

Mapping the Literature on Women Entrepreneurship: A Bibliometric Analysis of Motivation and Barriers

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Abstract

Women's entrepreneurship, involving women's ownership and management of businesses, faces numerous challenges despite significant progress. This study aims to comprehensively analyze the motivators and barriers in women's entrepreneurship, going beyond traditional reviews by employing advanced bibliometric techniques. The bibliometric analysis was conducted with the Bibliometrix package in R, followed by content analysis using VOSviewer to identify emerging research areas. This approach maps the intellectual landscape and identifies key authors, articles, institutions, and research themes. The analysis highlights the evolution of research themes such as gender discrimination, access to capital, social networks, economic performance, and the impact of crises like COVID-19. Key clusters and subthemes identified include women and entrepreneurship, business and female entrepreneurship, and women's status and empowerment. The study underscores the dynamic challenges women entrepreneurs face and the need for adaptive support strategies. The study proposes future research directions, including comparative studies across cultural contexts, evaluations of policy effectiveness, and explorations of digital platforms and technologies for empowering women entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Entrepreneur, Female Entrepreneurship, Gender, Motivators and Barriers, Women Entrepreneurship

JEL Classifications: L26, J70, O15, M13, L29

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1. Introduction

Women's entrepreneurship encompasses pursuing entrepreneurship as a career by women or owning and managing their businesses (Terjesen et al., 2016). Despite significant strides in recent years, women entrepreneurs face many challenges in starting, growing, and scaling their businesses. Chea (2008) highlighted that women encounter gender discrimination through government economic policies, statutory and customary laws, and administrative hurdles. Nonetheless, women have persisted and made substantial progress. The 2023 Women & Minority Business Owner Spotlight report by Bank of America highlights that although women business owners generally maintain an optimistic outlook, they are more subdued than their male counterparts. This disparity highlights women's significant progress in overcoming barriers and establishing themselves in business. Women entrepreneurs often encounter distinct challenges that hinder their business endeavors. One significant issue is the relative inefficacy of their social networks compared to their male counterparts, resulting in a fundamental disadvantage in accumulating social capital (Loscocco et al., 2009). The 2023 Bank of America report further reveals that 31 percent of women business owners need help accessing capital and more information to apply for funding confidently. This lack of confidence can be traced back to factors such as gender biases, inequitable lending practices, and restricted access to networks. Ensuring equal access to capital is crucial for the growth and success of women entrepreneurs. Providing women with the same resources and opportunities as men will enable them to reach their full potential and contribute positively to society.

Women entrepreneurs are pivotal in driving economic growth and fostering social development. According to Aileen Ionescu-Somers, Executive Director of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), women frequently dominate the smallest businesses in highly competitive, low-margin markets and industries. This overrepresentation often stems from enduring inequalities in the home, where women shoulder a more significant share of family responsibilities. This dynamic exacerbates their economic dependence and diminishes their interpersonal power and privilege (GEM Report, 2024). Addressing these challenges is essential for harnessing the full potential of women entrepreneurs and promoting more equitable economic and social progress. There has been a global rise in women entrepreneurs, with a particularly notable increase in countries like India. Many developing nations now emphasize women's entrepreneurship, spurring a surge in related research. Despite this focus, women entrepreneurs still encounter numerous obstacles that hinder their success (Silva et al., 2021; World Bank, 2018). This expanding research landscape on the motivations and barriers women entrepreneurs face underscores the need for a systematic literature review (SLR). An SLR can help organize existing studies, evaluate the current research status, and pinpoint areas for future investigation.

Research on women's entrepreneurship has often concentrated on developed countries, with numerous review papers examining various aspects of this field (Ahl, 2006; Brush, 1992; De Vita et al., 2014; Gundry et al., 2002; Foss et al., 2019; Henry et al., 2016). However, this article on "Motivation and Barriers in Women's Entrepreneurship" stands out due to its comprehensive

approach, combining bibliometric and content analysis. Unlike other reviews focusing on specific geographical areas or aspects like microfinance or policy implications, this study provides a broad intellectual landscape by identifying influential authors, journals, and emerging topics in global women's entrepreneurship. This multifaceted approach and verifying results across the Scopus database ensure robust and credible findings.

1.1 The Importance and Challenges of Women Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship involves the process of creating, organizing, and managing a new business venture to generate profit or add value to society. According to Shane and Venkataraman (2000), entrepreneurship entails identifying and exploiting opportunities, creating value through innovation, and assuming risk and uncertainty. Schumpeter (1934) characterized entrepreneurship as the force of creative destruction, where entrepreneurs disrupt existing markets and create new ones through innovation. This concept underscores the importance of innovation and creativity in entrepreneurship and the willingness to take on risk and uncertainty. Other scholars have emphasized the role of the entrepreneur as a leader, strategist, and visionary. Sarasvathy (2001) proposed the effectuation approach to entrepreneurship, which emphasizes using available resources, forming partnerships, and creating opportunities through experimentation and iteration.

There has been a global rise in women's entrepreneurship. Women entrepreneurs have been instrumental in promoting economic growth, creating job opportunities, and driving innovation across various industries. Despite these contributions, women still face significant barriers in starting and growing their businesses and are underrepresented in entrepreneurship compared to men. These challenges can limit women's ability to grow their businesses and reach their full potential as entrepreneurs. However, studies show that women's entrepreneurship can lead to positive economic growth, job creation, and gender empowerment. The premise of this study is that women entrepreneurs constitute a disadvantaged group compared to their male counterparts (Seshie-Nasser & Oduro, 2018; Bosma et al., 2020). Due to their status and physiology as women, they encounter numerous challenges that impede them from operating in more productive sectors of the economy (Hampel-Milagrosa, 2011; Overå, 2017).

The feminist standpoint theory recognizes a commonality among women in terms of being disadvantaged compared to men. Consequently, entrepreneurship researchers seek to champion changes in social structures that would promote decent work and transformational entrepreneurship for women in the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Harstock, 1997; Wylie, 2016). Brush, de Bruin, and Welter (2009) revealed that women entrepreneurs are driven by push and pull factors, such as discontentment with conventional employment, a yearning for autonomy, and the necessity to manage work and familial duties. Conversely, Kourilsky and Walstad (1998) discovered that women entrepreneurs are likelier to establish businesses in the service sector and exhibit more risk aversion than their male counterparts. Furthermore, they tend to initiate smaller enterprises and need more access to financial capital (Wang, 2019). In recent years, several reviews have focused on

entrepreneurship among women. Brush, de Bruin, and Welter (2009) and Marlow and McAdam (2013) have conducted significant reviews. None have attempted to review research on both the motivations and barriers to women's entrepreneurship, especially without considering the intersectionality of gender with other social identities such as race, ethnicity, and class (Wang, 2019). Most studies on women's entrepreneurship have been cross-sectional (Terjesen & Amorós, 2010; Blackburn & Schaper, 2012), capturing only a snapshot of women's experiences at a specific time.

