

Influences of Gender Labelling of Entrepreneurship on the Entrepreneurial Career Aspirations of Educated Women in Bangladesh – A Comparative Study of Employed Women and Housewives

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The notion of how gender labelling of entrepreneurship impacts upon entrepreneurial aspirations of the growing group of educated, urban based women in developing economies have been unrecognised in entrepreneurship literature. Drawing on the “5M” framework suggested by Brush, Bruin and Welter (2009), this study explores factors affecting entrepreneurial career aspirations of educated urban women in Bangladesh, where society’s notions of impropriety often keep women off certain occupations including entrepreneurship. In-depth interviews were conducted with 72 “potential” women entrepreneurs, consisting of 35 employed women and 37 housewives. Findings reveal that socio-cultural and institutional contexts play important role in influencing women’s perception and aspiration about business-ownership.

INTRODUCTION

By and large, the main focus of studies investigating women entrepreneurs in developing economies has been on very poor women in rural areas and also urban slums, who are involved in micro scale income generating type of enterprises. With the exception of a few earlier studies in India (for example, Srivastava and Chaudhry, 1991; Singh, K. P., 1993; Easwaran, 1993), in Pakistan (see Shabbir and Gregorio, 1994), and in Bangladesh (Rashid, 1989; Moyeen and Huq, 1994; Saleh, 1995), and more recently in a number of middle-eastern and transitional economies (Jamali, 2009; Welter and Smallbone, 2008; Welter, Smallbone, Aculai, Isakova and Schakirova, 2003) the growing group of well educated, urban based women who are increasingly starting and running their own businesses as their counterparts in the developed economies are relatively unrecognised by academic researchers or development planners.

It has been argued that because of their relative paucity, the educated urban women entrepreneurs have not only been ignored in statistics and policy documents, but also in academic research (Rashid, 1989; Baden et al., 1994). In light of ample evidence and recognition that women’s entrepreneurship not only fosters economic growth and employment generation, it also provides a career option for women to effectively combine gainful employment with family responsibilities while nurturing female expression and fulfillment (Eddleston and Powell, 2008; Longowitz and Minniti, 2007; Verheul, Van Stel, and Thurik, 2006), it is important to investigate factors influencing entrepreneurial career aspirations of educated urban women with a view to mitigating the gender gap in the phenomenon of business ownership. In particular, focus should be placed on the influence of gender labelling of entrepreneurship prescribed by society and cultural norms on the entrepreneurial aspirations of educated women. It is

notable that these issues are under researched not only in Bangladesh but also in any developing country contexts, in general. This paper is an attempt to fill this research gap. It aims to explore the factors (both predisposing and triggering) affecting the entrepreneurial career aspirations of educated urban women in the society/culture of a developing country, represented by Bangladesh where society's notions of impropriety often keep women out of certain occupations including business ownership.

PRE-DISPOSING AND TRIGGERING FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURIAL CAREER ASPIRATIONS

Much of the literature on entrepreneurship have traditionally suggested a wide range of micro-level factors, both internal and external, that predispose and trigger awareness of and aspirations for business-ownership. These include socialisation (Bandura, 1977; Scherer, Adams, Wiebe and Carley, 1989; Matthews and Moser, 1995) and role models (Kao, 1993; Shapero and Sokol, 1982; Scott and Twomey, 1988); personality traits (Herron and Sapienza, 1992; Chell et al, 1991; Reynolds, 1992; Naffziger et al., 1994; Brockhaus and Horwitz, 1986; Cunningham and Lischeron, 1993); motivations (Scherer, Brodzinski and Wiebe, 1990; Goffee and Scase, 1983; Brush, 1990; Turner, 1993; Epstein, 1993; Carter and Cannon, 1992) and opportunity recognition (Carter and Brush, 2005; Carter and Williams, 2003; Boden and Nucci, 2002). Because of the male-bias that exists in the traditional frameworks explaining venture creation, 'not necessarily by intention but rather by omission, (Brush, Bruin and Welter, 2009, p.10), recent studies on women's entrepreneurship have accorded increased attention and recognition to the complex interplay of various micro, meso, and macro level variables to holistically study women's entrepreneurship (Elam, 2008; Jennings and McDougald, 2007; DeTienne and Chandler, 2007; and Steyaert and Katz, 2004). As argued by Jamali (2009, p.234), the general experience of female entrepreneurship in any context is shaped by a combination of human capital constraints and 'pull' or 'push' factor type motivations that are inextricably linked to organizational processes or labour market constraints as well as various macro normative and socio-cultural variables.

