

## **Entrepreneurial motivation among female employees: Multiple experiences and common expectations.**

ADJOUT Samir<sup>1</sup>, BOUMOULA Samir<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Laboratory of Economics and Development, University of Bejaia, (Algeria), samir.adjout@univ-bejaia.dz.

<sup>2</sup> Laboratory of Economics and Development, University of Bejaia, (Algeria), samir.boumoula@univ-bejaia.dz

### **ARTICLE INFO**

Article history:

Received:08/06/2023

Accepted:05/02/2024

Online:27/02/2024

Keywords:

Entrepreneurial  
motivation

Female entrepreneur

Dissatisfaction

Independence

Push vs pull approach

JEL Code:

### **ABSTRACT**

*Entrepreneurial motivation, which lies at the heart of the entrepreneurial phenomenon, has attracted the interest of several authors. The objective of this article is to understand why female employees leave their jobs in favor of entrepreneurial activities. The results show that the entrepreneurial motivation of female employees primarily combines non-economic factors, which stem from dissatisfaction in the professional environment and the desire for independence. In their career transition, these women are driven and inspired by aspects that go beyond the economic sphere, which does not appear to be a priority, although it's important.*

## **1. Introduction**

Entrepreneurial motivation has been the subject of several research studies, highlighting multiple factors that can lead an individual to embark on an entrepreneurial path. Whether they are of an economic nature or not, whether they refer to personal or contextual aspects, all of these factors have often been analyzed from the perspective of the "Push-Pull" categorization. This perspective has given rise, according to Reynolds et al. (2002), to the concepts of necessity entrepreneurship and opportunity entrepreneurship, or constrained and voluntary entrepreneurship, to borrow the words of Giacomini et al. (2016).

The first type involves necessity factors of an economic nature (difficulty finding employment, insufficient income, job loss, ...), personal dissatisfaction, which can manifest as frustration in job, or a lack of professional prospects. This type also refers to a need, often identified as specific to women, related to flexibility between the private and professional spheres. On the other hand, opportunity entrepreneurship develops around factors that positively drive individuals towards an entrepreneurial direction. It is seen as a domain that is compatible with the desire for independence, autonomy, and personal achievement.

This dichotomous and simplistic view in the analysis of entrepreneurial motivation has led to a typology of motivational factors that revolves around mutually exclusive dimensions (necessity vs opportunity). However, the entrepreneurial decision often involves both necessity and opportunity factors (Van Der Zwan, 2016; Brush et al., 2009; Aldrich & Cliff, 2003). Thus, given the multiplicity of entrepreneurial situations and the diversity of entrepreneurial profiles, the "push vs pull" approach proves to be irrelevant in capturing entrepreneurial motivation in all its complexity. According to Carsrud & Brannback (2011), it is necessary to delve deeper into entrepreneurial

motivations, in order to better understand entrepreneurs.

In this study, we focus on analysing the entrepreneurial motivation of women who have transitioned from wage employment to engaging in entrepreneurial activities. These "atypical" entrepreneurial figures, as defined by Alter (2012), have not been the subject of targeted studies to better understand their transition to entrepreneurship. It is challenging to grasp their specificities through a study that encompasses women entrepreneurs in general, often portrayed as a homogeneous group. However, it is increasingly acknowledged that even though they share similarities, women entrepreneurs form a heterogeneous group (Nelson & Constantinidis, 2017; Lebègue, 2015; Constantinidis, 2010). In this perspective of better understanding the determinants of entrepreneurial motivation within an atypical population of entrepreneurs, we raise the question concerning the motivating factors for women employees. In other words, what are the reasons that push or encourage women to leave wage employment in favour of entrepreneurial activities? Answering this question has led us to an analysis of the theoretical foundations of entrepreneurial motivation. The analytical framework suggested by Gabarret & Vedel (2012) provides a flexible tool that is better suited to understanding the diversity of entrepreneurial situations. Hence, it has been selected to better apprehend this understudied profile of entrepreneurs.

Although entrepreneurship is an economic phenomenon, some entrepreneurs may be attracted to starting a business for reasons that are not necessarily related to the economic sphere (Jennings & Bruh, 2013; Hessels et al., 2008). This non-economic orientation of motivation is increasingly observed, especially in the case of social and solidarity entrepreneurship (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011). The hypothesis of non-economic motivation is suggested in the context of our work. It is assumed that the economic aspect would not be a priority for women who have an income from their salaried employment. Their motivations primarily lie outside of economic and financial considerations.

Taking into account its complex and multidimensional nature, it would be too simplistic to identify the entrepreneurial motivation of individuals in a strict dichotomy between opportunity motivation and necessity motivation (Williams & Williams, 2014). Therefore, we argue that the women involved in our study would be motivated by a combination of factors that belong to multiple dimensions.