1.2 Objectives

The primary objective of this research study is to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of 817 articles, spanning from 1987 to the end of 2023, that focus on the motivations and barriers in women entrepreneurship. This dataset comprises 787 research articles and 30 review articles. Unlike traditional literature reviews, which often emphasize the contributions of individual scholars, this study employs a bibliometric approach that quantitatively examines scientific data, such as citation counts and keyword frequencies. This method offers a more objective and unbiased analysis of the literature, providing a detailed understanding of the contemporary and evolutionary complexities within the field (Baumgartner and Pieters, 2003).

The bibliometric approach is particularly effective for investigating the motivations and barriers women entrepreneurs face. Analyzing patterns and trends in the literature can yield critical insights into this study area's status, themes, and developments. It allows researchers to identify the most frequently cited authors, journals, and articles, offering a comprehensive understanding of the primary concepts and themes explored in the literature (Vallaster et al., 2019; Moya-Clemente et al., 2021). Additionally, this methodology aids in identifying potential collaborations and interdisciplinary research opportunities. Researchers can connect with others pursuing similar questions by pinpointing common authors and journals within the field, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange. Moreover, analyzing nearly 36 years of academic research on women entrepreneurship through bibliometric methods provides valuable perspectives on the evolution of the literature. It highlights established and emerging areas within the field, identifies gaps requiring further exploration, and suggests fruitful avenues for future research. This comprehensive bibliometric analysis of women entrepreneurs' motivations and barriers represents the first systematic quantitative analysis in entrepreneurship and small business management. The study aims to address the following research questions:

- Who are the most influential authors, which articles and journals have had the most significant impact, and which organizations and countries have been vital in researching the motivations and challenges faced by women in entrepreneurship?
- What essential keywords are used in research on the motivations and barriers of women entrepreneurship, and how have their usage patterns changed over time?

- What are the current research themes on the motivations and barriers of women entrepreneurship, and how have they evolved?
- What prominent research clusters exist within the field, and what possible future research directions can facilitate the field's development?

2. Methodology

This study employs a SLR, a well-established method in management research designed to describe, identify, evaluate, and interpret existing research on a specific topic (Tranfield et al., 2003). SLR ensures that results are systematic, objective, transparent, and replicable (Linan & Fayolle, 2015; Tranfield et al., 2003). It is particularly suitable for reviews in the field of women's entrepreneurship (Jennings & Brush, 2013; Moreira et al., 2019; Ojong et al., 2021; Poggesi et al., 2016). SLRs can be categorized into various forms, including domain-based, theory-based, and method-based reviews (Lim et al., 2022). Domain-based reviews can be further classified into structured theme-based reviews, framework-based reviews, bibliometric reviews, hybrid reviews, conceptual reviews (Paul & Criado, 2020), and meta-analytical reviews (Lim & Weissmann, 2021). This study adopts a framework-based review approach, as Paul et al. (2021) suggested, to structure the SLR for more impactful results. The study employs a domain-based literature review via bibliometric analysis, followed by content analysis. Bibliometric analysis facilitates the quantitative examination of academic literature, identifying patterns and trends within a specific research field (Cancino et al., 2017; Merigo & Yang, 2017; Pineda Ospina, 2015). Broadus (1987) defines bibliometrics as a set of methods used to study or measure texts and information from all forms of written communication, including authorship and publication patterns. This approach enables the identification of the most representative publications, citations, authors, countries, and journals, thus providing a comprehensive overview of the research landscape (Merigo et al., 2015). The bibliometric analysis was conducted using data from Scopus, the largest abstract and citation database available. Multiple techniques were employed, including citation analysis, h-index evaluation, institutional analysis, organizational influence assessment, country-wise analysis, international collaboration examination, keyword and journal analysis, keyword frequency analysis, thematic map examination, and keyword frequency over time. The content analysis complemented this by exploring key clusters and subthemes within the literature. This multifaceted methodology ensures robust and credible findings, contributing to a broad and detailed intellectual landscape of women's entrepreneurship research. The investigation adhered to Donthu et al.'s (2021) guidelines for conducting bibliometric analysis. The research process was carried out in five stages:

Step 1: Selection of database

The data for this study were sourced exclusively from the Scopus database, renowned for being the most extensive citation and abstract repository. Scopus encompasses over 20,000 peer-reviewed journals across diverse disciplines, including social sciences, science, technology,

arts, and humanities (Fahimnia et al., 2015). The Scopus database was chosen over other databases, such as Web of Science (WOS), due to its more comprehensive coverage (Yong-Hak, 2013). A targeted query was conducted in the title-abstract-keyword field of the Scopus database, focusing on articles related to the motivations and barriers in women entrepreneurship. The query yielded an initial list of 1753 articles published between 1987 and the end of 2023.

Step 2: Creating the search formula

The literature on the motivations and barriers of women's entrepreneurship was thoroughly reviewed to develop comprehensive search criteria. Key terms frequently used in this field were identified, including "women entrepreneurship," "motivation," and "barriers" (Baral et al., 2023). These terms were essential for constructing an effective search strategy. The search criteria were designed using the "title, abstracts, and keywords" search fields, employing Boolean operators "AND/OR" to combine the identified keywords. The final search formula was constructed as follows:

TITLE-ABS-KEY (("Women entrepreneurship" OR "female entrepreneurship" OR "women entrepreneur" OR "female entrepreneur" OR "female business owner" OR "women business owner" OR "mumpreneur" OR "women led SME" OR "Female led SME" OR "Women led new venture" OR "Female led new venture") AND (("motivational factors" OR "motivation" OR "encouragement" OR "interest" OR "motive" OR "driving force" OR "Barriers" OR "Problems" OR "Challenges" OR "Threat"))). After the search filters 817 papers were found, by searching based in Business, Management and Accounting, document type as article, and review papers source type as journal and language as english.

