepreneurial research, Peredo and colleagues (2004: 14) suggest that by far the most dominant research theme is the 'relationship between Indigenous entrepreneurship and Indigenous culture'. Such deep links to cultural values and relational, more communally oriented, forms of exchange and benefit, establish Indigenous entrepreneurial effort as different from, and not confirming to, more orthodox mainstream depictions of entrepreneurship as a form of

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heroic individualism. Peredo and Chrisman (2006: 19) also argue that Indigenous entrepreneurship may in fact be a way for Indigenous communities to sustain their cultural values, and that 'entrepreneurship may be conducted in a different way in keeping with those values, including a community emphasis, consensus decision-making, and a focus on sharing and cooperation, instead of competition'. Indigenous social entrepreneuring, for example, may have both a market orientation and aim to fulfil a social or cultural purpose—or both. Strengths-based approaches to community development emphasize social 'capital', which can reinforce local talents and build local capacity.

By focusing on local priorities and strengths and assets—rather than perceptions of the 'other' as deficient and disadvantaged—pride, confidence, and motivation can be enhanced. Support for, and facilitation of, locally determined processes stimulates greater participation and lessens dependence on external economic interventions or approaches which aim to 'solve' Indigenous problems by imposing externally designed and driven Eurocentric and mainstream agendas. In collaborative research work with local Indigenous peoples in remote communities, the extent and diversity of entrepreneurial activity can be made more visible and local people can narrate their own forms of entrepreneurship.

# (p. 393) Entrepreneurial Aspirations within an Indigenous Cultural Context

In a qualitative participatory action research study conducted in 2008–11 by Banerjee and Tedmanson on stakeholder views of prospects for local entrepreneurial developments on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands of South Australia,<sup>4</sup> key local Aboriginal (Anangu) informants spoke with great enthusiasm about entrepreneurial ventures stimulating social, cultural, and economic returns to the community. Young people, for example, spoke of their aspirations and hopes:

I want to learn to run my own business—maybe the shop here. There are no shops or businesses here now—but I would start one, start something at least,—if I can get something going here then it will be good for me but also family...

(Young Indigenous male)

All my family work in some way—and we still hunt together too—I want to make my own things to sell...maybe punu [traditional Anangu wood carving/craft] and at least then add to supporting my family and helping community here.

(Indigenous male elder)

I'd like to do people's hair and make-up here; maybe once a week to be open...but we could be a business like in town then...even just once a week or month...

(Young Indigenous female)

Older people focused also on the regenerative power of enterprises to sustain an ongoing desire for connection to country while also fostering engagement with people outside the area:

I bring tourists here, only a couple at a time, small numbers, but show them my country and tell stories and involve family—pass on culture and leave something here for family...so people can stay on our homeland and not leave for the city...

(Older Indigenous male elder)

Want to see the community with Anangu serving Anangu...grow our own food and exchange it at maybe markets...We need to teach the culture more to everyone non-Anangu and Anangu—we need to get back to balance!

(Middle-aged Indigenous female)

(p. 394) The entrepreneurial vision of those interviewed always included a combination of both social and economic goals, and usually this was framed within the context of maintaining homeland and community cultural life. Concepts in the international development literature such as 'sustainable livelihoods' provide a framework for analysis that emphasizes the building of community 'assets' in terms of people—not just consumable material goods. Promoting micro-enterprises and local social entrepreneurial ventures are important components of processes that support the recovery of social cohesion and foster its maintenance, and play an often underdiscussed role in strengthening community health and well-being (Tedmanson and Guerin 2011).

On the dark side, however, postcolonial power politics and a 'political economy of whiteness' (Banerjee and Tedmanson 2010: 1) shape the state context within which Indigenous entrepreneurship occurs, and can impede its visibility and control its viability. In analysing the histories of 'settler-native' relations in Australia, Indigenous scholar Moreton-Robinson (2004) shows how the intersection of race and property created and sustained white economic, political, and cultural domination over Indigenous peoples. She argues the hegemonic effects of 'whiteness' served to deny Indigenous sovereignty while legitimating dispossession of Indigenous lands. Thus, 'whiteness' lies at the 'very heart' of the way in which the Australian continent was *un*settled (Tedmanson 2008).