Based on these elements, we have adopted a qualitative and exploratory approach, relying on open interviews conducted with a group of women who have left their employment positions to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

## **2. Litterature riview**

Entrepreneurial literature includes a wide range of research on the theme of motivations that lead individuals in their decision to start a business. These motivations can arise from economic or non-economic needs. They can be rooted in personal, family or sociocultural considerations. Moreover, the decision to create a business can be voluntary or, conversely forced. It is in this line that the push vs pull approach, pioneered by Shapero (1975), has long dominated entrepreneurial motivation research.

### *2.1. Entrepreneurial Motivation : A Complex Construct*

Entrepreneurial motivation is a topic that has attracted the interest of several authors who have explored the reasons and factors that drive individuals in their entrepreneurial pursuits. The economic nature of entrepreneurial motivation has been widely emphasized, referring to the decision to start a business as a maximization process in which individuals weigh the potential returns of various activities to choose the one that will yield the highest outcome (Arenius & Minniti, 2005).

However, the complexity of the entrepreneurial phenomenon is such that entrepreneurial motivation cannot be reduced to solely economic dimensions. Indeed, the need for achievement and fulfilment, identified by McClelland (1961) as a distinctive psychological characteristic of entrepreneurs, the opportunity to create one's own employment and the desire for autonomy or independence, as well as the aspiration to improve one's quality of life or that of others, are motivational factors widely discussed in entrepreneurial literature. While not aiming to provide an exhaustive list of motivational factors, it is essential to highlight that the inclination to seek non-economic gains in entrepreneurship should also be integrated into the motivational factors.

## 2.2. *The push vs pull approach to motivation : A critical reading*

The push vs pull approach represents a simplifying framework for understanding entrepreneurial motivation. It identifies the factors that lead individuals to choose entrepreneurial activities, categorizing them into two groups regardless of their nature: pull motivations and push motivations.

The pull group encompasses factors that positively attract individuals towards entrepreneurship, leading to a desire to start a business. In this case, entrepreneurial activity is a deliberate choice and is seen as a promising career path compared to other options. On the other hand, the push group represents a forced choice, where individuals are driven towards self-employment out of necessity.

This conception of entrepreneurial motivation has the advantage of simplicity in its application. It allows for comparisons between countries or regions worldwide. This approach is widely adopted in surveys such as the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), which establish international comparisons regarding rates of entrepreneurial activity and types of entrepreneurship (necessity or opportunity). However, this dichotomous approach to entrepreneurial motivation has faced several criticisms. These criticisms focus on the exclusivity of the choice, the weak opposition between push/pull (necessity vs. opportunity) aspects of motivational factors, and the neglect of the nature of motivation itself.

It is increasingly recognized that this approach is based on a restrictive view of entrepreneurial motivation (Van Der Zwan et al., 2016; Williams & Williams, 2014; Eijdenberg & Masurel, 2013). In other words, opportunity excludes necessity and vice versa. However, the entrepreneurial decision is often the result of both necessity and opportunity motivations (Van Der Zwan et al., 2016; Brush et al., 2009; Aldrich & Cliff, 2003). Bosma et al. (2009), in their analysis of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) reports, highlight a methodological bias that consists of asking respondents to choose exclusively between a push motivation or a pull motivation, without any possibility of opting for an intermediate option between these two extremes. Similarly, Reynolds et al. (2002) indicated that a proportion as high as 97% of entrepreneurs can be classified into either the “opportunity” or “necessity” group.

The distinction between the push and pull types has been made in a form of opposition, which is not without ambiguity. Numerous studies have indicated that the boundary between necessity and opportunity motivations is not as clear as it may seem (Van Der Zwan et al. 2016; Block et al., 2015; Caliendo & Kritikos, 2010; Kirkwood, 2009; Williams, 2009). Indeed, some factors can give rise to sometimes contradictory interpretations. For example, the desire for independence that drives an individual to become an entrepreneur can be interpreted as a pull factor that positively attracts towards entrepreneurship. However, this same desire for independence suggests a certain form of dissatisfaction or frustration in a previous job.

Furthermore, the push vs pull approach is based on grouping motivational factors, without any distinction regarding their nature. Thus, factors of an economic, social, familial, personal nature are mixed together in one category or another. However, given the complexity of the entrepreneurial phenomenon, which encompasses multiples facets, it is necessary to question the dimension (economic, social, cultural) that leads individuals to entrepreneurial activity.

## 2.3. *Towards a Combinatorial Framework of Entrepreneurial Motivation*

The diversity of entrepreneurial situations and the emergence of new profiles of entrepreneurs (students, women, immigrants, social and solidarity entrepreneurship, associative, etc.) have challenged the dichotomous logic of the push vs pull approach to entrepreneurial motivation. In order to better grasp this concept in all its complexity, an effort to adjust and readapt this framework was more than necessary.