While evidence suggest that gender differences in opportunity identification are linked to human capital variables that include education, work experience, prior industry or entrepreneurial experience (Carter and Brush, 2005; Carter and Williams, 2003; Boden and Nucci, 2002), the motivations for women to pursue entrepreneurial career have also been categorised into 'push' and 'pull' factors. The most commonly cited 'push' factors are restricted access to labour market, labour market discrimination or glass ceiling career problems, with business start-up often perceived as the best available strategy to combine multiple role demands on women (Baughn, et al. 2006; Aidis, Welter, Smallbone and Isakova, 2007), and the 'pull' factors are independence, challenge, initiative, and satisfaction derived through entrepreneurship (Eddleston and Powell, 2008; Baughn, Chua and Neupert, 2006; Hughes, 2003).

In this premise, this study draws on the gender aware "5M" framework developed by Brush, Bruin and Welter (2009) to enable more holistic and differentiated studies of women's entrepreneurship from general entrepreneurship research. The "5M" framework draws on institutional theory and the notion of social embeddedness of entrepreneurship (Baughn et al, 2006; Bates, Jackson and Johnson, 2007). It essentially builds on the basic constructs of '3Ms' (Bates et al, 2007) namely market, money and management as the three 'fundamental building blocks' of business viability, but argues that this framework needs extension to "5Ms" by including two more constructs, namely 'motherhood' and the 'meso' and 'macro' environment (Brush et al, 2009, p.9). The 'motherhood' metaphor represents the greater impact of the family/household contexts on women than men in regards to their entrepreneurial aspirations and venture start-up decisions (Jennings and McDougald, 2007). The "macro/meso environment" highlights importance of the mediating influences of factors such as expectations of society and cultural norms, media representation of female entrepreneurs, national policies, strategies, cultural and economic influences, regional support policies, services and initiatives on women's entrepreneurial activity (Dopfer, Foster and Potts, 2004; Pitelis, 2005).

Generalisations of female entrepreneurial career aspirations derived from the studies in developed countries may not be appropriate when applied to educated women in developing countries. Drawing on this “5M” framework, this study focuses on factors that pre-dispose and trigger entrepreneurial career aspirations among the ‘employed women’ and ‘housewives’ as important segments of educated women in the developing country contexts, knowledge of which is scarce in the literature.

METHOD AND SAMPLE

Considering the nature of the study, a largely open-ended interview schedule was designed and used to collect the data. In-depth interviews were conducted with 72 “potential” women business-owners, consisting of 35 employed women working in both public and private sector and 37 housewives, with a view to ‘incorporating qualitative dimensions and a constructive/interpretive paradigm together with any quantitative components from the positivist belief system that might be deemed appropriate’ (Brush et al, 2009, p16). On an average, the interviews lasted for nearly 180 minutes.

The Employed Women

The reason for looking at this group of women as “potential” business-owners is that these women are already economically active, pursuing a career and are working outside their home. Besides, this group particularly those in managerial and professional positions, appear to have the experience, information and contacts required to set-up high growth businesses and thus are viewed as a potential source of new entrepreneurs (Hisrich and Brush, 1984).

The Housewives

The other group of “potential” women business-owners in this study is the housewives because they are not currently economically active but have the potential to be so. It may be assumed that while some urban women in Bangladesh are housewives by choice who may have been employed before but prioritised motherhood after marriage; others do not want to (lack of interest) or have the ability to pursue an economic option outside home. On the other hand, these housewives may have the desire but are not able to set-up a business because it is not acceptable (society’s notion of impropriety) and therefore, have prioritised the roles of wife and mother, as prescribed for them by their families. The number of respondents in each relevant group and the total sample size are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE IN TERMS OF RELEVANT GROUPS

“Potential” Women Business-Owners	No. of Respondents
i) Employed Women	35
ii) Housewives	37
Total Sample Size	72

Source: Field Survey

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Characteristics of the "Potential" Women Entrepreneurs

The characteristics of the "potential" women entrepreneurs i.e., the employed women and the housewives are summarised in Table 2.