Step 3: Data collection and retrieval

Initially, a search was conducted using the Scopus search formula, resulting in 1753 documents across all subjects. However, to ensure the inclusion of "certified knowledge," which primarily consisted of articles and reviews, the suggestion of Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro (2004) was followed, and all other document types, such as conference papers, books, and book chapters, were excluded. This screening process yielded 817 articles. Fink (2019) states that the Scopus database is more comprehensive than the Web of Science (Fink, 2019).

Step 4: Performing the analysis

According to Díaz-Faes, Rey-Rocha, and Martín-Rodríguez (2021), Biblioshiny was employed for the analysis. Biblioshiny enables users to upload bibliographic data, conduct bibliometric analyses, and visualize results with interactive charts and graphs. The authors argue that Biblioshiny stands out among bibliometric tools due to its user-friendliness, flexibility, and customization options, which they detailed extensively.

Step 5: Recognizing the current themes and potential areas for future research

Biblioshiny facilitated the researchers in conducting a bibliometric analysis to identify emerging themes or clusters within the domain.

3. Results and interpretations

3.1. Yearly Output and Citation Analysis

The bibliometric analysis covered a total of 817 documents published between 1987 and the end of 2023, as depicted in Figure 1. One of the critical metrics used in this analysis is the citation count, which indicates the influence and impact of each document on the academic community. The most cited paper in this dataset is by Fischer EM (1993), which has accrued 650 citations, making Fischer EM the most influential author in the field. Following Fischer, other notable authors include Brush CG with 584 citations, Marlow S with 583 citations, Cliff JE with 554 citations, and Verheul I with 429 citations (Figure 2).

3.2. h-Index Evaluation

The h-index, introduced by Hirsch in 2005, evaluates both the quantity and impact of a researcher's publications. It is defined as the number of papers (N_p) that have received at least h citations each (Hirsch, 2005; Alonso et al., 2009). In this study, researchers Kaciak E and Welsh D each have an h-index of 10, indicating 10 publications cited at least 10 times. This positions them as the leading researchers in terms of publication impact. Agrawal S and Welter F follow with an h-index of 7, while Marques C, Memili E, Ramadani V, and Ratten V each have an h-index of 6 (Table 1).

3.3 g-Index and m-Index Analysis

The g-index provides a more nuanced view by considering the spread of citations across a researcher's work. It is calculated as the highest number of publications (N) that collectively have received at least g^2 citations. Kaciak E's g-index of 14 highlights the significant impact of their most frequently cited publications, underscoring their influential contributions to the field.

The m-index measures the h-index relative to the length of a researcher's academic career, offering insight into the consistency and impact over time. Kaciak E and Welsh D have an m-index of 0.833, the highest among the analyzed authors. This indicates that their research careers have been both consistent and impactful, contributing steadily to the field over the years.

3.4 Institutional Analysis

A thorough examination at the organizational level identified 1,509 institutions that had published at least one document and received at least one citation. This evaluation was based on the quantity and quality of published articles, providing a comprehensive overview of the research achievements and influence of these institutions. The assessment of institutional contributions underscores the collaborative and widespread nature of research in the field of women entrepreneurship, highlighting the diverse sources of academic productivity and influence.

3.5 Organizational Influence

Table 2 highlights the top ten organizations most influential in women's entrepreneurship research. The leading institutions include GLA University, University of Tehran, Brock University, University of Ottawa, Abu Dhabi University, South-East European University, Babson College, University of Putra Malaysia, and University of North Carolina at Greensboro. These institutions have published between 10 and 22 documents each, demonstrating significant contributions to the field.

3.6 Country-wise Analysis

A country-wise analysis revealed that 85 countries had published at least one document and received one citation in women's entrepreneurship. The United States emerged as the most influential country, with 124 documents and an average article citation of 45.60. India ranked second with 95 documents and an average citation of 6.50 per article, followed by the United Kingdom with 93 documents and an average citation of 40.60. These statistics indicate that the domain of women's entrepreneurship is experiencing rapid growth, with scholars publishing their work in diverse journals (Figure 3).

3.7 International Collaboration

The country collaboration analysis (Figure 3) provides insights into the international scientific community's collaborative tendencies and identifies active countries in specific research fields. Strong collaboration networks were observed between countries such as the USA and Poland, USA and the United Kingdom, Macedonia and North Macedonia, the United Kingdom and Malaysia, USA and Canada, USA and Sweden, United Kingdom and Oman, and the United Kingdom and Sweden. These collaborations indicate efficient research conducted through shared resources and expertise between these countries.

3.8 Keyword and Journal Analysis

Figure 4 presents a three-field diagram illustrating the connections between countries, journals, and keywords. This Sankey diagram shows that scholars from the USA, for example, tend to use keywords such as entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurs, women, female entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurship, motivation, innovation, challenges, and barriers more frequently.

3.9 Keyword Frequency Analysis

A tree map visualization (Figure 5) was used to represent the distribution of publications across different categories based on specific criteria or keywords. The analysis revealed that "entrepreneurship" had the highest frequency, with 179 occurrences, followed by "gender" with 134 occurrences, "women entrepreneurs" with 129 occurrences, and "women" with 100 occurrences. This visualization helps researchers identify the most frequently used keywords in the field, aiding in developing research questions and study designs.

3.10 Word Cloud Analysis

The word cloud, illustrated in Figure 6, captures the core themes and key focus areas in women's entrepreneurship research. It provides a clear visual summary of the most significant concepts and their relative importance. Prominent words such as "female entrepreneurship," "women," "gender," and "women entrepreneurship" highlight their substantial relevance and frequent occurrence in the literature. Additionally, terms like "motivation," "performance," "work-life balance," and "success factors" stand out, underscoring their crucial role in comprehending the factors that influence and shape women's entrepreneurial endeavors.

3.11 Thematic Map Examination

Figure 7 displays the results of a thematic map examination to detect the principal themes in women entrepreneurship. This examination utilized 200 authors' keywords and a minimum cluster frequency of 4, identifying six clusters. The cluster labeled "entrepreneurship" and "gender" emerged as the most significant, with 528 and 497 cluster frequencies, respectively, followed by "women" with 367 cluster frequencies. The thematic map's dimensions, centrality, and density assess the significance and sustainability of a theme in advancing a particular area. The "gender" and "female" cluster, located in the quadrant with high density and centrality, implies that this theme is closely interrelated with other themes in the field, with highly connected keywords such as "entrepreneurship," "women entrepreneurship," and "female entrepreneurship."