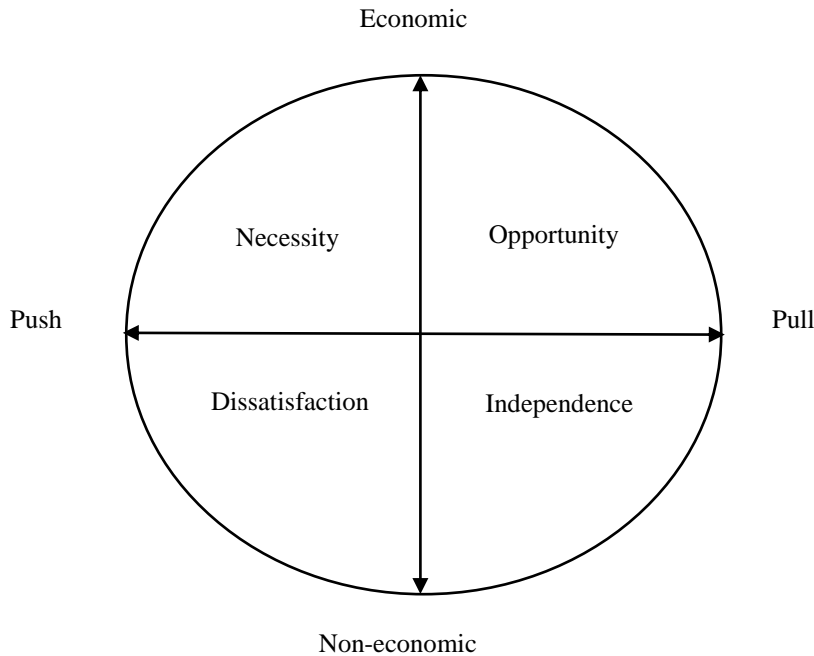
With this in mind, Gabarret & Vedel (2012, 2015) as well as d'Andria & Gabarret (2017) invite us to question this reference framework in order to surpass its limits, by proposing a reconfiguration that allows for a reliable and relevant tool in analysing entrepreneurial situations in their diversity. Building upon the push/pull approach, they suggest a dual adaptation to broaden the understanding and study of entrepreneurial motivation.

To overcome the exclusivity of choice, the authors distinguish between economic and non-economic factors and propose an interpretative framework that involves four dimensions of motivation: Necessity, opportunity, dissatisfaction, and independence. In this new configuration, entrepreneurial motivation is seen as a combination of factors that belong to different dimensions. A single exclusive choice of one of the four dimensions does not seem to fully represent motivation (Figure 1).

Based on this representation, it is therefore possible to associate each individual with a combination of different factors. Thus, faced with the heterogeneity of entrepreneurial profiles, the combination of motivational factors that corresponds to them will also be heterogeneous. From this perspective, an individual who has identified an entrepreneurial opportunity (motivated by opportunity) may be driven to pursue it due to a feeling of dissatisfaction with their current job (motivated by dissatisfaction). According to the push/pull approach, this individual is limited to

choosing between opportunity (pull) or dissatisfaction (push). The new interpretative framework allows for the representation of this individual's entrepreneurial motivation, which involves both pull and push factors. Similarly, the dissatisfaction that an individual may have felt in their employment can lead to a decision to become an entrepreneur in search of autonomy and independence. Once again, the push/pull approach proves to be insufficient as it can only partially represent this individual's motivation.

Figure 1. Dimensions of entrepreneurial motivation.



Source: Adapted from Gabarret & Vedel (2012, p 93).

To overcome ambiguous interpretations, each dimension can give rise to either a positive or a negative reading. The meaning attributed to each dimension depends on the entrepreneur's personality, desires, expectations, aspirations, and contextual factors that influence entrepreneurial orientation. For instance, dissatisfaction experienced in an employment position (push) can be interpreted as a desire to seek satisfaction (pull). This dual interpretation can be applied to other dimensions of entrepreneurial motivation.

#### *2.4. Entrepreneurial motivation of women*

Studies aiming to shed on the entrepreneurial motivations of women have often been conducted in a comparative logic with their men counterparts, in order to reveal differences and similarities. The results vary between those which argue that reasons motivating women to undertake entrepreneurial ventures are different from those of men, and those which have not found such differences. The contributions of Lebègue (2015) and Carrier et al. (2006) are illustrative of these differences. These differences can be explained through the notion of gender as a social construction, which revolves around values, beliefs, and norms (Nelson & Constantinidis, 2017). In most societies, gender assigns women roles that are related on the family context and responsibilities that fall within the domestic sphere. By adhering to these values and norms, women show a lower inclination towards entrepreneurship and are less motivated, or motivated differently, by entrepreneurial engagement. According to some authors, it appears that it is not one's sex that determines types of behaviour and motivations to adopt them. In fact, Chasserio et al. (2016) argue that there are more differences among individuals of the same sex than between sex.

Beyond this divergence, and without aiming to provide an exhaustive list of motivations for women entrepreneurs, we can refer to the synthesis by d'Andria & Gabarret (2016), which highlights some motivational factors that are often identified, although their order of importance may vary slightly from country to country. Female

entrepreneurial motivation primarily involves economic factors that intertwine with the pursuit of work-family balance and the desire for personal achievement.