TABLE 2
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POTENTIAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

	Employed Women	Housewives
Age	Ranged between 25 and 47 years, 49 percent falling between 26-30 years; 20 percent falling between 31-35 years; and 17 percent falling between 36-40 years.	Ranged between 22 and 51 years, 54 percent falling between 20-30 years; 41 percent falling between 31-45 years; and 5 percent were more than 45 years old.
Marital Status	74 percent married 26 percent single	
No. of Children	73 percent were mothers of one or two children (63 percent and 32 percent respectively)	73 percent were mothers 24 percent had one child, 16 percent each had two and three children, 8 percent each had 4 and 7 children
Type of Family Set-up	Majority (51 percent) lived in joint families	All (100 percent) lived in nuclear families
Income group	Majority (60 percent) belonged to upper-middle income group (from Tk. 100,000 and above) (approx. USD 1250)	Majority belonged to lower middle-income group (from Tk. 50,000 - less than Tk. 100,000) From USD 625 to less than USD 1250 approx.)
Level of Education	83 percent held a Masters degree; 17 percent held a Bachelors degree	35 percent held a Bachelors degree; 30 percent held a Masters degree; and 35 percent held an H.S.C. degree
Subject of Study	66 percent had degree in Social Science or Arts; 20 percent had degree in Commerce; and 14 percent had degree in Science	95 percent had degree in Social Science; 5 percent had degree in Science.

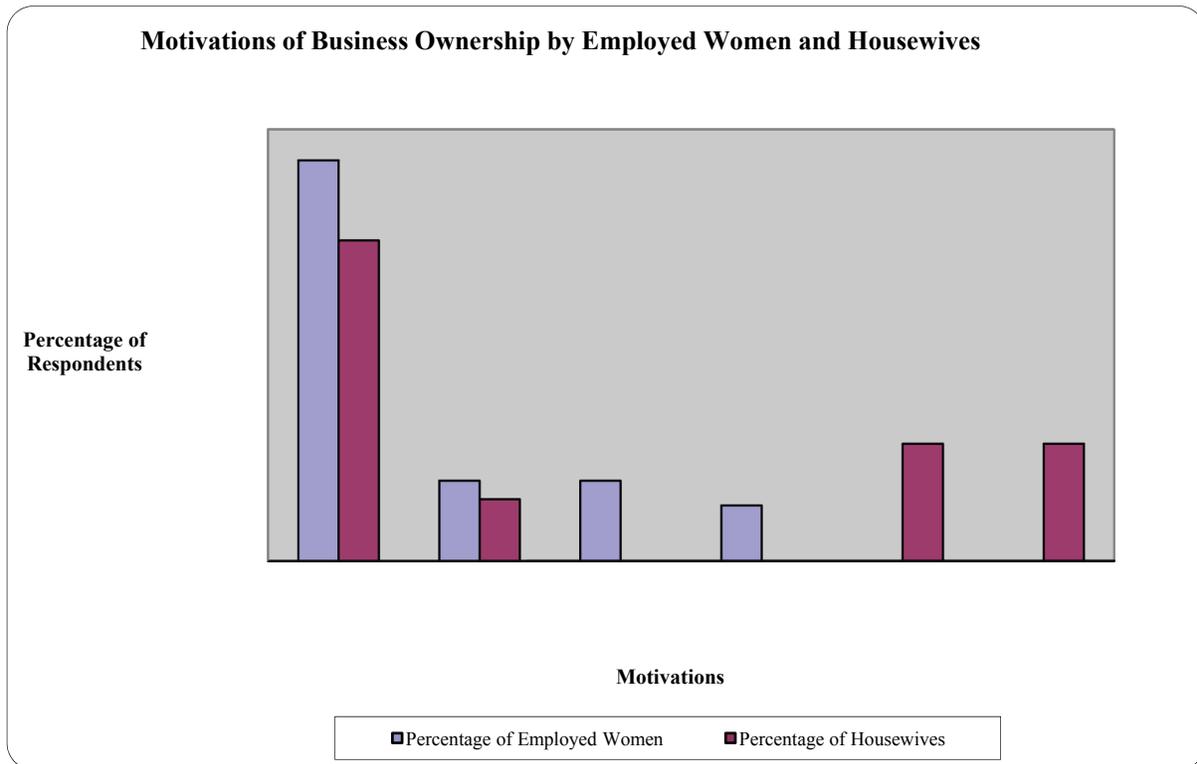
Factors Affecting Aspirations of Business-Ownership by Employed Women and Housewives