3.12 Keyword Frequency Over Time

Analysis of word frequency over time (Figure 8) provides insights into the changing research topics and themes within the field of women entrepreneurship. There has been a notable increase in the frequency of the keyword "women entrepreneurs" from 0 to 129 between 1987 and 2023. A similar increasing trend was observed for "female entrepreneurs," indicating a rising interest in this area of research. This growing frequency suggests that women's entrepreneurship is an emerging and increasingly important topic within the academic community.

3.13 A Density Map Analysis of Motivators and Barriers in women's entrepreneurship

To analyze and calculate the strength of interactions among keywords, density is used as an index (An and Wu, 2011). A smaller separation between keywords indicates a higher density value. VOSviewer software, known for its robust graphical user-interface (Cobo et al., 2011), is used to generate density maps. The keyword co-occurrence heat map of motivators and obstacles in women's entrepreneurship, based on density values, is shown in Figure 9. This map uses colors ranging from blue and green to yellow to depict density values, with more frequently used concepts shown in a higher density yellow color.

In addition to keywords like entrepreneurship, gender, and women entrepreneurs, the word "women" appears in a high-density yellow color, indicating frequent usage. Another notable concept is the frequent appearance of barriers and motivation, crucial components of women's

entrepreneurship. Motivation is linked to performance, work-life balance, and success factors, directly affecting the overall business outcome.

The knowledge structure and research themes in the field of women entrepreneurship can be identified from the keyword co-occurrence networks. Using VOSviewer, Figure 9 provides a visualization of the author's keyword co-occurrence, highlighting the key research hotspots within this domain. The analysis identifies nine distinct fields, each representing a specific thematic focus. The first field encompasses terms such as barriers, family business, female entrepreneur, feminist theory, institutional theory, gender theory, motivation, motherhood, work-life balance, and women entrepreneurship. This field reveals a significant research hotspot centered on designing and utilizing sophisticated systems for analyzing the motivation and barriers faced by women entrepreneurs. The focus here is on understanding the complex interplay between personal and systemic challenges, including the influence of societal norms and institutional structures on women's entrepreneurial activities. The second field includes keywords like economic growth, entrepreneur, performance, success factors, challenges, motives, and entrepreneur learning. This cluster highlights the economic outcomes and performance metrics of women entrepreneurs, emphasizing the factors that drive success and the challenges they encounter. It sheds light on how entrepreneurial activities contribute to economic growth and the learning processes that underpin successful entrepreneurial ventures.

The third field includes terms such as COVID-19, crisis, gender gap, self-employment, small and medium enterprise (SME), small business, and entrepreneurialism. This field focuses on the impact of crises, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic, on female entrepreneurship. It examines how such crises exacerbate existing gender gaps and influence self-employment trends, focusing on the resilience and adaptability of SMEs and small businesses. The fourth field includes keywords like education, emerging economies, entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial motivation, self-efficacy, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability. This cluster emphasizes the role of education and self-efficacy in fostering entrepreneurial intentions among women, especially in emerging economies. It also highlights the importance of social entrepreneurship and sustainability, reflecting a broader view of entrepreneurship that includes social impact and long-term viability. The fifth field covers terms such as feminism, firm performance, gender equality, innovation, leadership, and rural entrepreneurship. This field integrates feminist perspectives with organizational outcomes, examining how gender equality, leadership styles, and innovation drive firm performance. It also highlights women's unique challenges and opportunities in rural entrepreneurship, where traditional gender roles and resource limitations are significant barriers. The sixth field includes development, females, poverty, and rural. This cluster focuses on the intersection of gender, poverty, and rural contexts, exploring how development initiatives can empower women entrepreneurs in rural areas. The emphasis is on overcoming poverty through entrepreneurship and the role of female entrepreneurs in driving local development and economic improvement. The seventh field comprises business development, discrimination, entrepreneurs,

ethnic minorities, immigrants, and women. This cluster addresses the unique challenges women entrepreneurs face from minority and immigrant backgrounds, with discrimination being a central theme. It explores systemic barriers and pathways to overcoming these challenges through business development. The eighth field encompasses crowdfunding, culture, gender, networking, and social capital. This field highlights the importance of social capital and networking for women entrepreneurs, emphasizing the role of crowdfunding and networks in providing alternative financing and support systems. It also considers cultural factors and how gender dynamics influence access to social capital. The ninth field includes empowerment, social media, and small business. This cluster focuses on the role of digital platforms, mainly social media, in empowering women entrepreneurs. It illustrates how these tools facilitate marketing, networking, and business development, suggesting that digital literacy and online presence can help women overcome traditional barriers and expand their entrepreneurial ventures.

3.14 Content analysis of research clusters

The research on women entrepreneurship spans various topics, encapsulated in nine distinct clusters. Each cluster highlights different aspects, theories, and practical challenges female entrepreneurs face (Figure 10). This content analysis explores these clusters, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of women's entrepreneurship research.

Cluster 1, related to Barriers and Theoretical Foundations, delves into female entrepreneurs' personal and systemic barriers. It employs various theoretical frameworks, such as feminist and institutional theories, to explore how societal norms and institutional structures impact women. Key areas include balancing motherhood and entrepreneurship, motivation driven by gender-specific challenges, and the dynamics within family businesses. These themes underscore the complex interplay between personal life and entrepreneurial endeavors for women. Cluster 2 deals with the Economic Impact and Performance Metrics. Focused on the economic outcomes of entrepreneurial activities, this cluster examines the factors that influence the performance and success of women entrepreneurs. It highlights economic growth as both a motivator and an outcome. The emphasis on success factors and challenges provides insights into the hurdles women must overcome and the learning processes that contribute to their entrepreneurial success. Cluster 3 addresses the impact of crises like COVID-19 on female entrepreneurship. It highlights how the pandemic has exacerbated the gender gap and influenced self-employment trends among women. Focusing on SMEs and small businesses illustrates these entities' specific challenges during crises, showcasing resilience and adaptability as key themes. Cluster 4, focusing on Educational and Motivational Dimensions, emphasizes education and self-efficacy as critical for fostering entrepreneurial intentions among women. This cluster highlights how educational opportunities and personal confidence impact entrepreneurial motivation, especially in emerging economies. Social entrepreneurship and sustainability are also emphasized, reflecting a broader view of entrepreneurship, including social impact and long-term viability. Cluster 5 integrates feminist perspectives with organizational outcomes, examining how gender equality, leadership styles, and innovation drive firm performance.