Female employees may consider the entrepreneurial status for reasons that differ from those of women entrepreneurs as a whole. The limited studies on this specific case indicate motivational factors related to dissatisfaction in wage employment (Gabarret & Vedel, 2012; Kirkwood & Walton, 2010; Fayolle, 2003). The difficulty of reconciling work and family, as well as the need for flexibility imposed by household responsibilities, can be motives for ending wage employment and considering business creation (Bourgain & Chaudat, 2015; Orhan & Scott, 2001). It has also been established that identifying a business opportunity can serve as a source of motivation for an employee to become an entrepreneur (Shane, 2012).

### 3. Research Methodology

Fayolle (2003) emphasized the great diversity in entrepreneurial situations and business creations. Entrepreneurs and their entrepreneurial projects differ from one another. Under these circumstances, it is useful to question the knowledge we have about entrepreneurship, which is primarily derived from studies that rely on quantitative methods. The results are often generalized without taking this diversity into account. Consequently, female entrepreneurs have often been portrayed as a homogeneous group among all entrepreneurs, often in comparison to their male counterparts. The field of entrepreneurship can benefit from the development and dissemination of qualitative methods, which employ tools better suited to the diverse and heterogeneous nature of entrepreneurial situations (Hilady-Rispal & Jouison-Laffitte, 2015, p 17). In their literature review dedicated to the topic of entrepreneurial motivation, Dawson & Henley (2012, p 700) highlighted that the conclusions are often mixed. They thus recommend resorting to more in-depth qualitative research to eliminate any ambiguity or confusion between push and pull factors.

The objective of this study is to understand the factors of entrepreneurial motivation among women who have previously been employed. The reasons for such a career reorientation are difficult to identify through a quantitative approach, which aims to be normalized and standardized. Therefore, we have opted for an exploratory qualitative approach, which should lead us to a better understanding of the motivational factors within this segment of the entrepreneur population specifically, and entrepreneurial motivation in general.

Qualitative approaches are maturing to better legitimize knowledge construction based on pragmatic and participatory experiences at the heart of the research field and its practices (Audet & Parissier, 2013, P 7). In line with this spirit, we conducted individual interviews using an interview guide with women entrepreneurs who have previously been employed. The duration of each interview ranged from 1 to 2 hours. Through our interactions with these women, we observed that many of them do not seem to identify with this dichotomous view of motivation. They feel excluded from the restrictive framework imposed by researchers' classifications. Our approach, which involves listening to these women and transcribing their statements, therefore takes on its full significance. The women in question have professional experience as employees before starting their own businesses. They have left their employment positions to create and actively manage their own companies.

To obtain in depth-information, all interviews are conducted face to face. The physical contact with the respondents helps establish a relationship of trust, which is necessary for them to express themselves on topic related to their professional, as well as family and personal lives. In total, twelve (12) interviews were conducted and analysed. This number aligns with our research objective, which is to better understand the motivations behind women employees' entrepreneurial engagement. In this type of research, it is not about defining a threshold beyond which the sample would be representative and yield statistically significant results that can be generalized to the entire population. This requirement falls within the realm of quantitative methods (Hilday-Rispal, 2002).

The questions revolve around the professional trajectories of the interviewed women. The interviews are conducted with the objective of understanding what motivated their career redirection towards entrepreneurship: Their professional objectives and expectations, the factors that led them to leave regular employment, the factors that lead to leaving employee status, and the motivations behind starting them on business. Recognizing that the answers to such inquiries may lie in the familial and social embeddedness of these women (Santoni, 2016; Brush et al., 2009), we were led to question all of these dimensions.

The main descriptive characteristics of the sample, which consists of twelve women entrepreneurs established in the Bejaia region, are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: The main descriptive characteristics of the sample

Case	Age (year)	Family situation	Education	Salary experience	Year of crating	Business Sector
Wom1	29	Married, 01 child	Master Sociology	05 years	2014	Printing press, bookstore
Wom2	25	Single	Master Business	03 years	2016	Tourism
Wom3	27	Single	Computer engineer	04 years	2017	Information technology
Wom4	33	Married, no children	Ecology & environnement	06 years	2014	clean
Wom5	38	Married, 03 children	Bachelor Legal sciences	08 years	2018	Legal advisor
Wom6	35	Married, 03 children	/	04 years	2016	Trader
Wom7	37	Married, 02 children	Bachelor accounting and finance	07 years	2013	Accounting company
Wom8	32	Married, 01 child	Bachelor Psychology	04 years	2015	Childcare center
Wom9	46	Married, 04 children	Bank and finance	12 years	2015	Tax consultancy company
Wom10	34	Married, 02 children	Legal sciences	06 years	2014	Law company
Wom11	26	Single	Marketing	02 years	2015	Agri-food industry
Wom12	40	Married, 03 children	Insurance	08 years	2012	Insurance agency

Source : By author

#### 4. Results

The entrepreneurial motivation of the interviewed women was analyzed according to the framework proposed by Gabaret & Vedel (2012). This framework revolves around dimensions related to necessity, the desire to seize an opportunity, professional dissatisfaction, and the sense of independence and freedom that being an entrepreneur can provide. Other motivational factors from the literature were also highlighted. All these dimensions are illustrated by presenting the statements and testimonies of the participants. The results indicate that the entrepreneurial engagement of women employees is motivated by a combination of factors, with a predominance of aspects related to dissatisfaction and the desire of independence. The dimensions to exploiting opportunities or those arising from necessity come in second place (Table 2).