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From this theoretical perspective, the 'white' conquerors' lie enabled the founding of an Australian nation specifically built on the dispossession and non-recognition of its Indigenous peoples. Such hegemonic control of the nation's population diversity—and, in particular, its Indigenous peoples, is maintained by keeping economic control and, in effect, marginalizing Indigenous people's entrepreneurial efforts. Yet despite this hegemonic control, the racisms of the dominant nation, and the everyday struggles of the impoverished and poor standard of living that is the lived reality of so many Indigenous peoples, entrepreneurship survives—and in some communities it even continues to thrive.

The potential benefits with respect to enterprise development include building confidence, providing leadership and role modelling, increasing interaction between different groups leading to social harmony, greater social stability derived from feelings of commitment and belonging to the community, and a reduction in dependence on welfare (Fuller, Howard, and Cummings 2003). The key goal expressed by participants in this research project was to develop sustainable entrepreneurial ventures which combined economic, social, cultural, and environmental aims. One of the greatest challenges for Indigenous entrepreneurship is to integrate economic activity with social concerns, cultural priorities, and legal rights within effective governance systems. Given the lack of infrastructure and demand factors, along with community concerns about social, environmental, and economic problems resulting from large-scale economic activity, it may not always be possible to create sustainable for-profit businesses at the onset. Rather, building a social enterprise provides a good opportunity for community members to be involved in business activity, where the goal is to generate revenue rather than profits in a strictly business perspective.

(p. 395) For others, however, entrepreneurship can provide liberation from the difficulties of everyday life. This often-stated dual objective and motivation for Indigenous enterprise activity is cultural *re*building as well as the quest for the general improvement of socioeconomic conditions of family and community (Frederick and Foley 2006; Lee-Ross and Mitchell 2007; Reveley and Down 2009; Banerjee and Tedmanson 2010). One Anangu elder explained his aims to generate a family clan-based cultural enterprise:

[B] efore I die I want my kids and their kids to know their stories and Tjukurpa [Aboriginal cosmology, spiritual beliefs or 'dreaming'... to understand and have pride in their culture and be able to live off this land right way... and make an income from it... To live independent, not like old days, mission gone, government not helping—the past is gone but we can make it live again new way to hand on down the generations...

(Very old Indigenous male)

Australian Indigenous entrepreneurs who pursue local, national, and international markets in innovative and creative ways, on their own terms, are emerging. The term 'entrepreneurship' has become an iconic mantra in business and management studies, a metaphor for innovative thinking and new ways of 'organizing' economic change across a broad range of settings, spaces, and places. Normative values, however, still shape presumptions about the 'naturalness' of individualism and competition hidden in discourses about entrepreneurial activity and new enterprise creation (Steyaert and Katz 2004). Growth and 'development' is still more often portrayed in terms of wealth generation rather than in socio-political or cultural terms, and most entrepreneurship analyses are informed by Western values and Eurocentric epistemologies, using Western methodologies to reproduce Western theoretical frames of reference (Chakrabarty 2000; Ogbor 2000; Escobar 2001. By focusing on researching with Indigenous entrepreneurs, it becomes possible to see a greater diversity in the range of entrepreneurial effort occurring, and to comprehend more fully the diversity of lived experiences which shape—and are shaped by—the discursive constructions of entrepreneurship and its more heterogeneous potential.

## Female Migrant Entrepreneurship

Besides the research on Indigenous entrepreneurs, which contributes much to the literature on diversity in entrepreneurship, studies on female migrant entrepreneurs in Europe enriches this body of literature too. Most studies on ethnic minority entrepreneurship, implicitly or not, concentrate on male entrepreneurs or ignore the roles played by female entrepreneurs in these businesses (Westwood and Bhachu 1987; Essers and Benschop 2007).