Rural entrepreneurship focuses on highlighting unique challenges and opportunities for women in non-urban settings, where traditional gender roles and limited resources pose significant barriers. Cluster 6, focusing on Development and Rural Challenges, explores how development initiatives can empower women entrepreneurs in rural areas. The emphasis is on overcoming poverty through entrepreneurship, highlighting the role of female entrepreneurs in driving local development and economic improvement. Cluster 7 addresses the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs from minority and immigrant backgrounds. Discrimination is a central theme, illustrating systemic barriers. The focus on business development suggests pathways to overcoming these challenges, highlighting resilience and adaptive strategies among minority women entrepreneurs. Cluster 8 emphasizes the role of Social Capital and Networking. This cluster focuses on crowdfunding and networks providing alternative financing and support systems. Cultural factors are also considered, reflecting how gender dynamics influence access to social capital and the effectiveness of networking strategies. Cluster 9 highlights Empowerment through Digital Platforms. Digital platforms like social media significantly empower women entrepreneurs by facilitating marketing, networking, and business development. The focus on empowerment suggests that digital literacy and online presence can help women overcome traditional barriers and expand their entrepreneurial ventures. The research clusters reveal a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the challenges and motivations shaping women's entrepreneurial activities. This underscores the need for diverse strategies to support and empower female entrepreneurs across various contexts.

4. Conclusion

This study provides a detailed and systematic examination of the motivations and barriers faced by women entrepreneurs, offering key insights and identifying critical research areas for further exploration. It emphasizes the global and interdisciplinary nature of women's entrepreneurship research, providing a foundational understanding of the academic landscape and guiding future researchers to pivotal resources. The analysis of current research themes reveals women entrepreneurs' evolving challenges, such as gender discrimination, access to capital, social networks, economic performance, and the impact of crises like COVID-19. Keyword analysis shows the emergence of new concepts like digital empowerment and social entrepreneurship, indicating shifting research priorities. Identifying prominent research clusters offers a structured view of the field, grouping related studies into coherent categories and facilitating a more organized approach to future research. Highlighted gaps include the need for deeper investigations into social and cultural influences, the effectiveness of policy interventions, and strategies to enhance social capital and networking opportunities. Future research directions include comparative studies across different cultural contexts, evaluations of policy effectiveness, and explorations of digital platforms and technologies to empower women entrepreneurs. Essential areas include longitudinal studies on the economic impact of women-owned businesses and assessments of digital literacy programs. Conducting a meta-analysis could further elucidate the strength and direction of relationships between motivations and barriers women entrepreneurs face. Additionally, exploring the role of

women in sustainable and social entrepreneurship can highlight their contributions to addressing social and environmental challenges.