Table 2: The dimensions of entrepreneurial motivation among the interviewed women

	Dissatisfaction	Independence	Necessity	Opportunity
Wom 1	X	X		
Wom 2	X	X		X
Wom 3	X	x		
Wom 4	X	X		
Wom 5	X	X		
Wom 6	X	X		
Wom 7	X	X	X	
Wom 8	X	X		X
Wom 9			X	X
Wom 10	X	X		
Wom 11			X	X
Wom 12	X			X

#### 4.1. The multiple forms of dissatisfaction

The dissatisfaction experienced in the employee status is a very important factor in the entrepreneurial motivation of the women in our sample. The feeling of dissatisfaction that comes with being an employee takes on multiple forms: lack of prospects, boredom at work, lack of recognition, favouritism, discrimination, conflicts with hierarchical levels. This dissatisfaction, which manifests in the professional environment, does not remain without effects on the private sphere. As a result, tensions can arise within the family home, further reinforcing this sense of dissatisfaction.

Boredom brings about a feeling of weariness and uselessness among employed women, who become disinterested in performing routine tasks. This was the case for **Wom 1**: *"I left my job that I had held for 5 years. By the third year, I started feeling an infernal routine that weighed not only on my professional behavior but also on my family life. With no prospects or horizons... I was convinced that if I didn't leave this company, I would be condemned to endure this routine and its consequences for another 20 years. The idea of starting my own business started to take hold."*

The discrimination and lack of respect that women can endure in the professional sphere often manifest during motherhood. This vulnerable time can coincide with remarks and behaviors aimed at devaluing and demotivating them. This is evident in the propos of **Wom 7**: *"When I had my second child, just as the eldest had started school, I struggled to make end meet. This situation led my boss to block the promotion she had considered for me, claiming that my career was no longer compatible with my family obligations"*.

The lack of consideration an favoritism that employees may endure corresponds to the feeling that career progression no longer adheres to objective criteria based on skills and rewarding efforts. This leads to disappointment and dissatisfaction. This scenario is illustrated by the words of **Wom 3**, who highlighted the fact that career management within the company is driven by informal factors. *"I joined an informatics company as an engineer. I didn't have much difficulty adapting to a predominantly men environment. In fact, I was confirmed in my position before the probation period even ended. This served as a real motivation for me to fully commit to this job. However, when it came to recognizing my skills and reconsidering my professional category and hierarchical position, the response as always the same: it's not the right time yet. Meanwhile, acquaintances of the owner were getting promotions at very short intervals. That's when I realized I had to rethink my professional future, and the idea of starting my own business began to emerge"*.

A strained relationship with the hierarchy can be a source of dissatisfaction. Such conflicts can arise when the company's vision is no longer shared with all employees (**Wom 4**). Repetitive interference can also lead to conflicts with hierarchical supervisors (**Wom 5**).

**Wom 4**: *"I joined this company at its inception. After six years, we were able to gain market share on a national scale. In this new setup, it was imperative to adopt a new organization, a new organizational chart, ... The company's leaders did not consider this aspect a priority. The financial results show continuous growth, but these achievements come at the expense of employees, especially women, who are increasingly burdened with tasks. In fact, this tension has driven many employees to leave their positions. For me, these conditions became a genuine motivation to start my own business."*

**Wom 5**: *"Becoming an entrepreneur was never part of my plans. I worked as an employee in three different companies. For eight years, I managed my professional career in way that I considered successful. In my last experience, I held the position of head of legal and litigation department. I was in charge of team of five people. The lack of resources and restrictive interference from the hierarchy in my prerogatives became the real reason for my break from the employment world"*.

Indeed, the combination of these factors of dissatisfaction has led these female employees to leave their jobs. However, the motivation to start a business is not solely a result of this feeling of dissatisfaction. Other factors come into play, which belong to different dimensions.

#### 4.2. The diversity of independence factors

Regarding the dimension related to the desire for independence, women in the sample stated that the desire to feel free and autonomous played a significant role in redirecting their professional lives towards entrepreneurial activity. According to their statements, this desire for independence is synonymous with freedom of organization, decision-making, and action. Entrepreneurship also appears to offer a more balanced path and a balance between the private and professional spheres.