Moreover, the popular discourse on entrepreneurship, or the way the public, media, but also traditional entrepreneurship, 'talk' about entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, (p. 396) seems to be in conflict with the discourse on womanhood. Thus, being a woman and an entrepreneur at the same time results in many tensions (Ahl 2004). Entrepreneurship, and originating from outside Europe (or the West), or being 'non-Western', also seems to be a dichotomy in this popular discourse. And so being a woman of Turkish or Moroccan origin, and an entrepreneur at the same time, is a big challenge for the females that we study: Turkish- and Moroccan-origin female entrepreneurs in Western Europe.

A comparative pilot study was conducted in 2010 (see also Humbert and Essers 2012) to get a first impression on how national opportunity structures in the Netherlands as well as in the UK impact upon the female Turkish entrepreneur's possibilities and chances. Entrepreneurial rates among Turkish migrants in Europe are lower than that of the

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general population. Yet evidence shows that the number of economically independent female Turkish entrepreneurs is growing. In the Netherlands, only 4 per cent of the population of Turkish origin are entrepreneurs, 18 per cent of which are female (Statistics Netherlands (CBS) 2009), while in the UK the self-employment rate is estimated to be 20 per cent for Turks (Basu and Altinay 2002; Altan 2007), 20 per cent of which are estimated to be female (Basu and Altinay 2002; Strüder 2003). In this research, we gathered life-story interviews with Turkish-origin female entrepreneurs.

We spoke with eighteen Turkish female entrepreneurs in the Netherlands, and eight in the UK, to explore how these Turkish migrant entrepreneurs respond to, adjust to, and alter the various political, institutional, and societal opportunity structures. By contrasting the UK and the Netherlands, we were able to show how diverse structures may affect processes of entrepreneurial possibilities and agency.

# Comparing Female Turkish Entrepreneurs' Experiences in the Netherlands and the UK

In this pilot study, we observed that the social context or opportunity structure (comprising particularly the networks and social contacts) in the Netherlands is fraught with much more tension than in the UK. The respondents feel their position as (young) females of Turkish origin and entrepreneurs is problematic, as this combination of identities is perceived as incompatible and sometimes even connected with shame.

Familial support may compensate and eventually strengthen the business attitudes and acumen of these female entrepreneurs, and their position as Turkish individuals may become more of an asset than a hindrance, particularly as they become more established and, for example, promote themselves within a culturally specific niche market. Networking was mostly seen as difficult to sustain because of time commitments, and respondents in this research spoke of often feeling excluded due to their gender and ethnicity.

In the UK, Humbert and Essers (2012) conclude that there is a greater usage of business Turkish networks and a greater sense of inclusion within mainstream networks than in the Netherlands. In the study, female Turkish entrepreneurs in the UK mostly do not feel the need to be coached formally, yet some successful female Turkish entrepreneurs seem (p. 397) to coach other minorities to contribute to society. Moreover, entrepreneurialism is picked up 'naturally', respondents in the study commented, and to actively encourage potential entrepreneurs is regarded positively. Regarding finance, the female entrepreneurs are more circumspect, however, as having the right contacts at banks to obtain a loan seems to be essential in both the UK and the Netherlands, just like, in some

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cases, having the right name or appearance appears an important attribute to attracting backing in both countries.

In the UK, more interviewees indicated a lack of interest in pursuing business loans, as the female entrepreneurs do not see it as desirable to be burdened by repayments. Instead, they choose to be much more reliant on informal sources of funding. Finally, the social opportunity structure appears to be experienced more negatively in the Netherlands, when compared to the experiences of the female Turkish entrepreneurs in the UK. The political climate in the Netherlands has changed over the past two decades, towards becoming more hostile to ethnic minorities, particularly those of Muslim faith. Islam is being used in societal discourses to exclude this group, and the need for these allegedly non-adjusted citizens to integrate is constantly being stressed. This atmosphere makes it difficult for these respondents to come to terms with their sense of identity as entrepreneurs who are also female and also Turkish. In the UK, the female Turkish entrepreneurs feel less different and otherized, and seem to be able to distance themselves more from negative pigeonholing in the media.