Appendix

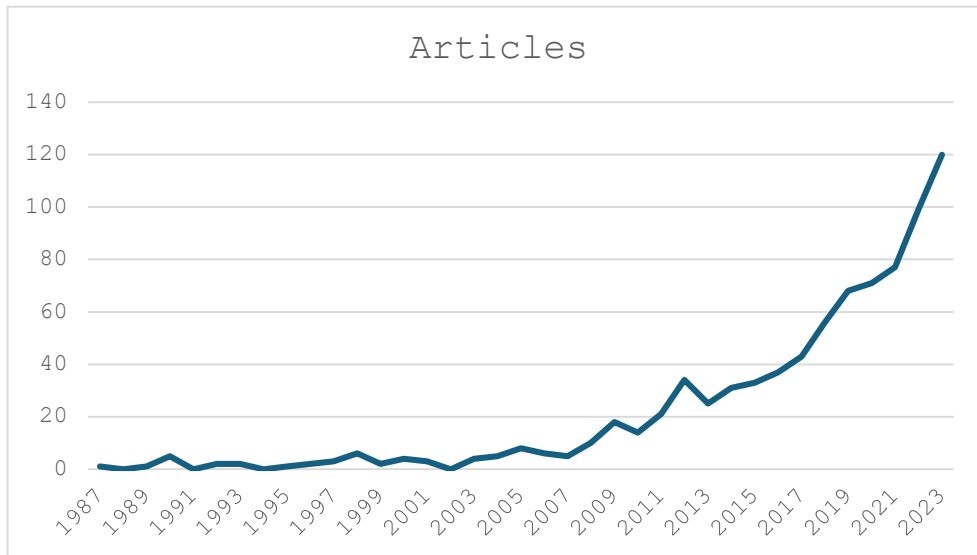


Figure 1. Metric That Illustrates the Yearly Output of Scientific Research

Source: Biblioshiny

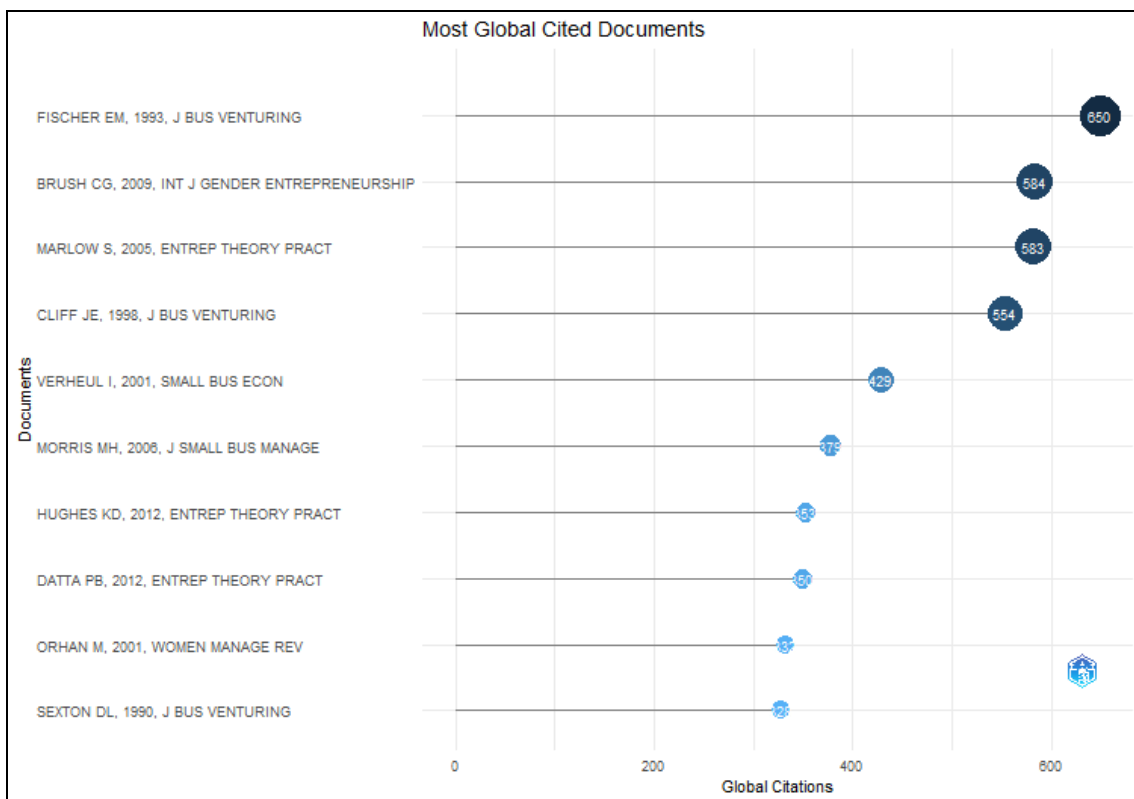


Figure 2. Visualization That Depicts the Documents with the Highest Number of Global Citations

Source: Biblioshiny

Table 1. A Bibliometric Analysis Table That Displays the Author's Local Impact

Element	h_index	g_index	m_index	TC	NP	PY_start	Element	h_index
KACIAK E	10	12	0.83333333	517	12	2013	KACIAK E	10
WELSH DHB	10	11	0.83333333	571	11	2013	WELSH DHB	10
AGARWAL S	7	10	0.7	323	10	2015	AGARWAL S	7
WELTER F	7	7	0.33333333	1616	7	2004	WELTER F	7
MCELWEE G	6	6	0.27272727	367	6	2003	MCELWEE G	6
MEMILI E	6	6	0.5	327	6	2013	MEMILI E	6
RAMADANI V	6	9	0.5	767	9	2013	RAMADANI V	6
RATTEN V	6	7	0.75	299	7	2017	RATTEN V	6
AGRAWAL V	5	7	0.71428571	143	7	2018	AGRAWAL V	5
BRUSH CG	5	5	0.29411765	919	5	2008	BRUSH CG	5

Source: Biblioshiny

Table 2. A Bibliometric Analysis Table That Displays Articles' Affiliations

Affiliation	Articles
GLA University	22
University Of Tehran	14
Brock University	13
University Of Ottawa	13
Abu Dhabi University	12
South-East European University	12
Babson College	11
University Of Putra Malaysia	11
University Of North Carolina at Greensboro	10

Source: Biblioshiny

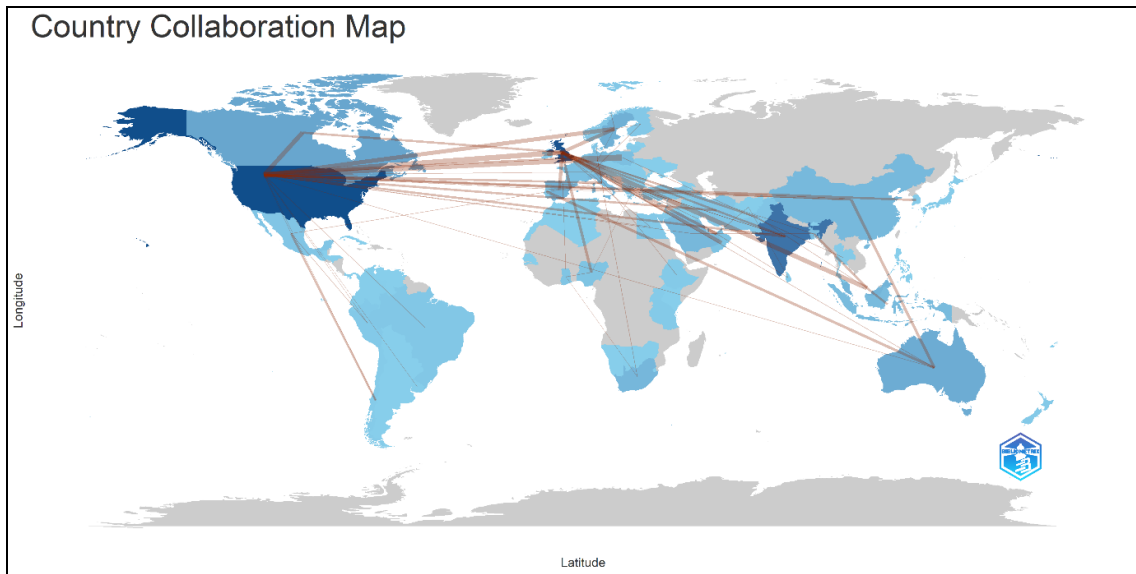


Figure 3. Figure That Illustrates a Map of International Collaborations Between Countries