**Wom 2**: *"As an employee, I always felt dependent on others... the need for freedom, to be the originator of a creation and personal achievement, played a significant role in my decision to start my own business."*

**Wom10**: *"The real motivation behind my decision was to gain my freedom in all its dimensions: freedom of organization, initiative, creation, and decision-making."*

**Wom 6:** *“Creating my own business meant no longer being indebted to anyone. Being an entrepreneur allows for better organization of both my family life and professional life. This independent status also offers the advantage of being autonomous in shaping one's professional career.”*

**Wom 8:** *“Being an entrepreneur means taking control of one's own destiny... whereas before (as an employee), that wasn't really the case.”*

**Wom 7:** *“As an employee, I had the feeling of missing out on important family events. I didn't get to see my child grow up. In my role as an entrepreneur, I am in perfect harmony with my personal life.”*

#### *4.3. Entrepreneurial opportunity: A major asset*

Regarding the dimension that considers the exploitation of a business opportunity as the essence of entrepreneurship, the statements of the respondents reveal that the idea of starting their own business gradually took shape as they accumulated experience and developed a network of relationships. The support of the environment, in all its dimensions, can also present an opportunity to seize in order to create a company.

**Wom 12:** *“Before starting my own business, I worked for eight years in the insurance sector. I worked for two different companies. When I left the first company, a significant number of clients transferred their portfolios to the new company. It was at that moment that I realized the trust I had built with the clientele was the reason for this transfer. From there, the idea of working for myself emerged. Having an initial clientele with whom I had worked for a long time as an employee is an opportunity that strongly motivated me to take the leap.”*

**Wom 2:** *“Due to the responsibilities I had in my job, where I was in charge of the company's commercial network, I had the opportunity to develop relationships with a variety of partners. Constant contact with them gave me the ability to identify untapped niches that could be analyzed and lead to the creation of a business. It was this opportunity that motivated me to create my own job.”*

**Wom 8:** *“I held a position in a public organization in the field of early childhood education. With the promulgation of a new law on the creation and operation of early childhood establishments, I had the idea of registering for this activity as an independent. This opportunity provided by the new legal framework governing this field, combined with the possibility of obtaining funding through creation assistance programs, strongly motivated my decision to create an early childhood establishment.”*

#### *4.4. The necessity dimension, or entrepreneurs by circumstances*

Regarding necessity-driven entrepreneurship, it appears that this dimension is not emphasized in the entrepreneurial process of the women being studied. This can be explained by the fact that these women were not unemployed before starting their businesses, so they were not driven by economic need to create their ventures. However, entrepreneurship out of necessity does not solely refer to the economic aspect. Events or circumstances, often exceptional, can force an individual to leave their salaried job and pursue an entrepreneurial activity that is more compatible with their situation.

In our study, this is the case for a woman who finds herself compelled to leave her job in order to take over the business her husband had been running. Due to a serious accident, her husband became unable to manage his company.

**Wom 9:** *“I worked as an employee for 12 years. Starting a business never crossed my mind. However, after this accident, I gradually found myself responsible for continuing the operation of my husband's business. During this period, I was on temporary leave from my employer. After a year, it became clear to me that I had to leave my job permanently and fully devote myself to the business. This situation lasted for nearly three years. At the end of this period, my husband wanted to exercise his retirement rights, and that's when I was compelled to create a new business in my own name, which is still in line with my husband's business.”*

Another entrepreneurial situation experienced as an obligation or even a sacrifice is that of a young woman who was an employee and lost her entrepreneur father. This tragic event became the breaking point with the world of employment and the starting point for an entrepreneurial activity she had never chosen.

**Wom11:** *“I worked in a private company for over three years, where I was in charge of a team of dynamic and ambitious collaborators. The working conditions and prospects offered by this international company were in line with my ambitions. However, after the death of my father, who had been managing his business for about twenty years, I found myself obliged to take over his activity. This business is a part of our life, our daily routine. This obligation naturally fell upon me, being the eldest in the family, as my brothers and sisters were not able to assume such responsibility.”*



## 5. Discussion and conclusion

One of the main characteristics that emerged from our research is the absence of economic motivation factors. These factors can be expressions of financial and economic necessity (lack of income, insufficient family income, etc.) or a desire for financial autonomy. This absence can be explained by the fact that the study focuses on employed women who are not facing economic necessity. Additionally, all the women in our case have a high level of education, which suggests that they hold important positions as employees and receive high salaries. Under these circumstances, it would be difficult to consider starting a business with the intention of ensuring one's own financial resources, given all the risks and uncertainties associated with entrepreneurial endeavors. Therefore, for these women, the nature of motivational factors lies outside the economic dimension.

The analysis of the statements collected from the interviewed women highlights the combination of "dissatisfaction and independence" as a favorable ground that fuels motivation to venture into entrepreneurship, at the expense of a traditional career in the employment world.