A total of 23 employed women (66 percent) in this study had aspirations of business-ownership at one point in their life and the remaining twelve did not show any interest in having own business. Most of the housewives (84 percent) interviewed for the purpose of this study also had aspirations of business-ownership. Only six housewives were found to have no interest in business-ownership as an economic option.

Motivations of Business Ownership

As presented in Figure 1, majority of the employed women who wanted to start a business did so in order to have independence and attractive monetary return (65 percent, n=15), while majority of the housewives (52 percent, n=16) wanted to start a business in order to raise economic returns for the family as well as to have independence. The desire for independence however carried a different connotation for these housewives. These housewives' aspirations of business-ownership were triggered by their perception that business-ownership would offer them the independence that allows the flexibility to cope with the combination of family responsibilities and gainful employment. The remaining employed women's aspirations of business-ownership were triggered by market opportunities, a desire to contribute to the economy by generating employment for others, and to satisfy need for creativity and satisfaction. This shows that aspirations of business-ownership by the employed women in this study were triggered pre-dominantly by the 'pull' factors.

FIGURE 1



Source: Field Survey

Entrepreneurial aspirations of the remaining housewives were triggered by the desire to make use of their "idle" time as they could not enter/re-enter the job market at older age. Finally, some housewives' business aspirations were also triggered by the influence of a mentor/sponsor in the family – mostly by husbands who actively encouraged their wives to set-up a business; and because of market opportunities i.e., access to potential customers. The above data shows that similar to the employed women, the business aspirations of the housewives also appear to have been triggered mostly by positive motivations/pull factors.

Aspirations of Type of Business

As can be seen in Table 3, while majority of the employed women with business aspirations wanted to set-up a business in the service sector (non gender-role related) (43 percent, n=13), an overwhelming majority of the housewives (94 percent, n=29) with business aspirations wanted to set-up their business in traditional sectors (for example boutique, handicraft, fast food and catering).

Some housewives, however, reported that they wanted to set-up a home-based business because they did not have any other business ideas. The remaining employed women with entrepreneurial aspirations were interested in manufacturing, home-based, and gender role-related service sector, respectively.

TABLE 3
ASPIRATIONS OF TYPE OF BUSINESS BY EMPLOYED WOMEN AND HOUSEWIVES

Type of Business	Percentage (n) of Employed Women	Percentage (n) of Housewives
Service sector (non gender-role related)	43 percent (13)	Nil
Manufacturing business	26 percent (6)	6 percent (2)
Home-based business	22 percent (5)	Nil
Traditionally female type service sector	9 percent (2)	94 percent (29)

The above data relating to the motivation of business-ownership by employed women and the type of business they were mostly interested in suggest that business aspirations of these women were developed through conscious evaluation of comparative advantages of business-ownership to those of paid employment as well as business potentials for women in the service sector (non gender-role related) to those of other types of businesses in Bangladesh. For example, the General Manager of an advertising agency explained how her aspiration of business-ownership in the service sector was developed:

"I feel that the absolute liberty in planning, developing comprehensive marketing strategies and implementing the same for the growth of business could only be enjoyed by having a business of my own. I would prefer the service sector over others because Bangladesh and especially Dhaka being a densely populated place with a rising middle-class population with disposable income provides an excellent opportunity for consumer service based business".

