

Chapter 7

Fostering Green Entrepreneurship Education and the Socioeconomic Inclusion of Women in the South Caucasus Region


Nargiz Hajiyeva

Azerbaijan State University of Economics, Azerbaijan

Zarina Burkadze

Ilia State University, Georgia

Saida Khalil

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3695-7755>

Azerbaijan State University of Economics, Azerbaijan

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the challenges and opportunities for fostering green entrepreneurship among women in Azerbaijan and Georgia, post-Soviet republics grappling with transitioning economies. Employing qualitative data from interviews with nine female entrepreneurs and green policy experts, alongside legislative analysis and descriptive statistics, the study illuminates a significant gap in understanding and utilization of green economy practices among these entrepreneurs. Despite their successes, participants faced hurdles in incorporating green principles, including regulatory complexities and resource limitations. Collaboration between govern-

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ment, civil society, and the private sector emerges as crucial for supporting women entrepreneurs in embracing sustainability initiatives. The findings underscore the need for enhanced awareness and educational efforts to promote green practices and facilitate collaboration, thereby advancing sustainable development goals in the region.

INTRODUCTION

It is well-known that entrepreneurship contributes significantly to societal advancement (Schumpeter, 1934). Ironically, the same corporations have often been criticized for their detrimental effects on society due to their operations (Muo & Azeez, 2019). Green entrepreneurship integrates environmentally sustainable practices into business operations and management. This emerging field not only involves adopting green approaches in business activities but also emphasizes promoting and educating consumers about eco-friendly alternatives to conventional products.

Unlike traditional entrepreneurs, green entrepreneurs prioritize educating consumers on the benefits of eco-friendly products, which are often priced higher than conventional alternatives. This educational role is crucial because consumers are generally unaware of the long-term advantages of environmentally friendly products. Therefore, green entrepreneurs must convince consumers that the higher price of these products is justified by their environmental benefits.

Additionally, green entrepreneurs must stay informed about industry advancements and technological competition to maintain their competitive edge. Sustainable production and distribution methods are essential for these businesses, ensuring that their operations do not harm the environment (Sumathi et al., 2014). Scholars argue that eco-friendly entrepreneurial activities can yield significant ecological, socio-cultural, and economic benefits. These benefits include reducing carbon footprints, enhancing social cohesion, and fostering economic resilience. However, experiences in Western countries reveal that these activities can also contribute to the exclusion of disadvantaged groups and may increase social inequalities (Tubridy, 2020; Anguelovski et al., 2018). Such adverse outcomes often arise because both entrepreneurs and policymakers are strategically motivated, prioritizing growth and economic benefits over environmental considerations.

In developing countries, the situation is more complex. Regulatory environments are often weak, and entrepreneurial practices tend to favor powerful groups, making green policies less likely to be embraced. This is compounded by a low entrepreneurial culture and skewed deals that undermine sustainable practices. Understanding the decision-making processes in these contexts is crucial. Identifying who makes the decisions, what types of decisions are made, and the cost implications of these

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