Source: Biblioshiny

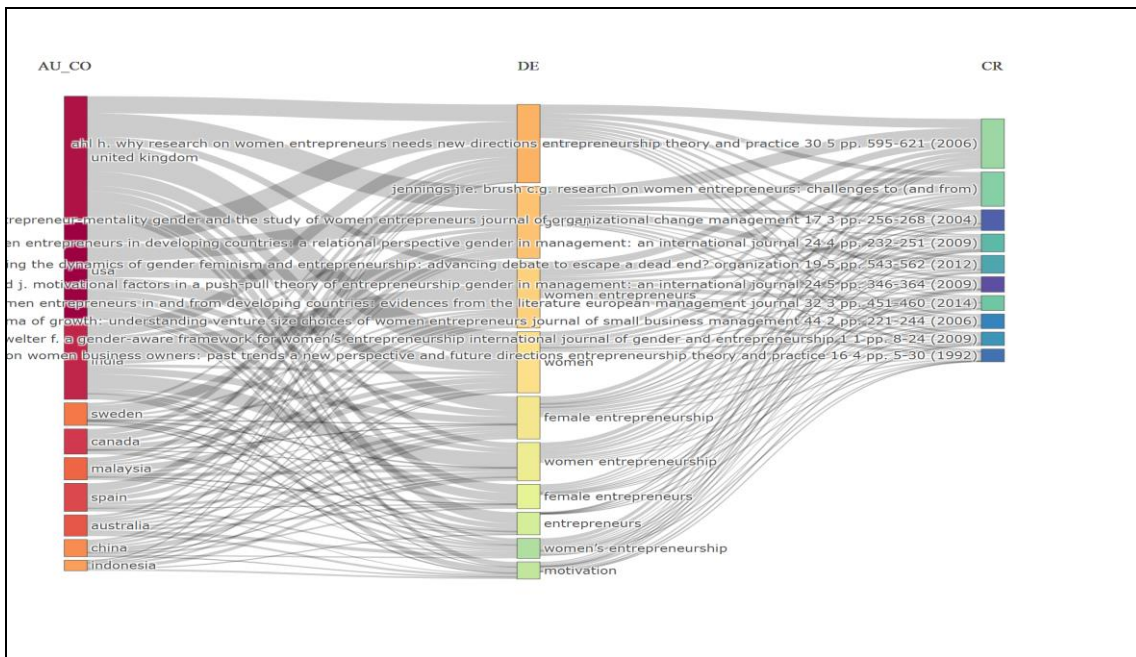


Figure 4. A Bibliometric Analysis Figure That Depicts a Three-Field Diagram

Source: Biblioshiny

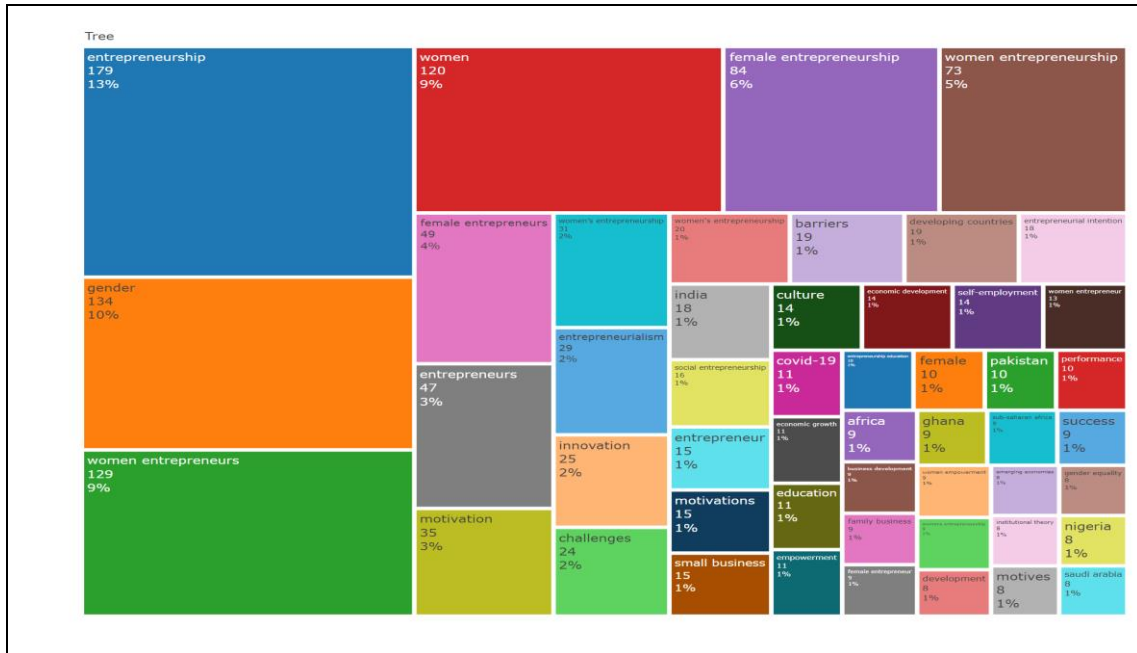


Figure 5. A Bibliometric Analysis Figure That Depicts a Tree Map

Source: Biblioshiny

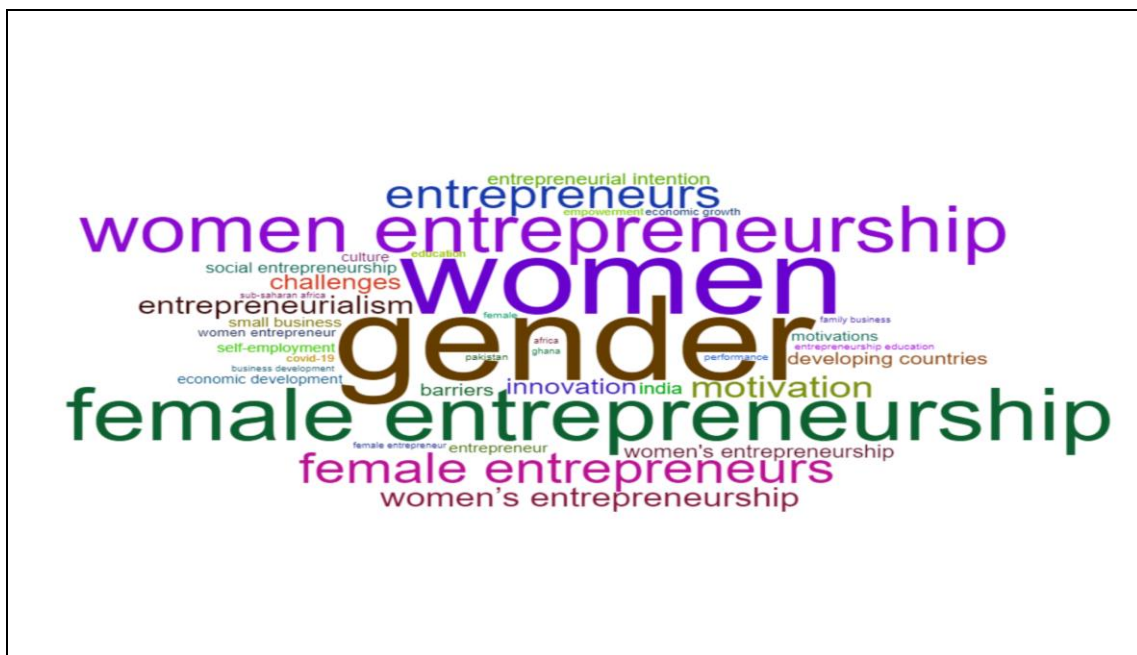


Figure 6. A Bibliometric Analysis of Word Cloud Visualization