Aspirations of Type of Business-Ownership

As seen in Table 4, out of twenty-three employed women with business aspirations 30 per cent (n=7) each were interested in sole-tradership businesses, and in setting-up the business with their husband. The remaining 26 per cent (n=6) were contemplating setting up their business with friends, and 13 per cent (n=3) with their family members. Among the housewives with business aspirations, half of them wanted to start a business with their family members, such as, sister/s, daughter/s, sister-in-laws etc. The rest were interested in sole tradership, or wanted to set-up their business with friend/s. It is notable that all the housewives aspiring to set up businesses irrespective of type of ownership were expecting their husbands to play an important role in the business set-up process.

TABLE 4
ASPIRATIONS OF TYPE OF BUSINESS-OWNERSHIP BY EMPLOYED WOMEN AND HOUSEWIVES

Type of Ownership	Percentage (n) of Employed Women	Percentage (n) of Housewives
Sole tradership	30 percent (7)	29 percent (9)
Partnership with their husband	30 percent (7)	Nil
Partnership with friend/s	26 percent (6)	23 percent (7)
Partnership with family member/s	13 percent (3)	48 percent (15)

As far as the actual steps undertaken for business start-up was concerned, it was found that more than three-quarters of the employed women with business aspirations (78 percent, n=18) did not take any action towards setting-up their businesses primarily because of hesitation to come out of the job (50

percent, n=9), and due to financial constraints (28 percent, n=5) and lack of relevant experience (22 percent, n=4). Moreover, out of the five employed women who took some initiative, four women had gathered some information only and one had prepared a plan. This suggests that although these women perceived business-ownership to offer greater scope for independence and creativity and higher monetary returns compared to employment, the security of getting an attractive and regular salary in the job was most important to them at that point in their life which in turn made them reluctant to take the risk of setting-up own business. For example, the Personnel Planning and Development Manager of a multinational company captured the feelings of most employed women who were hesitant about leaving their jobs in order to set-up own business:

"Since the pay package and the working environment of my current job are extremely satisfying, I am not ready to try out business right now".

The social consequence of business failure, essentially the social embarrassment, was also an important reason for some of these women's hesitations to leave their jobs. A school teacher interested in manufacturing baby products said:

"If a man after leaving his job in order to set-up own business fails to succeed, people sympathise. If a woman fails, people ridicule".

Although majority of the housewives in this study were interested in having their own business, more than half of them (58 percent, n=18) had not taken any specific initiative to actually set-up the business. Moreover, those (42 percent, n=13) who took some initiative had either gathered some information only or made a plan. The reasons given for this was that some housewives wanted to wait till their youngest child grew up, whilst others felt they did not receive enough support and encouragement from their husbands and therefore were afraid of taking the risk. Interestingly, the remaining five housewives said they were waiting for their daughters to complete their studies. In fact, these housewives' business aspirations were developed out of a desire to assist in their daughters' pursuit of entrepreneurial career and they were strongly encouraged by their husbands to do so. For example, one housewife interested in setting-up a business with her two daughters explained why she did not yet take any initiative to start the business as below:

"In fact, it was not my idea to set-up a business. It all started when two of my daughters wanted to set-up a boutique and asked me to help them because I have always been good at tailoring and embroidery. My husband became very enthusiastic about the idea and encouraged me to set-up the business together with my daughters. He believes now that all of my children have grown up, I should have something of my own to keep myself busy. Moreover, he says that my involvement in the business would save my daughters from facing unpleasant circumstances that young single women in business usually come across. So I am waiting for my youngest daughter to complete her studies very soon before we take any active step towards setting-up the business".