The variations in these experiences might be explained by the fact that the political climate towards Turkish Muslims in the UK is less polarized than in the Netherlands. This negative climate apparently, in the view of the female Turkish entrepreneurs interviewed, affects the opinions and sentiments of the various actors of the opportunity structure (not only the societal one) with whom they have to deal. The differences might also be explained from migration, which occurred at different times in the respective countries. Because of migration occurring earlier, the Turkish respondents in the UK might perhaps feel less cultural difference between their community and the British. Moreover, their experiences can also be contextualized within different economies, the UK being a liberal market economy and the Netherlands being a coordinated market economy. Although one might expect that the Dutch coordinated market economy would provide much more institutionalized support, leading to (proportionally) much more entrepreneurship amongst this group than the UK's liberal market economy, alternatively this coordinated market economy might entail too many obstructing rules. Of course, these are only indications, and we cannot, and do not, aim at generalizing the situation of the whole population of female Turkish migrant entrepreneurs, but we may also detect different forms of agency being enacted by these females when connecting with these opportunity structures. They adjust to, deploy, and alter the various opportunity structures in order to enhance their entrepreneurial possibilities in various ways. Some female Turkish entrepreneurs seem to figuratively or literally distance themselves from the negative opinions regarding (Muslim) Turkish people within a Western society, since this atmosphere impedes their entrepreneurial activity. Their way of dealing with the dominant discourse on foreigners and migrant entrepreneurs is to escape negative

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(p. 398) images. They herewith, if somewhat understandably, sustain this hegemonic discourse on the 'different, Other Muslim'.

However, although seemingly adjusting to the various opportunity structures, the female Turkish entrepreneurs in this study eventually found room to undertake entrepreneurship in their desired way. Some seem to be distancing themselves from the various opportunity structures, as they refuse to engage with any formal institutions. They exploit opportunity structures by conforming to a 'Western' way of doing business, and render their own otherness invisible, both physically, and in entrepreneurial behaviour.

Although the othering by Dutch people in the field of entrepreneurship is bothersome for female Turkish entrepreneurs, they sensibly, patiently, and pragmatically deal with such prejudice in order to be able to perform their entrepreneurship. While building on their growing experience, knowledge, and professionalism, these entrepreneurs subtly try to change the system from within. Some reported being quite pragmatic about not letting their ethnic identity affect their business practices, while at the same time capitalizing on the Turkish community where possible. But there are also female Turkish entrepreneurs who react more aggressively to the negativity they experience in the Netherlands. Some take the opportunity to set up a network for female Turkish entrepreneurs to cooperate.

Moreover, some female entrepreneurs explicitly make use of their gender and ethnic identity as a unique selling point, helping society by, for instance, initiating projects on entrepreneurship at schools. Such female Turkish entrepreneurs actively fight to change the various opportunity structures that surround them, such as their own migrant community. Being energetically involved in several networking and professional organizations, and using them to actively change the way things are done in business in/ out of the Turkish community, as well as traditionally gender relations, these female Turkish entrepreneurs can be called active 'change agents'. Of course, these are only some preliminary results, and the number of interviews done in the UK is lower than in the Netherlands. More systematic comparative research regarding the impact of national context on the possibilities and challenges confronting female Turkish entrepreneurs across Europe would provide further insights on the barriers this group experience. For instance, a comparison between the Netherlands, the UK, and Germany, while using both qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse the impact of the social, institutional, and political opportunity structure on this important group of new European professionals, would contribute to a better policy (on a national and European Union (EU) level) to stimulate and support these entrepreneurial change agents. This would not only add to economic development, but also aid the emancipation of these new European female entrepreneurs.

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## **Considering Intersectionality**

While doing research on the intertwinement between structure and agency, we noted that identity construction and intersectionality are important theoretical concepts.