Source: Biblioshiny

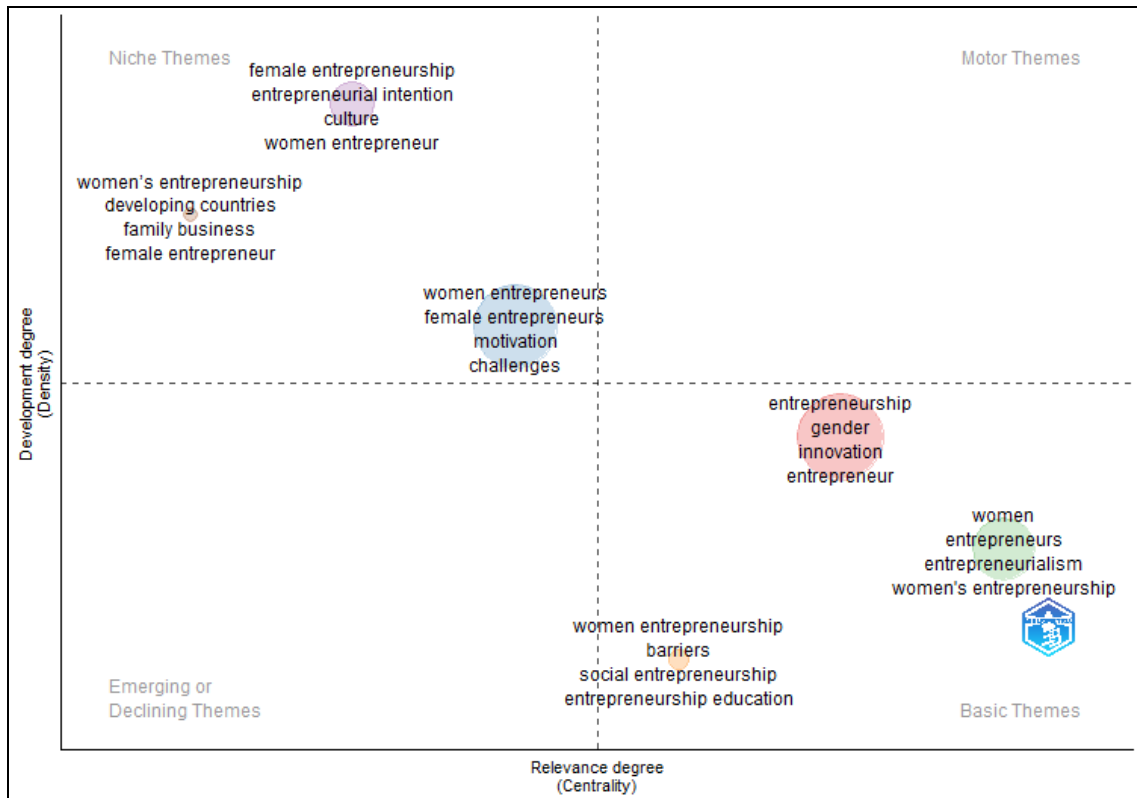


Figure 7. A Bibliometric Analysis Visualization Depicting a Thematic Map

Source: Biblioshiny

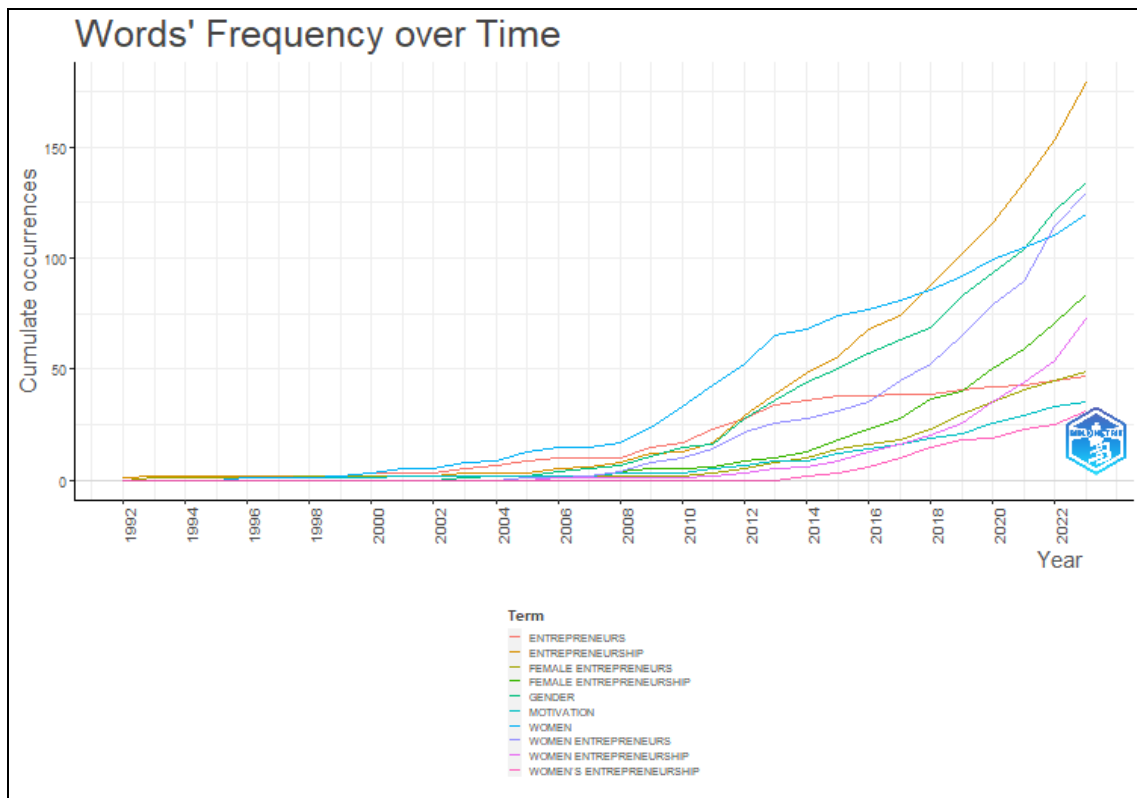


Figure 8. A Visual Depiction of Word Usage Frequency Over a Period

Source: Biblioshiny

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