Influence of Husband, Relatives, Friends and Media in Entrepreneurial Aspirations

Among the various factors that influenced aspirations of business-ownership by the employed women, husbands and friends were found to play important role (57 percent, n=13 and 48 percent, n=11 respectively). Test of coefficient of correlation also confirms this. The influence of husbands ($r = 0.57$, $p = 0.000$) and friends ($r = 0.39$, $p = 0.009$) were found to be significantly correlated with employed women's aspirations of business-ownership. No significant relationship were found between the employed women's business aspirations and the influence of media ($r = 0.22$, $p = 0.101$), parents ($r = -0.11$, $p = 0.26$), relatives ($r = -0.03$, $p = 0.43$) and siblings ($r = 0.28$, $p = 0.080$) respectively. In addition, no significant relationship was found between having entrepreneur fathers and employed women's business

aspirations ($r = -0.169$, $p = 0.166$).

Interestingly, not only having business-owner husbands were found to be positively related to employed women's aspirations of business-ownership ($r = 0.36$, $p = 0.038$), stepwise multiple regression also identified the role of husbands to have the most important influence on employed women's business aspirations (Table 5). This may be due to the fact that not only 30 percent of the employed women with business aspirations wanted to start a business with their husbands, those who were interested in sole-tradership (30 percent) or wanted to start the business with friends (26 percent) or family members (13 percent) expected their husbands to be their sponsors and to play an active role in the business start-up process. For example, the Deputy Manager of an insurance company stated:

"Setting-up a business from scratch is not an easy matter. I need a lot of support from my husband in acquiring finance and other resources for setting-up the business. In fact, if he does not take active role in the business set-up process, probably I will never be able to start my own business".

TABLE 5
RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSES SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INFLUENCE OF PREDISPOSING FACTORS AND BUSINESS ASPIRATIONS OF HOUSEWIVES AND EMPLOYED WOMEN

Dependent Variables	Business Aspirations of Housewives			Business Aspirations of Employed Women		
	b	s.e	t	b	s.e	t
Media Relatives Husband	0.63	0.10	4.86***	0.57	0.14	3.70***
Constant	0.50			0.47		
Multiple R	0.64			0.57		
R ²	0.40			0.33		
Adjusted R ²	0.39			0.30		
F	23.65***			13.65***		

* $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.01$

*** $p < 0.001$

Among the various factors that influenced aspirations of business-ownership by the housewives, relatives (81 percent, $N=25$), the media (58 percent, $N=18$) and friends (52 percent, $N=16$) were found to play very important role. Test of coefficient of correlation also confirms this. The influence of relatives ($r = 0.64$, $p = 0.000$) the media ($r = 0.43$, $p = 0.004$) and friends ($r = 0.38$, $p = 0.009$) were found to be significantly correlated with housewives' aspirations of business-ownership. Moreover, a significant relationship was found between having family members in business and housewives' aspirations of business-ownership ($r = 0.32$, $p = 0.027$). Similar to the findings regarding employed women, no significant relationship was also found to exist between the influence of parents and housewives' business aspirations ($r = -0.01$, $p = 0.48$). Furthermore, no significant relationship was found between the influence of siblings and aspirations of business-ownership by housewives ($r = 0.17$, $p = 0.15$). Finally, stepwise multiple regressions identified the role of relatives to have the most important influence on housewives' business aspirations (See Table 5). Accordingly, it was found that many of these relatives were the housewives' role models or mentors. For example, a housewife who had recently become a widow explained how her business aspiration was influenced by a family member role model.

"Since my husband passed away my sister-in-law who is a successful business-owner has been trying to persuade me to either join her business or to start a business of my own. She and my brother believe that if I set-up a business it will not only improve my financial status but more importantly, will keep me occupied".

Another housewife explained how her niece and her husband influenced her aspiration of business-ownership:

"Although almost every female member in our family has been good at dress-making and embroidery, converting the hobby into business was out of question for us as it was perceived to be a threat to family honour by the men in our family. However, my niece took the challenge and proved that there was nothing wrong about a woman doing business. Since then she and my husband have been encouraging me to set-up my own boutique. Even my sisters are interested in joining me if I go ahead with it".