(p. 399) Generally, gender and ethnicity seem to be regarded as important identity categories for understanding the identities of female migrants (Buitelaar 1998). Entrepreneurship and Islam are other salient identity categories when studying the multiple identities of female migrant Muslim entrepreneurs. The concept of intersectionality can be used to understand how being a Muslim, for instance, intermeshes with gendered and ethnic practices of exclusion, and how this influences entrepreneurial identities.

Intersectionality provides insights into the complexity of lived multiple identities and into the identity work necessitated by simultaneity of the socially orchestrated identity regulations. This identity work can be regarded as boundary work that people do to react to processes of inclusion and exclusion tied to various identity categories (Lamont and Fournier 1992; Bartkowski and Read 2003). Islam, for instance, connects to how gender is 'done' within a specific religious context, which is 'about how women and men make their femininities and masculinities known to themselves and to each other, through saying and doing things in specific instances' (Torab 1996: 238). Female entrepreneurs of Moroccan and Turkish descent have agency in the construction of their gender identities being a businesswoman, but are also affected by structural constraints provided by gender socialization and patriarchal processes. Moreover, in the dominant academic discourse on entrepreneurship, Islam has been negatively related to successful entrepreneurship. Thomas and Mueller (2000) note that a culture of individualism and achievement has dominated the worldview of entrepreneurship, which is related to Weber's Protestant work ethic. Calvinists were perceived as potentially successful entrepreneurs (Weber and Kalberg 2002) because of skills congruent with the virtues and practices of Calvinism: working hard, using time carefully, innovating, having an internal locus of control, and reinvesting earnings (Anderson, Drakopoulou-Dodd, and Scott 2000; Arslan 2001). According to Weber, Islamic societies were not able to produce 'the spirit of capitalism' because of the warrior ethic, other-worldly Sufism, Oriental despotism, and a lack of individualism (Arslan 2001: 321).

Yet authors such as Shane and Venkataraman (2000: 220) stress that entrepreneurial opportunities come in a variety of forms and do not necessarily equate with capitalism. In the case of immigrant businesspeople who focus on ethnic market niches, entrepreneurship can be a way to retain one's self-esteem, as this economic mobility does not entail cultural assimilation (Porter and Washington 1993).

#### **Different Roles in Different National Contexts**

Additionally, postcolonial theorists, such as Said (1978) and Prasad (2003), take note of a typical Orientalist discourse in organization studies which perceive certain non-Western businesses practices to be residues of 'traditional', backward, and primitive cultural practices that are an obstacle to organizational efficiency and effectiveness. In many Orientalist discourses, Islam is pictured as backward, violent, and primitive, which does not tally with honest, ethical, and straightforward ways of doing business (Said 1978). In contrast to the alleged entrepreneurial asset of individualism, the (p. 400) literature on ethnic minority entrepreneurship stresses the advantages of sociability and family relations (Portes 1995). Although a few authors (for example, Sloane 1999) discuss the realities and opportunities of the combination of Islam and entrepreneurship, the standing entrepreneurship literature constructs a hegemonic discourse that suggests the incompatibility of Islamic and entrepreneurial identities. What does this mean for the identities of female Muslim entrepreneurs of Moroccan and Turkish descent? In a research project undertaken in the Netherlands amongst this group of female migrant entrepreneurs (Essers and Benschop 2009), we saw these Muslim female entrepreneurs exhibit complex boundary work (see also Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003), entailing strategies in which Islam is used as a basis for distinction, stratification, and demarcation to facilitate entrepreneurship.