The attraction to entrepreneurship seems to be a necessary but not sufficient condition for motivation to take hold and trigger the act of creation. If a woman is not faced with job dissatisfaction in her employment, the likelihood of taking action remains low. Similarly, if we encounter a woman who is compelled to leave her job due to dissatisfaction but does not have a positive perception of entrepreneurship as a domain compatible with her aspirations for independence, autonomy, and freedom, she may seek another salaried job to rebuild her professional situation.

Therefore, the entrepreneurial motivation of these women can be interpreted as a process that revolves around factors of dissatisfaction and independence. The combination of these factors appears to be decisive in the outcome of this process, although the weight of the two dimensions may vary from one woman to another. In fact, some women may be more motivated by factors related to dissatisfaction, while for others, the factors of independence seem to have a stronger impact. However, for all women, entrepreneurial motivation revolves around this combination of factors.

Given the divergent research findings on the entrepreneurial motivation of women, this study aimed to focus on a unique figure in entrepreneurship: women who have left salaried employment in favor of starting their own businesses. Our objective was to understand the motives of a category of entrepreneurs that Alter (2012) refers to as "atypical," individuals who have deviated from the professional trajectory that could have been theirs to build their own stories.

The creation of businesses by women can be driven by different logics, relying on multiple and varied motivations. Such a decision can be more or less voluntary and may occur for economic or non-economic reasons. It is also a decision that, while personal, is inseparable from the contextual and environmental factors of the entrepreneur.

On a theoretical level, it is difficult to identify women entrepreneurs as a homogeneous group with specific motivations of their own. Entrepreneurial motivation should be understood as a transformative and constructive process directly linked to the personality of the entrepreneur and the environmental situations (Williams & Williams, 2014). Particularly in the case of women, entrepreneurial motivation can be a response to the evolution of their life cycle, an adaptation to the responsibilities imposed by gender social relations (Brush & Cooper, 2012). Thus, a single woman does not consider entrepreneurship for the same reasons as a married woman, a woman with dependent children, or a divorced woman.

Methodologically, our study stands out for its exploratory qualitative approach to motivational factors, focusing on a sample of 12 women who have abandoned traditional careers to become entrepreneurs. In our approach, we relied on an analytical framework that allows us to associate each individual with a combination of motivational factors that can be economic or non-economic. It is also a tool characterized by its flexibility in interpreting the components of motivation, which can lead to positive or negative interpretations. Ultimately, our work proposes a new perspective for understanding entrepreneurial motivation that breaks away from the classic push/pull approach.

The results of our research show that the entrepreneurial motivation of employed women combines non-economic factors related to dissatisfaction in the professional environment and the desire for independence. In their career change, the women in our case are driven and motivated by aspects that go beyond the economic realm, which does not seem to be a priority, even though it is important. We are dealing with women whose decision to opt for entrepreneurial activity is not limited to a simple career reorientation. It is a decision that resembles a choice of lifestyle compatible with their aspirations for independence and satisfaction, rather than a purely economic imperative.

Our study has some limitations that are mainly due to the characteristics of the sample. The women included in this study have high levels of education and have been able to access positions of responsibility within the hierarchical order. This contrasts with the reality of women as a whole, who are forced to leave their jobs to become entrepreneurs. Therefore, it would be interesting to examine the entrepreneurial motivation of women who have not been able to reach various hierarchical levels in their salaried employment.