Although no significant relationship was found between the influence of husband and housewives' desire to start own business ($r = 0.11$, $p = 0.26$), data relating to the aspirations of housewives with regard to type of ownership indicates the importance of husband's role in their business set-up process. This can be explained from the point of view that these women, being housewives neither had enough money of their own nor had the information or contacts to be able to access the resources necessary to set-up a business from scratch. Therefore they perceived that their entrepreneurial aspirations would become a reality only if their husbands became their sponsors and took an active role in acquiring, or helping them to acquire other resources (for example information, trade-licence, machinery etc.) prior to setting up the business. For example, one housewife interested in setting up a handicrafts business stated:

"I gave-up my banking career after having my first child. Besides, my husband did not like the idea that I would be working full-time. Now that my children have grown up I feel lonely and bored at home. So I have decided to set-up a handicraft business, as it is too late for me to return to my job. However, all these years of being a housewife and having little exposure to the 'real outside world' have made me less confident about being able to do it on my own. Therefore I am relying heavily on my husband to help me out in setting-up this business".

Employed Women and Housewives with no Entrepreneurial Aspirations

A total of 12 (34 percent) employed women in this study were found to have no interest in setting up own businesses, primarily because they perceived that there was a lack of appropriate social climate (i.e. lack of security and freedom of mobility as well as inadequate enterprise support) in the country for women to take-up business ownership as an economic option. In addition, half of these women did not have "enterprise culture" in the family and perceived business-ownership to be full of risk and uncertainty. The remaining three each were only interested in a professional career, and perceived that having a business would be very time demanding and therefore would create problems in balancing between work and family responsibilities. Interestingly, none of the various predisposing factors (for example: parents, the media, siblings, friends, relatives etc.) influencing individual's career choice appear to have important influence on the employed women's lack of interest in entrepreneurship as a career option.

Among the six housewives (16 percent) who did not have interest in business-ownership as an economic option, five perceived having a business to be very time consuming and that it would therefore lead them to neglect their domestic responsibilities. Only one housewife was found who was interested in employment only. Interestingly, none of the predisposing factors influencing individual's career aspirations were found to have important influence on these housewives' lack of interest in business-ownership as an economic option. This data suggests that these women's lack of interest in business-

ownership or any other economic options were not influenced by any predisposing factors. Rather, it was their conscious choice to prioritise the traditional gender roles of being a wife and a mother.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study concludes that entrepreneurial career aspirations of educated urban women in developing country contexts are more a circumstantial decision impacted by the complex interplay of micro, meso and macro level factors of entrepreneurship, rather than something that has been nurtured since childhood and bloomed in adulthood. The study provides evidence to support the notion that individual orientations and aspirations of educated women in entering entrepreneurship; and the factors affecting the start-up and development of their business are enmeshed and moulded by 'hidden' human capital and institutional constraints, such as, prior industry or entrepreneurial experience, access to finance and other enterprise support; the roles society ascribes to women (Brush et al, 2009; Welter and Smallbone, 2008; Jamali, 2009), influence of gender labelling of entrepreneurship, and 'pull' or 'push' factor type motivations, thereby supporting the premise of the '5M' framework that 'a separate theory on women's entrepreneurship may not be required if existing theoretical concepts are expanded to incorporate explanations for the distinctiveness of women's entrepreneurship and give due recognition to the social context and the embedded nature of gender' (Brush et al, p.18).

As bulk of the literature on female entrepreneurship draws from the experiences of Anglo-Saxon countries (Jamali, 2009, p. 247), this study has provided meaningful insights into factors affecting women's entrepreneurship in developing country perspective. However, the findings stem from a single country investigation, and hence should not be readily generalized. Further research across groups of developing countries will confirm the wider relevance and applicability of the findings.

The findings of this study have some important implications for those officially concerned with developing women's entrepreneurship in developing countries. In the face of shrinking adequate job opportunities for educated urban women, business-ownership can offer them a viable medium for effectively combining their economic and domestic roles in traditional societies, like Bangladesh. Policy makers and development planners concerned with augmenting women's entrepreneurship need to understand the full range of issues confronting and influencing women's orientations to entrepreneurship, and their aspirations and actions towards start-up. It is only when these issues are understood will it be possible to develop meso and macro level policies, programmes, support and structures that are gender-sensitive and that take into account the distinctiveness of women's entrepreneurship in light of the social context and the embedded nature of gender.

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