All of the interviewed female entrepreneurs resist traditional, dogmatic approaches of Islam and negotiate their Muslim identity in relation to entrepreneurship. Based on our analysis, we distinguish four kinds of boundary work in relation to gender, ethnicity, entrepreneurship, and Islam. One strategy is to resist the strict sex segregation as advocated by certain sections in Islam. Females may pragmatically relate their job to respectful professions and define their 'limits' by keeping an appropriate distance from male clients. They symbolically create a boundary between themselves and their male clients to conform to gendered norms without jeopardizing their businesses. Another strategy to deal with gender regulations ascribed to Islam is to emphasize the individuality of faith. The female entrepreneurs in this study do this by claiming the right to decide for themselves which religious rules apply to their working lives and which—in their eyes, dogmatic—rules can be disregarded. Thus, they craft an individual Muslim identity and build boundaries within Islam; different Islams are distinguished to create space for religious individualism. They view Muslim identity as an individual matter between Allah and the believer. Therefore, the boundaries of what is (not) allowed are individually set and stretched to accommodate female entrepreneurship. The third form of boundary work involves embracing feminist progressive interpretations of the Qur'an, such as referring to Qur'anic female role models and stressing the morality of work. This

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provides females with the opportunity to stretch the boundaries of what is acceptable work within gendered and religious regulations. The final form of boundary work involves historicizing and contextualizing the Qur'an, such as stating that the strict gender relations as described in several Qur'anic verses pertain to ancient periods where societies had other gender dynamics. Demarcating earlier societies from contemporary societies helps these entrepreneurs shield themselves from more dogmatic interpretations of the Qur'an. Accordingly, they are able to craft a more individual religious identity to counter more collectivist, universal interpretations within Islam regarding appropriate gender behaviour.

Boundary work closely relates to the notion of identity regulation and identity work, which has been discussed in a recent project (Essers, Doorewaard, and Benschop 2013) in the context of family relations. We studied how female entrepreneurs of Turkish and Moroccan origin in the Netherlands perform their identity work between conflict with, and compliance to, the family regulations, in continuous interplay with their social (p. 401) environment. We found that the patriarchal contexts in the Turkish and Moroccan communities emphasize the 'good woman role' in the private family environment and tend to restrict females from holding public roles. The female entrepreneurs have to manoeuvre strategically between the conflicting roles of the good woman in private contexts and the small business owner in the public. The stories of the interviewed entrepreneurs have demonstrated how these female migrant entrepreneurs are regulated by a set of restrictions and norms regarding gender, ethnicity, as well as small business ownership. These norms and regulations relate to normative discourses, patriarchal norms, and traditional practices, which tell them what to do, and how to behave. Females are expected to behave in a feminine manner and to adhere to female roles, strongly related to the private sphere, such as motherhood and being a housewife (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006). These norms and practices hinder female migrant entrepreneurs from stepping outside, into the public domain, as business owners. Two important identity regulations can be discerned: the first concerns 'the good woman', the second one the ambiguities regarding 'family support'.

From this research project on family dynamics, a variety of identity work manifestations emerges, all between conflict and compliance. These manifestations of identity work can be placed in four different positions: the two poles of conflict and compliance, and two more hybrid positions of bending and selecting in-between. We also distinguish a fifth manifestation of identity work, which surpasses these poles of conflict and compliance. For the majority of the migrant female business owners we interviewed, only a small and winding path is available in order to become a business owner without bringing shame to the family. Each of them followed their own path, more or less successfully. In so doing, each of them forms, maintains, strengthens, or revises a construction of herself in

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relation to the claims and demands issued on them. Most identity work manifestations stay within the conflict-compliance dimension. A first category of manifestations can be found on the conflict pole of the strategic manoeuvring continuum.

Conflict-oriented identity work is a visible, active, and sometimes aggressive activity. In order to get what they want, female migrant entrepreneurs need to rebel against the family norms and oppose their family members and acquaintances openly. Another manifestation of conflict-oriented identity work is the activity we describe as blackmail. Blackmail is a form of coercion, through which the blackmailer realizes his or her wishes based on threats. The conflict-oriented responses operate within the set of family norms. The entrepreneurs mostly do not question the family norms; they just want to ignore them. Neither rebelling nor being blackmailed is an easy position, and for both positions female migrant business owners need persistency and a thick skin to convince their relatives that they want to stick to their business owner identity. Such an attitude openly objects to the norm that a female should stay home and should keep a distance from the public sphere. Compared to conflict-orientation, the category 'bending' is characterized by softer and less aggressive interventions. Manipulation, for instance, is a manifestation of identity work which aims at adjusting or bending the environment to someone's wishes. The female entrepreneurs involved in this kind of identity work object to the idea that they ought to perform a subordinate, economically dependent, (p. 402) and reproductive role. Nevertheless, they do not speak their minds freely, but appear to be inclined to use more 'manipulative' tactics to impress their relatives. This strategy contains similarities with Ketner, Buitelaar, and Bosma's (2004) approach, which aims at playing out people or ideas against each other. Telling 'white' lies and other forms of secret behaviour also belong to the bending approach.