**References:**

- Aldrich, E. & Cliff, J.E. (2003). The pervasive effects of family on entrepreneurship: Toward a family embeddedness perspective. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 18, 573-597.
- Alter, N. (2012). La force de la différence. Itinéraires de patrons atypiques. *Presses universitaires de France, Paris*.
- Arenius, P. & Minniti, M. (2005). Perceptual variables and nascent entrepreneurship. *Small Business Economics*, 24, 233-247.
- Audet, M. & Parissier, C. (2013). La recherche qualitative dans les sciences de la gestion : de la tradition à l'originalité. *RECHERCHES QUALITATIVES*, 32(2), 1-12.
- Block, J., Kohn, K., Miller, D., Ullrich, K. (2015). Necessity Entrepreneurship and competitive strategy. *Small Business Economics*, 44 (1), 37-54.
- Bosma, N., Acs, Z., Autio, E., Coduras, A. & Levie, J. (2009), Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2008 Executive Report. *Babson College and Universidad del Desarrollo*.
- Bourgain, M. & Chaudat, P. (2015). Vie professionnelle et maternité : représentations comparées de jeunes entrepreneures et cadres en TPE et PME en croissance. *Revue de l'Entrepreneuriat*, 14(2), 83-108.
- Brush, C. G., De Bruin, A. & Welter, F. (2009). A gender-aware framework for women's entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 1(1), 8-24.
- Brush, C.G. & Cooper, S.Y. (2012). Female entrepreneurship and economic development: An international perspective. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 24 (1 -2), 1 - 6.
- Caliendo, M., Kritikos, A. S. (2009). "I want to, But I Also Need to": Start-Ups Resulting from Opportunity and Necessity. *IZA Discussion Paper No. 4661*, 1-33.
- Carrier, C., Julien, P.A. & Menvielle, W. (2006). Un regard critique sur l'entrepreneuriat féminin : une synthèse des études des 25 dernières années. *Gestion* 31(2), 36-50.
- Carsrud, A. & Brannback, M. (2011). Entrepreneurial Motivations: What Do We Still Need to Know? *Journal of Small Business Management*, 49 (1), 9-26.
- Chasserio, S., Pailot, Ph. & Poroli, C. (2016). L'entrepreneuriat est-il généré ? *Regards croisés sur l'économie*, 19, 62-75.
- Constantinidis Ch. (2010). Représentations sur le genre et réseaux d'affaires chez les femmes entrepreneures. *Revue Française de Gestion*, 36 (202), 127- 143.
- D'Andria, A., & Gabarret, I. (2017). Mères et entrepreneures : étude de la motivation entrepreneuriale des mampreneurs françaises. *Revue internationale P.M.E.*, 30 (1), 155-181.
- D'Andria, A. & Gabarret, I. (2016). Femmes et entrepreneurs : Trente ans de recherches en motivation entrepreneuriale féminine. *Revue de l'Entrepreneuriat*, 15 (3), 87-107.
- Dawson C. & Henley A. (2012), "Push" versus "pull" entrepreneurship: an ambiguous distinction? *Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, 18 (6), 697-719.
- Eijdenberg, E. & Masurel E. (2013). Entrepreneurial Motivation in a Least Developed Country: Push Factors and Pull Factors among Mses in Uganda. *Journal of Enterprising Culture*, 21(1), 19-43.
- Fayolle, A. (2003). Le métier de créateur d'entreprise. *Ed. D'Organisation, France*.
- Gabarret, I., & Vedel, B. (2015). Pour une nouvelle approche de la motivation entrepreneuriale. *La Revue des Sciences de Gestion*, 271, 13-20.
- Gabarret, I. & Vedel, B. (2012). Quitter son emploi pour devenir entrepreneur. *@GRH*, 3 (4), 79-97.
- Giacomini, O., Janssen, F., Guyot, J L. & Lohest, O. (2016). Entrepreneurs de nécessité et d'opportunité : quels comportements durant la phase de création ? *Revue de l'Entrepreneuriat*, 15 (3 - 4), 181-204.
- Hessels, J., Van Gelderen, M. & Thurik, R. (2008). Entrepreneurial Aspirations, Motivations, and their Drivers. *Small Business Economics*, 31, 323-339.
- Hilady-Rispa, M. & Jouisson-Laffitte, E. (2015). La contribution des méthodes qualitatives au développement du champ de l'entrepreneuriat. *Revue de l'Entrepreneuriat*, 1(14), 15-40.
- Jennings, J. E., & Brush, C. G. (2013). Research on women entrepreneurs: challenges to (and from) the broader entrepreneurship literature? *The Academy of Management Annals*, 7(1), 663-715.

- Kirkwood, J. & Walton, S. (2010). What motivates ecopreneurs to start businesses? *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, 16 (3), 204-28.
- Kirkwood, J. (2009). Motivational factors in a push-pull theory of entrepreneurship. *Gender in Management: An international Journal*, 25 (5), 346-364.
- Lebègue, T. (2015). La réussite de carrière entrepreneuriale des femmes. *Revue de l'Entrepreneuriat*, 14, 93-127.
- Nelson, T. & Constantinidis, Ch. (2017). Sex and gender in family business succession research: A review and forward agenda from a social construction perspective". *Family Business Review*, 30 (3), 219-241.
- Orhan, M. & Scott, D. (2001). Why women enter into entrepreneurship: an explanatory model. *Women in Management Review* 16(5), 232 - 247.
- Reynolds, P., Bygrave, W., Autio, E., Cox, L. & Hay, M. (2002). Global entrepreneurship monitor (executive report). *Babson College, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation/London Business School*.
- Santoni, J. (2016). Le rôle de la sensibilisation, de l'accompagnement et de l'auto-efficacité entrepreneuriale perçue dans l'engagement entrepreneurial des femmes. (*Thèse de doctorat, université de Strasbourg*).
- Shane, S. (2012). Reflections on the 2010 AMR decade award: Delivering on the promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research. *Academy of Management Review*, 37, 10-20.
- Van Der Zwan, P., Thurik, R., Verheul, I. (2016). Factors influencing the entrepreneurial engagement of opportunity and necessity Entrepreneurs. *Eurasian Bus Rev*, 6, 273 – 295.
- Williams, N. & Williams, C. C. (2014). Beyond necessity versus opportunity entrepreneurship: some lessons from english deprived urban neighbourhoods. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 10, 23-40.
- Williams, C. W. (2009). The motives of off-the-book entrepreneurs: necessity-or opportunity driven? *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 5 (2), 203-217.