

## Chapter 4

# Entrepreneurship as a Career Choice for Women: A Successful Case Study From Turkey

**Meryem Aybas**  
*Kafkas University, Turkey*

**Gaye Özçelik**  
*Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey*

### ABSTRACT

*Entrepreneurship is seen as an important tool in the prevention of women's unemployment and in the fight against poverty in underdeveloped and developing countries. Entrepreneurship becomes particularly obligatory for many women to substitute a kind of employment to provide additional income to the family. Drawing on Bowen and Hisrich's a career perspective to women's entrepreneurship and the context of a successful entrepreneurial career of a woman in Turkey, this chapter aims to discuss women's entrepreneurship by focusing on the reasons as to why women might choose entrepreneurship as a career choice. Another contribution is to provide a platform aimed at encouraging the mindset for the development of women's employment and entrepreneurship. In this context, the chapter provides explanations for the reasons for women's entrepreneurship within the push and pull factors. Furthermore, the main demographics of women entrepreneurs, their general personality characteristics, the sectors they operate in, and the difficulties they face are discussed.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The restructuring of the labor market in terms of changes in the economy, labor force qualities, labor contracts, and the content of the work has increased the importance of entrepreneurship in the global economy (Minniti & Arenius, 2003). Women's entrepreneurship in Turkey, after the economic crisis in 1970, was affected by the structural adjustment policies proposed by institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank. As of the 1980s, liberal economic Conditions in the world and women's liberation movements positively impacted women's entrepreneurship (Soysal, 2010). Women were encouraged to establish small businesses as one of the strategies aimed at raising household incomes due to structural adjustment policies (Yetim, 2002). Today, entrepreneurship is seen as an important tool in the prevention of women's unemployment and in the fight against poverty in some countries. In parallel with the increasing population in low-income and developing countries, entrepreneurship has become particularly obligatory for many women to provide additional income to the family (Minniti & Arenious, 2003). In the 10th Development Plan (2014-2018), within the framework of the Priority Transformation Programs, it is aimed to support women entrepreneurs within the scope of "Labor Market Activation Program" (Türkiye'de Kadın İşgücü Profili ve İstatistiklerinin Analizi, 2014).

Viewing the issue from a broader and more global perspective, the statistics with regards to women's entrepreneurial activities vary to a great extent. According to those of the American Population Bureau, in 1972, the number of women who established their own business was only 4.6%, compared to 36% in 2012 (Stengel, 2016), which shows that there has been a remarkable increase in the last half century. According the OECD 2013 statistics, the proportion of women in full employment by running their own business was 5.6% in the US, 10.4% in Japan, the EU (28) was at 12.3% and 43.4% in Turkey. For men, the equivalent figures were 6.6% in the United States, 11.5% in Japan, 16.5% in the EU (28), while it was 35.9% in Turkey. The entrepreneurial rate in developed countries is low compared to developing countries, such as Turkey, which implies that it is not strongly considered an employment alternative in the foremost nations. Hence, these figures can be interpreted as being an indicator of the motive of owning one's own business and of the wish to be an independent entrepreneur or being unable to find another job. In 2011, according to the Population and Housing Survey, employers and self-employed women in Turkey had an overall rate of 9.9%,

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