We may infer that female migrant entrepreneurs are inclined to display secret behaviour during their childhood in particular, as it is in this period that they live with their parents and are heavily controlled. When they are adults, this secret behaviour is less necessary, as they may physically and emotionally distance themselves from this parental control. This role of secretly opposing family members can be recognized in Ketner, Buitelaar, and Bosma's (2004) secret behaviour approach, regarding the identity strategies among adolescent girls of Moroccan descent in the Netherlands.

Compared with conflicting and bending, this category of identity work does not alter the norms. Instead of openly or secretly trying to fight or adjust the effects of the norms and mores of the family, female migrant entrepreneurs attempt to realize their wishes by taking very small steps. Selectively, they accentuate those norms or suggestions, which, within the limits of the factual situation they are in, will help them on their paths towards small business ownership. We found several examples of this form of identity work. Some female entrepreneurs selectively filter the suggestions that suit their intentions, such as

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having a good education, and more or less ignore other suggestions stemming from their family. Others apply familiarity to sustain their small business, whereas on other occasions they keep their family away from their company in order to preserve their business ownership autonomy. Sometimes, the female migrant entrepreneurs explain that they had no choice but to accept the rules of the family. Evidently, such female entrepreneurial identity work invokes pragmatism, which entails seeking female autonomy from their families by pragmatically presenting themselves in relation to the family norms on gender and ethnicity. To some extent, this pragmatic approach echoes Bruni, Gherardi, and Poggio's (2005) study on Italian female entrepreneurs, in which females as 'disentrepreneurs' were found to leave the impression (with clients) that they were secretaries instead of the entrepreneur.

Apparently, sometimes it is possible that for a migrant female entrepreneur to succeed in extricating herself from family influence, and thus her identity work surpasses the poles of conflict and compliance. We recognized this in only a few cases, where female entrepreneurs who have a good relationship with their husbands are able to subvert the identity regulation and negotiation process with the rest of their family. Accordingly, such an action does not always result in breaking up the family. The family might not like it, but sometimes the love and respect for their daughter, sister, or wife is stronger than the disappointment that she does not behave completely according to the family norms.

We do not suggest that the overview of identity work we presented is exhaustive, since other narratives may reveal different manifestations. Moreover, dependent on the situation, time, and family relation, each of the presented manifestations of identity work may easily be practised by one and the same female business owner. Overall, our research has shown that, by developing various forms of identity work in response to (p. 403) normative familial standards, the migrant female entrepreneurs in our study are able to maintain—within certain limits—the respect of their relatives, the illusion of female modesty, and their autonomy at the same time.

### Reflections

Despite the vast differences in geography covered by the research projects referred to in this chapter and the diversity of contexts and identities, from Indigenous Australian to Turkish Muslim female entrepreneurs for example, we argue that not only are there a range of unique research issues outlined here which run counter to the dominant normative and hegemonic notions of 'the' entrepreneur, there are also threads woven through the experiences of these 'other' entrepreneurs which resonate with similarities despite the diversity of context.

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One of the main features which stands out is the way in which these research insights serve to highlight that, for ethnic minority populations and for many female entrepreneurs, the experience of entrepreneuring is one embedded in web-like connectedness to community and family. It is not an individualized or exceptional activity, but rather one which underpins, liberates, or enriches people's sense of identity and cultural context. For many Indigenous entrepreneurs, business activity is a means for supporting family and community; showcasing culture and reinscribing cultural identity in a positive and value-adding way (Foley 2000, 2008; Peredo and Chrisman 2006). Entrepreneurial activity is marked by its intersectionality for the female entrepreneurs highlighted in this chapter also. The disembedding of entrepreneurial activity can be seen in this context to be the 'exceptional' province of the dominant and more mainstream norms which have been established, not around the majority of the world's people with the diversity of contexts which could be represented, but rather positing male 'white' Western experience as if this were the norm against which all other experience should be calibrated.

A further link emerges here between the experiences of Indigenous entrepreneurs and the experiences of female entrepreneurs from diverse contexts and cultural backgrounds—that of postcolonialism. Postcolonial theory (see, for example, Said 1978; Moreton-Robinson 2003; Prasad 2003) takes account of difference and makes visible the oppressive and limiting lens of 'whiteness' and how this tends to normalize Western (Anglo, Christian, and European) experience as the desired norm, and renders invisible the oppressive and colonial nature of the way 'others' are perceived to be lacking, exotic, or primitive. Postcolonial theory highlights how dominant culture interests are served by the continued 'othering' of people with diverse epistemological understandings or from non-Western cultures.

For Indigenous peoples around the world, the pernicious nature of past colonization, with its accompanying violence and systemic dispossession of millions of people worldwide, is not just an historic legacy but a lived experience in the neocolonial present day. Economic engagement through micro, community-based social enterprise, or larger-scale entrepreneurial effort, can be, in this context, not just an act of assimilation, (p. 404) but more often of cultural resilience, continuity, and survival. For female entrepreneurs from diverse cultural backgrounds, engagement in self-actualizing business efforts is a powerful expression of agency and selfhood, and one which is enacted in ways congruent with one's identity and priorities (Essers and Benschop 2009; Essers, Doorewaard, and Benschop 2013). Postcolonial organizational theory enables us to better understand how popular constructions and all-too-frequent insidious, often invisible, taken-for-granted stereotypes and perceptions stigmatize and 'otherize' people from diverse backgrounds.

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It enables us also to re-evaluate and better appreciate the depth and importance of entrepreneurship as a powerful tool for the expression of agency in diversity.

In this chapter, it has been our aim to extend other critical entrepreneurship contributions to illustrate and analyse diverse entrepreneurs stemming from diverse contexts. By highlighting current research findings on studies which focus, first, on Indigenous entrepreneurs in Australia and, second, on female Muslim Turkish entrepreneurs in the UK and the Netherlands, we have shown how new takes on entrepreneurship in action across different locations and settings can reveal not only new forms of entrepreneurial diversity, but also the increasing diversity of how (and what) entrepreneuring can mean.

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#### **Notes:**

- (1) The term 'Indigenous' is used to denote the inclusion of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (who comprise the Indigenous peoples of Australia) whereas the term 'Aboriginal' will elsewhere be used where this refers to Australia's mainland Indigenous peoples who prefer the use of the term 'Aboriginal'.
- (2) On 22 June 2007, the then Australian prime minister announced a national emergency into 'the abuse of children in Indigenous communities in the NT. Amongst these measures was the deployment of the military as well as police and specialist security forces to take over some 60 Indigenous communities in remote areas'.
- (3) The 1997 Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report, Bringing Them Home: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families, found government policies of the time

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towards Indigenous peoples fell within United Nations' definitions of 'genocide'. On 13 February 2008, the Australian prime minister formally apologized to Indigenous Australians on behalf of the Australian people for what they had endured during the public policy period known as the 'Stolen Generations'.

(4) The APY Lands of South Australia are a vast area of the central desert region located within South Australia but bordered by Western Australia and the Northern Territory also, which were handed back to the Aboriginal communities of the region through the historic Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Land Rights Act in 1981. A map of this area and information about APY Lands Aboriginal communities is available at: <a href="http://www.anangu.com.au/">http://www.anangu.com.au/</a>.

#### **Deirdre Tedmanson**

University of South Australia

#### **Caroline Essers**

Nijmegen School of Management



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